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VALUES CONGRUENCE FROM THE EXECUTIVES' VIEWPOINT: VALUE-BASED PRACTICES

ABSTRACT. The permanent dilemma of congruence between personal and organizational values, prevailing in the research, fosters the new search for answers and the ways to achieve the coherence of employees and organizations. Therefore, this paper investigates the ways of strengthening the congruence of personal and organizational values as applied in organizations from the viewpoint of executives and how to harmonize individual values and those prevailing in organizations. The study is conducted using a semi-structured interview method, giving informants additional questions arising in the course of the interview. The executives of 8 organizations participated in the research. It was found that the causes for value' incongruence of the person and the organization in the researched organizations are different, and the gap is determined by different experiences with value management in the organizations presented in this paper.

Introduction

Relevance of the research. Dolan *et al.* (2006) argues that leaders and managers today are perhaps facing the biggest challenge in the history, striving with how to create and maintain successful organizations based on what is equally good for business, people and society. Harmonizing the beliefs and values of owners of the company and employees is a vital source of competitive advantage. However, for many organizations development and management of common values system becomes an insurmountable problem because of the lack of the identity and consistency of management. Identity is managed only from the top to bottom, i.e. there is no feedback, the needs of employees, consumers, and other stakeholder groups are perceived insufficiently and/or receive little attention, therefore, the declared values of organization are understood and acceptable not to all members of organization (Jusčius, 2009; Vveinhardt, Andriukaitiene, 2015; Zukauskas, Vveinhardt, 2009). In the recent decades this issue is increasingly discussed both in business practice and in scientific literature, however, it is still not easy to answer the crucial question of *how to put values in actions*. It is often debated that organizations often only formally incorporate values provision

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into their management schemes and structures. As a result, the gap between publicly declared values, ideals of organization and actual practice inevitably occurs. Therefore, lasting organizational values must be shaped omitting the contradiction with the values of individuals and groups, but by combining them, transferring the best values of each member of the organization to the common system of values, which is purposefully managed in practice of organizational activities. According to Dolan *et al.* (2006) management by values is a relatively new approach to governance and organizational practice concerned with developing management systems that are capable of integrating values into organizational strategies, policies, procedures, and programs.

The *research aims* to find out how certain organizations work with values in their practice and identify possible reasons for strong value congruence in some organizations.

The central problem of the research is posed by the question: what ways of strengthening the congruence of personal and organizational values are applied in organizations from the viewpoint of executives and how to harmonize individual employees' values and those prevailing in the organization?

Problem exploration level: a wide range of scientists have explored value congruence phenomenon ant it's impact on employee and organization (Meglino, Ravlin, 1998; Verplanken, 2004; Edwards, Cable, 2009; Hoffman *et al.*, 2011). There have been many empirical studies that have examined the value congruence phenomenon positive affect on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and negative affect on turnover intention (Westerman, Cyr, 2004; Ostroff *et al.*, 2005; Amos, Weathington, 2008; Ren, Hamann, 2015), employees' motivation (Lawrence, 2006; Posner, 2010; Ren, 2010). Previous researches have established a significant correlation between levels of stress and higher incongruence, which is ultimately manifested by a value conflict, leads to high levels of stress and to possibly even leaving the organization (Liedtka, 1989; Bouckenooghe *et al.*, 2005; Medina *et al.*, 2005; Lamm *et al.*, 2010). A variety of types are used to conduct a comprehensive personal and organizational value congruence analysis in organizations: subjective (Cable, Edwards, 2004; Verplanken, 2004; Edwards, Cable, 2009), perceived (Kallas *et al.*, 2010; Hoffman *et al.*, 2011), objective (Suar, Khuntia, 2010) and even triangulation (Knoppen *et al.*, 2006). However, qualitative case studies that have examined causes of the congruence between employees' values and organization values from executives' perspectives, have not been found.

Limitations of the research. This study analyses values congruence only from executives' perspective. To examine a comprehensive causes for the gap between personal and organizational values it is recommended to conduct a more detailed study and to measure personal and organizational values congruence from empolyees' subjective viewpoint. The comparison between the executives' interview results and employees' values congruence survey results could show deeper causes for a strong values congruence or the gap between particular values.

