The competences model as the basis for shaping a positive image of a contemporary lobbyist

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Abstract

Lobbying is an instrument of influence in a number of decision-making processes. It has been underestimated as a research problem. The lack of research on the competences of a contemporary lobbyist is particularly significant in this regard. This study attempts to answer the following questions: What competences are characteristic of the professional profile of a lobbyist? What competences should the characteristics of the profile of a contemporary lobbyist be comprised of? The search for answers to the above questions requires placing the quest for opportunities to change the image of lobbying in the area of competences of entities that conduct lobbying activities. The aim of the article is to present a model of competences of a lobbyist which shapes the lobbyist's positive image. The article is of theoretical and empirical nature. The theoretical part presents the scope of lobbying activities and the significance of the professional competences of a lobbyist. The empirical part presents an analysis of the results of quantitative research carried out using the diagnostic survey technique, in which a questionnaire mostly composed of closed-ended questions was used. The research project was carried out between January 2018 and May 2019. The research results present a practical model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist, with a focus on positive image.

Keywords

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Introduction

Contemporary organisations operate under conditions that require them to be in constant motion in order to reduce the uncertainty caused by the dynamics of change in the environment, which for organisations is a source of both opportunities and threats.

In both situations, it requires activities that ensure not only the current existence of organisations, but also their development in the long term (Wach, 2020). The activities in question are referred to as lobbying.

Lobbying, which forms the theoretical and empirical basis for considerations as part of the discourse about competences, is treated as a specific form of a professional service which is institutionally positioned within the environment and the proposed organisation as a means of support for its regulatory aspirations in relation to the environment (Kubiak, 2013). The professionalism of the service is a feature of effective lobbying activity expected by organisations, as well as a condition for the provision thereof in favour of the interests of the organisation by professionally competent lobbyists. It is the lobbyists who put their own competence resources at the disposal of organisations interested in cooperation, as they may deem them useful in achieving the goals of the organisations. In contrast to the competences of human resources, the competences of lobbyists remain outside the regulatory influence of organisations. The value of these competences is identified under the influence of demand and supply, as well as from the perspective of the organisation as their potential "temporary user" (Rosenthal, 2001). Therefore, the specific nature of the competence-oriented approach in the description of the lobbying profession does not solely consist of highlighting competences and the significance thereof in the effective implementation of the tasks entrusted to lobbyists. Competences have already been recognised as an important and frequently occurring research problem within the sub-discipline of management and quality sciences, which is referred to as organisational human resource management. In this respect, the competences of lobbyists, as an object of analysis, can be anchored in this area of knowledge resources. However, lobbyists operate in a space constituting the environment of organisations, and their competences constitute a market product used by the organisations, which is of a specific nature and subject to assessment. Therefore, the formation and development of said competences rests with the lobbyists and depends on their individual involvement (Dzieńdziora, 2018). The study aims to present a model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist, which would be directed towards the creation of a positive professional image. The identified research objective led the authors to seek answers to the following research questions: What competences are characteristic of a professional profile of a lobbyist? What competences should the characteristics of the profile of a contemporary lobbyist be comprised of? In order to achieve the aim of the article, the notion and characteristics of professional competences were identified; the competences of lobbyists were analysed in the light of previous research; and then the authors conducted their own research.

1. Literature review

1.1. The notion and characteristics of professional competences

In management and quality sciences, there are numerous concepts which assume that the sources of employee effectiveness depend on a set of their personal qualities, such as intelligence, temperament, morality or exceptional talents, which determine not only the type of the employees' professional activity, but also their potential success or failure. The concepts pointing to one set of qualities or another are usually considered the most important. When looking at different sets of desirable qualities of employees, it is difficult to find clear, constant and unambiguous indications of qualities characteristic of a given profession. On that basis, it can be concluded that the relationship between personality traits and professional success is neither obvious nor as simple as it may seem (Sarwoko and Nurfarida, 2021). However, the adopted

direction of the search was not without influence on the formation of competence models. The notion of competences derives from the Latin word *competentia*, which means having the knowledge that enables one to make a judgement or express an authoritative opinion, or a range of issues about which a given individual can make a judgement, for he or she has the relevant knowledge and experience. A competent individual is therefore one who has the right preparation for certain actions, but also the right to undertake them (Furmanek, 1997). It should also communicate effectively on various levels as maintaining relations are integral parts of these competences (Poszytek, 2022).