1. Literature review

Increasingly often, the fact that organizations attach great significance to their employees and strive to increase employees' motivation (Lawrence, 2006; Posner, 2010; Ren, 2010), job satisfaction (Lauver, Kristof-Brown, 2001; Silverthorne, 2004; Verplanken, 2004; Westerman, Cyr, 2004; Siegall, McDonald, 2004; Huang *et al.*, 2005; Ostroff *et al.*, 2005; Lawrence, 2006; Cennamo, Gardner, 2008; Edwards, Cable, 2009; Greguras, Diefendorff, 2009; Chiang, Birtch, 2010; Kallas *et al.*, 2010; Posner 2010; Suar, Khuntia, 2010; Leung, Chaturvedi, 2011), their commitment to the organization (Finegan, 2000; Silverthorne, 2004; Westerman, Cyr, 2004; Huang *et al.*, 2005; Ostroff *et al.*, 2005; Lawrence, 2006; Cennamo,

Gardner, 2008; Greguras, Diefendorff, 2009; Chiang, Birtch, 2010; Posner, 2010; Suar, Khuntia, 2010; Leung, Chaturvedi, 2011; Agarwal, Sagar, 2012), citizenship behaviour (Cable, DeRue, 2002), organizational identification (Cable, DeRue, 2002; Edwards, Cable, 2009) is reflected in scientific. The aim is to motivate (Ren, Hamann, 2015) employees, create a positive organizational climate (Verplanken, 2004; Dickson *et al.*, 2006), look for ways to reduce work stress (Westerman, Cyr, 2004; Posner, 2010), etc. All this is done by organizations to attract new and retain existing employees important for the organization (Cable, Judge, 1996; Billsberry, 2007), and the actions of the organization, directed towards that, show how the organization appreciates its existing staff (Cable, Judge, 1996). Research shows that one of the ways to ensure this is to seek the congruence of values of the employees and the organization (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Ostroff, Judge, 2007). However, the actions of the organizations are often incongruent with the values expressed by the employees or vice versa, therefore, unlike value congruence, incongruence of values forms the conflict between the employee and the organization (Jehn *et al.*, 1997; Jehn *et al.*, 1999; Verplanken, 2004; Fitzpatrick, 2007).

It is natural that employees want to realize their values at work and organizations also want the prevailing values in the organization to be complied with (Adkins *et al.*, 1994; Suar, Khuntia, 2010), thus, it can be said that the aim of these two sides is the search for the dialogue towards the value congruence (Thamarajakshi, 2001; Michailova, Minbaeva, 2012). In organizations paying attention to management by values there is a dilemma, how to seek and ensure congruency and harmony of values of the employees and the organization? (Draskovic, 2012; Draskovic, Draskovic, 2010).

It is wrong to believe that values are changing in time and easily replaced by "new" once in relation to certain changeable circumstances, therefore, easily adaptable, as organizations adapt to new changes, in order to remain in the market (Bradley, Caldwell, 1999; Jin, Rounds, 2012). On the contrary, a strong feature of the organization is clear, rooted not only in the codes, but also in behaviour, equally known to all members of the organization and perceived values (Collins, Porras, 1996; Begley, Boyd, 2000; Suar, Khuntia, 2010; Malbašić, Brčić, 2012; Bourne, Henkins, 2013). Some organizations boast about being values-based, but all organizations are values-based in the sense that all decisions are guided by values. The more important questions have to do with the particular values that are chosen, and how those values guide action (Hultman, 2006). Leaders of organizations must be able to put together the structure of the organization and processes with the system of organizational values as values may be generally understood as the strategic choices employee make regarding what is required to achieve our goals. Living organization's values means making difficult choices among competing values and the being at peace with our decisions (Dolan, 2011).

However, nothing more than a practical contact can answer the questions of what the congruence or incongruence of values of the employee and the organization means to the organization. Therefore, in every organization leaders themselves or with the help of external consultants have to discover and identify why certain gaps of values potentially occurred, what causes increased congruence of certain personal and organizational values and the lack of what measures or wrong behaviour prevent necessary values to be fixated in the organization. Analysis of scientific literature shows that generally studies are conducted in case of a random sample or a specific organization, its groups; thus, the question arises whether it is possible to state that the obtained results are truly representative and recommendations are possible and recommended to apply in another organization? Unequivocally, no. What prevails in one organization does not necessarily prevail in another one, what is typical of one organization is not necessarily typical of the other, and what is suitable for one organization, may be absolutely unsuitable for another organization, although

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its sector, industry, nature of activities (Ostroff *et al.*, 2005), structure, number of employees or even leadership style (Hoffman *et al.*, 2011) are the same. Each organization has its own culture with distinct (unique) value system (Verplanken, 2004; Lok, Crawford, 2000). Therefore, it understands the significance, meaning and importance of values differently. Even identical values, declared by different organizations, may be expressed in behaviour of different organizations in a different way or not expressed at all. Without comparison of different organizations, such examples can be detected at the level of the subdivision or international divisions of companies in different countries as well. Employees' intercultural differences in international organizations presuppose that even in departments of organizations, located in different states, different organizational values suitable to that country and its culture are formed or formed purposefully (Seong, Kristof-Brown, 2012).

Importance and stability of core organizational values is the secret of a long-term success of any organization (Collins, Porras, 1996). McDonald and Gandz (1994) depicted a healthy organization as the one that has succeeded in integrating its organizational values into plans as a means of their concrete realization. Consequently, organizations have to identify, describe, communicate and act coherently by organizational values in the entire organization in order to achieve strong personal and organizational value congruence. The first step of the organization aiming to ground its activities to the extent of the entire organization on specific value beliefs is to identify fundamental values and describe what they mean for the organization in practical terms (Devero, 2003). But the fact that values are articulated in annual reports, strategic plans and/or mission statements does not necessarily result in actual behavior. Organizational values become „actionable" only if they are internalized by individuals. To enable value internalization, the values need to be enacted, i.e., acted upon by management through various governance mechanisms (Michailova, Minbaeva, 2012). Because organizations whose managers have failed to realize the importance of organizational values in their activity can expect a number of issues including unnecessary formalisms and procedures, shifting and avoiding responsibility, expansion of responsibility, accumulation of power and negative selection (Brčić, Vuković, 2008).

2. Research methodology

In qualitative research, in-depth interview is recommended to gather data from people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). The opinion interview technique always involves oral information, having the advantage of flexibility, of the ability to get specific answers to each question (Silvia, Simona, 2013). Questions of the interview are designed after careful examination of scientific literature on the phenomenon of value congruence in organizations and its range of problems. The structure of the research instrument is formed taking into account the object, aim and objectives of the research in the context of the full (quantitative and qualitative) research of congruence of personal and organizational values. The questions of the interview are intended to determine how the organization works with values: what is the leaders' attitude to the values and their importance, value congruence in the organization, what actions of formation, internalization, support of values have been carried out, in what ways values are maintained and the uniformity of the values in the organization is ensured, how the values influence staffing, etc. All these questions will enable the identification of certain practices of the organizations, which will reveal why in some organizations the gap between employees and the values of the organization occurs, and in other organizations value congruence is strong. It was planned in advance that each participant of the interview will provide his/her subjective personal perspective, but it will be analyzed only in the context of the object of the research. The detailed structure of the instrument is presented in *Table 1*.

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Table 1. Structure of the instrument

Categories	Questions
The leader's approach towards values, their relevance to the organization	1. What are the values of your organization? 2. What are the benefits to the organization provided by the current system of values? 3. Who are the values of your organization intended for?
Value congruence	4. Do you think that formally declared values are identical to the actually prevailing values of the organization? 5. Do you think that organizational values are acceptable to the majority of the employees of the organization?
Formation and internalization of values	6. In what way are organizational values formed? 7. Who participated in the identification of values? 8. What principles did you invoke when formulating the specific values? 9. How are the values of the organization formalized? 10. How did you communicate the values to the employees?
Integrity of values	11. Do all employees comply with the same values, i.e. are the values the same for everyone, both employees and managers? 12. How do you deal with those employees who do not accept organizational values?
Reflection of values in the practice of the organization	13. What real work examples reflect organizational values? 14. How organizational values are recognized in employees' daily activities? 15. How long did it take you to realize that your organization really works according to the desired organizational values?
Actions to maintain congruence	16. In what ways are the values of the organization supported? Who is responsible for the maintenance of the organizational values? 17. How is the monitoring of values carried out in the organization? 18. How often do you assess the declared and actually prevailing organizational values? Who is responsible for that? 19. What actions do you take if you notice the gap between the values of the employees and the organization? 20. How would you accept the idea of changing the values by the new ones if the existing values are not acceptable to the majority of the members of the organization?
Role of values in staffing	21. What is the principle of selection of new staff? 22. Does the employees' system of values have any influence during staffing? How do you find out the applicants' values? 23. How do you socialize a new employee and introduce him her with the values?

Source: prepared by the authors.

As one can see from the categories and the questions attributed to them (*Table 1*), the complex formation of the system of values in the organization, that ensures the existence of not only formally declared, but also really existing values in the organization, must be consistently considered and reasoned.

3. Research results

3.1. Organization of the research

The date and time of conducting the interview was agreed with every executive individually. Due to busy work schedule of the executives, the interviewing of 8 executives

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lasted for 3 weeks. The executives who participated in the survey said that they did not have any knowledge of the phenomenon of value congruence prior to the quantitative research. In all researched organizations no specific attention is or had been given to the activities of implementation of values in the organization before the research. Thus, before starting the interview the concept of congruence of personal and organizational values and its components were introduced to each informant.