What has often been indicated as the beginning of the interest in competences is the research conducted by McClelland (1973), which proved that qualities identified with competences are a much better predictor of professional success than personality traits or intelligence. Moreover, in his research the author shows that psychological tests or school grades do not make it possible to predict the extent to which a given individual is likely to achieve professional success. Boyatzis (1982) together with representatives of McBer were also pioneers of similar research. The researchers began their quest with an attempt to identify the competences that distinguish the best employees from average or poorer ones. They called them *differentiating competences* as opposed to *threshold competences*, which in their opinion are much less significant.

In the field of management sciences, a special interest in competences emerged in the 1980s, which was caused, among other factors, by: the increased complexity of the ways in which entities operate on the market, the need for professional reorientation, the growing multifunctionality, and the need for polyvalence of employees and the perception of "learning" as a key factor in organisational success (Czekaj, 2005). A competence is a certain latent trait that manifests itself in an individual's behaviour. It is currently believed that practical skills influence the effective performance of a certain activity in the optimal time, in accordance with the specific nature of a given situation. Upon further analysis, it turns out that it is not only skills that affect one's personal professional effectiveness. Knowledge is equally important – in the form of both the expertise that is closely related to a given profession, and general knowledge that allows for a better understanding of situational conditions (Hao et al., 2021). An important factor in competences is also attitude, which determines the extent to which skills and knowledge are used and developed; therefore, the latter can include aspects of knowledge as well as attitudes and levels of motivation. In secondary sources, the terms "competences" and "qualifications" are often used interchangeably. The issues of defining competences take into account a broad area of analysis of that notion by contemporary theoreticians and practitioners of management and related sciences. The scope of the notion of competences is of an interdisciplinary nature, as it is defined by researchers of various scientific disciplines. The notion is used mainly in the humanities and social sciences, from formulating a general meaning of the notion (praxology) to guidelines and classification of competence areas (law), to their analysis in the functional aspect (psychology), to the abilities identified with the course of various types of careers (sociology), or in pedagogical terms. The interdisciplinary nature of competences renders it difficult to define and understand them in a methodological and structured way (Kotter, 1982; Robotham and Jubb, 1999). The greatest differences in views regarding competences occur when authors undertake to determine their components. This difference of opinion is certainly determined by numerous aspects, not only the ones stemming from different fields of study. The analysis of the presented views entitles one to reflect on the constantly expanding scope of the meaning

of the notion. An important contribution to the definition of competences was made by Schultz (1971), who researched qualities that he called "competences", instead of studying personality traits.

According to Hoffman (1999), there are three main positions on the understanding of competences: as an observable performance; as a certain standard of a given individual's work; or as a qualitatively defined result – as an attribute of the individual. According to the author, they can be "output" variables that are pursued through performance, e.g. training. On the other hand, they can be seen as "input" variables when it makes sense to focus on the content of the training and the characteristics of the trainees. Königova et al., (2012) present a slightly different approach to competences, based on linking them to work performance, with the latter depending on the level of component competences (i.e. knowledge, abilities, skills, traits, motives, attitudes and values) that are measured through an analysis of results. In defining competences, the following phases of development can be distinguished: the first focuses on individual competences; the second concerns management competences in an organisation; while the third consists of identifying basic competences, which are the sum of key competences. The authors present a slightly different approach, assuming that competences are a determinant not only of effectiveness, but also of actions taken in new or difficult situations that often require innovation, creativity or entrepreneurship (Thierry et al., 1994).