3.2. Sample of research

In order to find out how the organizations work with the values in practice, semi-structured interviews with the heads of the organizations have been conducted. The method is chosen in order to determine in as many details as possible how different organizations work with values, to identify possible causes leading to the gap between publicly declared values and their application in practical activities of the organizations. On the basis of the results of the research and best practices of other organizations, the recommendations for harmonization the values of the employees and the organization are formed. It should be emphasized that the interview with the executives of the organizations is a part of the diagnostic research of congruence of personal and organizational values, but this article presents only the results of the qualitative research. After completion of the quantitative research (during which employees in same organizations of different types were interviewed) and the analysis of the results obtained, the interviews with the executives of those organizations were organized. More detailed information about the organizations is presented in *Table 2*.

Table 2. Characteristics of organizations

Abbreviation	Date of establishment of the organization	Nature of activity	Culturality	Sector	Location	Number of employees	Notes
1O	2005	Production	Multicultural	Private	Lithuania	74	
2O	1976	Services	Non-multicultural	Public	Lithuania	60	
3O	1996	Production	Non-multicultural	Private	Lithuania	29	
4O	1991	Services	Non-multicultural	Public	Lithuania	85 / 582	Only administration staff, the number of whom is 85, participated in the research
5O		Services	Non-multicultural	Private	Lithuania	56	
6O	2009	Services	Non-multicultural	Private	Lithuania	31	
7O	2009	Production	Non-multicultural	Private	Lithuania	31	
8O	1899	Services	Multicultural	Private	Great Britain	32/153	The employees of administration of only one department participated in the research

As it is seen from the data presented in *Table 2*, two of the researched organizations provide public sector services, two of the production in the private sector, two private sector multicultural and two private sector organizations providing services. Seven of the researched organizations are based in Lithuania, one in Great Britain. It is also important to mention that

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largest part of the research (i.e. 1O, 2O, 3O, 5O, 6O, 7O) has been carried out in organizations with less than 100 employees.

3.3. Results of research

Only the summarized results of interviews with the executives are provided below, highlighting the essential actions and activities of the organizations, potentially influencing the congruence or the gap between the values of the organization and the employees.

The results of the interview with executives. The results of the interview presented below are grouped by categories described in the methodological part of the article in more detail.

Approach towards values, their importance to the organization. Interview results indicate that only 6O and 8O of all of the researched organizations have a stable, clear, and, according to the executive, known to all the members value system. The executives of the other organizations stress that they have certain provisions, which all the employees follow in their daily activities, thus, the executives could outline the values of the organization incoherently and/or with difficulty. The leaders' acknowledgement that the values are important to the organization, however, the lack of them, presuppose the assumption that currently the values would be more intended to the users of the organizations or to themselves than to the employees of the organizations. Only the executive of 6O reported clearly what formally declared values in their organization are and what they mean in the practical language.

Meantime, the executives of 1O and 4O expressed the greatest efforts and interest in the issues of the implementation of values. The head of 4O indicated that after the restructuring he aims to unify the values of different departments and presented the possible list of values common to all the departments and described each of the values in detail. The head of the organization 1O said that the organization does not have any specific organizational values, but they have a purpose to purify and implement them in their organization. According to the executive, 1O is a constantly expanding organization with staff of different cultures, so the formation of the stable system of values is essential for the organization. In addition, the executive has mentioned that he doesn't have a lot of knowledge on how to put it into practice.

In the absence of the unique value system in an organization, contemplation on the questions of whom the values are intended to and what benefits they provide to the organization are rather of rhetorical, speculative nature of how the leaders of the organization think, what influence the values should have on the activities of the organization. However, the executives of the organizations named such benefits of the system of values as the means of strengthening of the identity of the organization, unity of the members of the organization, reduction of ambiguity and image formation. The executives of 1O, 4O and 6O looked at the importance of the values of the organization deeper, both from the customer's and from the employee's perspective, and argued that it is important for the employees' welfare, purposefulness, clarity of activity of the organization and the sense of commonality. 2O said that the system of values prevailing in the organization can be considered a major part of the competence of the organization.

Value congruence. Formal values exist only in O6; in other organizations values are only implied. In the opinion of the head of the O6 organization, the declared and real values should be congruent, since the values are not simply conceived by him and "set to the organization from the top". In addition, employees' dissatisfaction or resistance to the existing organizational values is not felt in the organization. The comparison of other values declared by organizations with the actually prevailing values in the organization would have been

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pointless, since the executives indicated that they do not have formally declared values. However, leaders of all organizations willingly agreed to carry out the research of the value congruence in the organizations and find out the current strength of personal and organizational values.

Although it was not purposeful to ask the executives about the strength of value congruence, the executives spoke quite extensively on their acceptability to the employees of the organization. When asked for the executives' opinions on whether the values prevailing in the organization are acceptable for most employees of the organization, they presented different ideas. The executive of 2O said that the values are presupposed by the nature of the organization itself, as the educational institution outlines certain values from itself Also, according to the head of the 2O, the team of the organization remains quite stable in the course of time, there is no significant staff turnover, a part of the staff has been working from the foundation of the organization, and the new employees are hired only with the emergence of new jobs or, as is usually the case, after retirement of elderly employees. Conflicts are rare in the organization, it is unlikely that the employees would suffer from serious stress, the more so as all values of the organization are already settled, the same year by year, unchanging and perceived and understood by all the employees of the organization. The more so, as most of our fostered values are sent out from the education system, the government, which itself dictates these values of our institution, thus, there is no intention to introduce a lot of new values, therefore, the values are rather the standards or rules of conduct.

According to the executive of O7, values should be acceptable to most employees of the organization. O7 declares to be and is a socially responsible organization. The majority of the employees of the organization are with a disability. Thus, this alone brings the employees together, unites them, and gives a sense of community. The mere fact that they want to prove to the public they are useful and be recognized as equal to the other, provides them the motivation to work and pursue the goals. All the employees feel equal to each other, and the executives support them.

The head of the O3 stated that the organization is small, so only qualified professionals who know their work, have specific competencies and know how to carry out their functions best work there, so the team is diverse not only in respect of the employees' competence, but also in respect of different personal characteristics of the employees. Most of the employees deservedly understand their importance in the organization that leads to giving themselves and their work prominence, which is not a very positive phenomenon in the organization. However, the employees know that if one of them does not do his job on time and correctly, performance of all the organization suffers, so they feel very responsible and if the values do not match sometimes, there is always a way found to resolve this dilemma constructively. Perhaps the incongruity is resolved by the team principle of community, the ability to give ground and help each other there and then.

The executive of O5 thinks they are acceptable, but did not speak about it wider and said that the head of the personnel department who constantly supervises the employees should be interviewed about that.

The executive of the O1 argued that she has been working for the organization for a short time, so she still would not be able to tell all of the nuances, but the organization is multicultural, there is a variety of employees, but very positive organizational climate is felt, the organization is constantly expanding, hires new employees, however, the employees working for the organization from its establishment do not quit, that could indicate the acceptability of the values of the organization for the employees.

According to the executive, quite a lot of multicultural employees work for O8, but most of them work at the lower levels. The executive noticed and was disappointed about the most frequent staff turnover at these levels. This may indicate a strong organizational culture,

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the pressure of which is not withstood by the new employees of the organization. It is difficult to say how much of this is due to the employees themselves being the odd ones, how much because of mobbing, as, according to the executive, unfortunately, the organization does not record any documents showing the reasons for the termination of employment of the employees.

Formation and internalization of values. The executive of the 6O argued that the values have been formed based on their, at the beginning as a small community, principles of activities, that the employees of the organization comply with, and which can be exhibited not only internally, but also publicly. According to the executive, the values are known for all members of the organization, they are declared on their website. As the organization is not large, it was not difficult to communicate and formalize the values, in addition, the values were formed by the efforts of all the employees who worked at that time. The executive of 4O also shared the practice of formation of values, as at the time of the research this organization has already started the process of the formation of values. The executive told coherently and in the chronological sequence how organizational values are formed. All the employees of the organization participate in their formation so that they would be acceptable to the majority of the employees of the organization, the values are shaped during creative workshops, analysis, group meetings, in the form of certain tasks and sessions with the employees. A fundamental principle in the shaping of values was that they would not intersect between different departments, would be appropriate and acceptable to all the departments and reflect the general culture of all the organization. Employees hear about the values in this organization during meetings, celebrations of the organization, there are also employees, who assumed the role of ambassadors of values.

The executive of the O1 could not answer in set terms how the values of the organization have been formed, as the executive has been working for the organization not since its foundation. The leaders of the other organizations argued that the values formed naturally, and in the course of time and with the changing employees and the management of the organization, the principles of work changed as well, together with the organizational values. According to the head of the O8, the values of the organization were changing depending on market conditions, as the volatile competitive environment motivated to look for and choose new work principles. The executive of the O7 stated that when setting up the organization it was considered that it would be socially responsible, and therefore from the beginning they tried to implement the principles of social responsibility in every possible way, and when the organization expanded, they thought about the quality of its production, thus, with the changing competitive environment they had to think about the new quality standards, which committed to follow certain business values.

The executive of the O8 said that the values were formed purposefully, involving members of the organization. Together with the employees, the reasons why they want to stay in this organization were written, and these reasons combined in the 10 most important ones. Since then, every new employee had to comply with these 10 principles, which later became the basis for the assessment of employees. Instead of evaluating the employees' results, the organization focused on evaluation of values. Later these principles developed into 5 organizational values, so the employee unable to follow these values, has to leave the organization.

In most of the investigated organizations the values are formed naturally, therefore, no specific principles or methods have been applied, and the values are not formalized in the documents. The specific values of the organization are not purposefully communicated, and their natural formation was influenced by personal values, motives and aspirations of the majority of members of the organization. It should be mentioned that underlying values in

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many organizations were formed by the founders of the organization, and changed depending on market conditions and new changes both within and outside the organization.

Uniformity of values. According to the executive of 6O, all the values are the same for everyone, like all employees are equal to each other. A very friendly climate predominates in the organization, there is no divide between the employees of different positions, thus, all the rights and responsibilities are uniform for everyone in the organization. With the executives of other organizations it has been talked about the values, in their opinion, existing in the organization informally and about the compliance with them. Since there are no formal values in the organizations, no penalties are applied for failure to comply with them. Therefore, in this case, the executives were interviewed about the norms, which should be followed in the organization. In all researched organizations, according to the executives, the norms are the same for all employees. The executive of the 4O organization argues that maintaining the values in the organization will be based on the practice when non-compliance with the values of the organization and unresponsiveness to the warning is punished by the strictest penalty in the organization, i.e. firing the employee. In the opinion of the head of O2, there are no well-established measures of punishment of employees for non-compliance with the values of the organization, but as the community of the organization is very united, the employees who do not comply with the values or norms naturally experience pressure from other employees, and are reprimanded for strict offences. According to executives of O8 and O5, if we looked at the values in accordance with the norms of the organization or the standards of conduct and performance, employees are penalized financially, some employees are being forced to leave the organization. In other organizations, according to the executives, there are no specific measures on how to behave, if the employee fails to comply with the values of the organization, it depends on the situation.

Reflection of values in organizational practice. The executive of 6O stated that it did not take a long time to realize that everyone in the organization work in accordance with formed values. Previously, when they have not been shaped, the activity was based on the same principles of activity, only non-formalized. After formalization of values nothing has changed, only entrenched, and with expansion of the organization and adding new members to the team, with the formal values it has become much easier for the applicants to evaluate whether they will suit the organization or not. In the employees' daily activities organizational values are recognized in the practice of communication with customers, they are reflected in the organizational climate, in communication between the employees, in the behaviour when there the risk of an error or spoilage occurs, in distribution of responsibilities. The executive of 1O said that there are some problems with certain employees of the organization, usually they have been working in the organization for a long time, who struggle to accept or ignore a new member coming to the organization, therefore, the problem of how to deal with such employees arises. In addition, employees of different cultures work in the 1O. Therefore, according to the executive, such aspects as ethics and respect for other cultures become important to the organization to avoid the problems of discrimination. One of the examples is that even though the organization is located in Lithuania, and the vast majority of the employees of the organization are Lithuanians, but to avoid communication difficulties it is desirable to speak English in the organization, and it is mandatory to do it at all group meetings and tours of the organization, so that all the employees of the organization would understand the discussions.

The executive of the O2 stated that the values are reflected in the employees' behaviour, when sharing the best practices, advising colleagues, involving employees in the development of the strategic plan of the organization and decision making, working in the workgroups.

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The head of the O8 said that the values are reflected in the rituals, traditions, artefacts of the organization. The organization also constantly invests in the development of the employees, providing courses or trainings when there is the need. Also it should be noted that the applicant's values are an important factor in staffing, but specific methods to determine values are not applied.

Actions to maintain value congruence. Only in the 4O organization people responsible for the maintenance of values, called ambassadors of values, who have a certain badge that identifies them are assigned. These people are the main generators of ideas, decision makers in the organization, interested in the dissemination and maintenance of values. There are no people responsible for the maintenance of values in other organizations. According to the executives, the organizations do not carry out any studies of congruence of the declared and actually prevailing values. This kind of longitudinal studies is not popular. As such studies are not carried out, the growing gap between personal and organizational and declared and prevailing values is possible to evaluate only by feeling the change (in the sensual sense) rather than by actual facts or figures. In most organizations, organizational values are supported by celebrating together, where the aim is to make employees to know each other more closely, as much as possible, to reduce interpersonal tension. O2 employees have uniforms, the colour and design of which they created together, logo, which they use for the badges, certificates of appreciation, diplomas, so everyone is actively involved in support of values. As the executive of the O1 stated, during joint meetings they praise each other's accomplishments, thank for the initiative, certificates of appreciation are awarded. According to the executive of the O1, the following support measures are applied in the organization: observation, reflective conversations between the staff and the administration (they discuss achievements, personal professional goals, the need for in-service training, etc.).

Various groups and committees that encourage celebrating the organizational culture, supporting the values and finding new activities to uphold the culture of the organization are formed in the O8. One of the examples is summer trips, when teams are dispersed and the groups are formed from employees from different departments who work in one team, different kinds of relays, focus group discussions are organized, during which efforts are made to eliminate the barriers between people, to encourage communication while having a good time together.

The role of values during the selection of employees. The example of one of the researched organizations 6O shows that the values of the organization formed unconsciously as the values of the majority of employees are close to the majority of the members of the organization, and are maintained informally. Presumably, this is influenced by the size of the organization and the method of selection of employees. The head of the 6O organization pointed out that when looking for new administration employees firstly they are looked for among the existing employees to ensure the employees' career opportunities. And when there is a need for lower level staff or certain professionals, suitable candidates are invited to selection interviews in accordance with the recommendations of the employees. However, the values-based process of hiring does not exist in any of the organizations and they do not focus on such criteria of the applicants as values. In the absence of fundamental organizational values, underestimating their importance during the staffing, therefore, during the process of socialization of employees, the new employees are not familiarized with the values. Employees' values are important when selecting candidates, therefore, they are found out at the time of the interview covertly. The executive of the O2 mentioned that when hiring a new employee interviews, background research (one of the important criteria is the length of service) are usually carried out, the study of references and the results in educational institutions is used rarely.

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As the head of the O8 stated, the values of the organization are perfectly reflected by the example when they rejected an employee who met the requirements perfectly. It was decided to hire him, but he closed the conversation by saying that he would bring a lot of former clients with him, when he joins our organization. And the opinion has changed immediately, this applicant was rejected, as if this applicant decides to leave our organization, he will also take a part of clients with himself. In this situation, the executive has seen a significant moral issue.

3.4. Recommendations for the reduction and/or elimination of the gap between publicly declared values and their application in practical activities of organizations

In order to harmonize the values of the employees and the organization, it is necessary to take complex actions and make decisions common for the employees and the organization. The needs of the management of the organization should not be separated from the employees' ideas, opinions, and statements, thus, active participation of all members of the organization is important in the process of development of the values of the organization. Aiming at value congruence, it is recommended to start changes in the organization not from the elimination of consequences of incongruence, but from such fundamental things as "understanding", i.e., what the organization needs values for, what benefits they will provide to the organization and its employees. The plan of recommendatory nature on how to develop and ensure a strong value system in the organization aiming at the congruence of personal and organizational values is presented below.

Executives' approach towards the values and their importance to the organization. The management of the organization should first of all find the answers to the following questions: "does the organization need values?", if appropriate, "why should the organization have its own system of values?" and "what specific values should predominate in the organization?"

Identification and purification of values. Values should be acceptable to the majority of the existing members of the organization, thus, it is necessary to decide who will participate in the identification of values: only managers, all employees of the organization or only the interested employees on a voluntary basis. It would be appropriate to discuss the most acceptable for the organization ways in which the values will be purified: meetings, activities within an organization, guest sessions or other.

Research of value congruence. In order to find out both the managers' and the employees' opinion about the employees' values and currently prevailing values in the organization, it is necessary to carry out the research of congruence of personal and organizational values. In order to achieve reliable research results, it is important to decide who will carry out the research: the responsible employee who works in the organization or an independent external researcher. After the research, i.e., after identification of values and the degree of their congruence, the strengths and weaknesses of the existing values diagnosed (application of SWOT analysis). At this stage it is important to find out what exists in the organization today and what is missing to maintain certain values.

Internalization of values. Organizational values are worthless if employees don't actually live by them. Organizations must be able to concretely explain why the values are important and how every worker can help fulfill them – in simple, concise language. Articulation, recording (best both in oral and written forms) and confirmation of the purified values facilitate the assimilation/awareness of organizational values, which become the internal determinants of behaviour. The analysis of values may result in the code of conduct or code of ethics, which formalizes the position of the organization and its members on various issues and describes how an employee should behave in one or another case. Thus,

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each value is defined formally, explained what it means to the organization, and in what manner the values will be given sense in certain actions of the organization.

Values in activities of the organization. Organizational values should be the basis directing the employees' perception of the way the organization must operate. Values must be acceptable to all members of the organization. Often, there is a risk when double standards are applied: for example, the managers think that everyone except themselves must comply with the values. Any exclusivity, privileges divide the organization and promote the emergence of "we" and "them" castes. Therefore, in the course of time, the gap between these castes increases, it is getting more difficult to hear, and the more so to understand each other, so it is naive to expect a favourable employees' attitude towards the job, positive organizational climate and desired performance. Non-compliance with the declared values, one type of requirements for managers, and other requirements for the rest of employees, and perhaps even differentiation of the employees form the atmosphere of mistrust. Then, the values become the laughing-stock, and there is the best ground to develop intolerable actions in the organization like this.

Development of values. The plan of implementation of changes of the organization with the descriptions of implementation of certain steps, the terms of their implementation and the person in charge of the implementation is prepared. At this stage, the question is "whether the organization will have persons in charge, "inspectors" who will monitor the development, maintenance of values and monitor their further implementation in organizational activities?"

Maintenance of values. At this stage of reduction and/or elimination of the gap in the values from their application in practical activities of organizations, it is important to decide in what ways the organizational values will be maintained. Values must be not only publicly declared on the website or in the documents. The most important duty of each employee of the organization is actually follow and cherish them. The rituals, symbols of the organization are formed, heroes are involved, unique holidays are organized in order to strengthen the relationship of the community with the underlying history, traditions of the organization, to unite the team and involve the community in the activities of the organization.

Values and their implementation in practice of the organization. It is advisable to establish a performance measurement system which would include the organizational values as well. It is appropriate to think about how the employees who support/follow organizational values will be encouraged and awarded. In addition, during the transition period when values are communicated and engrained, but are unsettled, the employees who do not follow the values declared by the organization should not be fired or punished by executives, but they should be provided assistance by detailed explanation how to behave appropriately in one or another case. The implementation of values in practice must be regularly assessed during meetings, meetings with employees, or during assessment of employees.

Values in staffing. Values should be the qualitative aspects taken into account during the selection of staff. Therefore, only the applicants who declare the values that are consistent with the values of the organization should be employed. For example, if one of the organizational values is orientation to customers, then during the interview more questions related to customer service should be asked. When posting job advertisements with specific requirements for applicants, use the keywords that reflect organizational values, such as "cooperation" or "results orientation" and when describing the required qualifications of the applicant, add the desired competencies, which reflect the particular values of a person, for example, "entrepreneurship" or "flexibility".

Leaders of organizations must be able to put together the structure of the organization and processes with the system of organizational values as values may be generally understood as the strategic choices we make regarding what is required to achieve our goals. Living

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organization's values means making difficult choices among competing values and the being at peace with our decisions (Dolan, 2011).

Conclusions and discussions

Semi-structured interviews compared to the standardized surveys with the executives about values management practices in the organizations can more clearly reveal the reasons why the gap between declared and actual values of the organization arises.

To sum up the results of the interviews with the executives of organizations, we can say that all organizations see the formation of organizational values positively, but not all recognize their necessity and only a small part of organizations seek to engrain the target values in the organization integrally. All executives assured that they have heard about organizational values, others acknowledged that organizational values are posted to organization's web page or enacted in employees behavior, thus, with values congruence phenomenon executives have not been familiar. The research on value congruence have not been carried out in no one of the surveyed organizations. The executives of smaller (in respect of employees) organizations, compared to executives of larger organizations, stressed the employee welfare more: both personal values of employees, the employees' opinion on the aspects of values in the organization and the opportunities to ensure the congruence of personal and organizational values is important to them. The results of the research have also revealed that the reasons causing the gap between the values are desultory activities of the organization related to the integration of organizational structure and the processes in it with the desired organizational values not coordinated by the management. We can also distinguish such reasons for this gap as the lack of unity, unfocussed/desultory communication, insufficient involvement of staff, the lack of competence of the executives on the issues of implementation and importance of values. Selection of inappropriate employees significantly contributes to the gap of values in the practice of organizations existing in the market for a longer period. Individual needs of the employees are not given prominence as well, the attention is not focused on the improvement of systems of motivation to improve working conditions for employees. It should be added that the lack of proper activities for adaptation of new employees shows that the employees have to find out all by themselves through their mistakes what actions and behaviours are tolerated in the organization and what are not. In addition, leaders of the organizations often have the values of the organization only in their mind, while they are neither communicated, nor formalized in the way understandable to everyone. Therefore, it should be stressed that organizations seeking to build a stable system of values stand on a coherent sequence of actions and valid theoretical models.

After examination and determination of a possible causes of the gaps between declared and actual values in the organization, the sequence of stages, which have to be implemented to eliminate these gaps, are recommended. These stages are: 1) executives' approach towards the values and their importance to the organization; 2) identification and purification of values; 3) research of value congruence; 4) internalization of values; 5) values in activities of the organization; 6) development of values; 7) maintenance of values; 8) values and their implementation in practice of the organization; 9) values in staffing.

As the aim of this paper was to highlight what executives do and what they think, how they behave and how are trying to reach value congruence in practice, the different organization's comparison with each other by sector, size, employee diversity or location have not been analyzed.

The paper shows that further research could involve comparison of the results between employees' survey and executives' interviews in the organizations. Also based on the plan for strengthening value congruence in organization recommended in this paper, create and

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suggest values development and value congruence strengthening plan for each studied organization depending on its situation and needs of executives.

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