The basic difference between the discussed streams of research is the treatment of the notion of competences in an absolute manner, independent of the organisation's objectives and the resulting tasks to be performed. This means that when defining the notion in terms of labour, one should take into account the requirements of the work, as well as the need to achieve both partial goals and those relating to the organisation

as a whole. Irrespective of the differences presented, most authors of both streams of research struggle with the necessity of defining the components of competences, i.e. with indicating what constitutes the potential that exists in a person, which is revealed in action and allows them to perform their work at an appropriate level.

In secondary sources, there are numerous definitions of professional competences, which are considered in an interdisciplinary manner. However, their common denominator is the so-called competences in behavioural categories. Whiddett and Hollyforde (2003) define them as the ability to successfully complete professional tasks or achieve the expected results as well as to act in accordance with specified behavioural patterns (2003). According to the authors, they must comply with predetermined standards, and each competence must be identified and described in advance by means of certain "behavioural patterns". The stage of focusing on employee behaviour is the starting point of the behavioural model of professional competences. According to the model, in order for an employee to exhibit the desired behaviour leading to the achievement of a designated outcome, they must know how to behave (KNOW), be able to take appropriate action (CAN), and want to behave in a certain way (WANT).

An interesting point of view on professional competences is presented by Drucker (2000) who stresses that in their professional activity, an employee should recognise their strengths and undertake the tasks in which their skills and predispositions can be best used. Drucker shares the view that "everyone can acquire additional skills, knowledge and qualifications, in order not to be suspected of lacking competences in the profession they perform". Abilities, talents and other innate factors are not a prerequisite for acquiring competences. However, they significantly influence the level at which one masters the competences. As Drucker writes, "mathe-

maticians are born. But almost everyone can learn trigonometry. And the same holds for foreign languages or for major disciplines".

To summarise what has been discussed so far, we should also note that competences need to be improved and developed. The development of competences is a complex process that depends on the occurrence of numerous factors, which, due to the fact that they occurred at the same time or within in a small timespace, have the greatest impact. Knowledge is only one of many components of competences, and their level depends to a large extent on the level of one's motivation, skills and abilities, as well as learning processes, and attitudes and types of behaviour adopted.

1.2. Competences of a lobbyist in the light of previous research

Analysing the competences of a lobbyist based on the literature review (e.g. Ehrlich, 1974; Carroll and Boivin, 1997; Grochowski and Ben-Gera, 2002; McGrath, 2006; Kasprowicz, 2009; Sławik, 2009; Kubiak, 2011; Lewicka-Strzałecka, 2012; Chmielecki, 2013; Matuszak, 2013; LaPira et al., 2014) and the content presented herein, it is possible to refer to three basic areas: knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as the valued and often emphasised values. According to Ehrlich (1974), the most important competence of a lobbyist is to exert influence on authorities by providing opinions, expert opinions or draft legislative acts. According to the author, a lobbyist should have the ability to exert "pressure" on MPs and political parties, as well as state bodies.

In the opinion of Carrol and Boivin (1997), a lobbyist should be characterised by the following skills: exerting influence, influencing the environment, applying business promotion, acting in a social environment, sharing knowledge, analysing, pursuing goals, communicating information, applying PR methods and techniques, establishing contacts and communicating with de-

cision-makers, influencing the legislative process, knowing one's way around business, being result-oriented, being client-oriented, and applying monitoring, while also having managerial competences. According to Grochowski and Ben-Gera (2002), a competent lobbyist should know the language specific to the environment and be familiar with the socio-political mechanisms and the required documentation, as well as being able to create it. The essential qualities of an effective lobbyist include caution, tact and diplomacy, which should be enriched with a certain sensitivity to social dynamics.

A broad catalogue of competences of an ideal lobbyist is presented by McGrath (2006), including: professional knowledge; the expertise related to the represented area; the ability to speak, listen and convey reliable and up-to-date information; observational skills and perceptiveness; monitoring of information gathering; the ability to build relations and reputation in the environment; transparency; reliability; the ability to comply with ethical norms and one's own values; cordiality; charisma; perseverance; understanding; and gender diversity. The ideal lobbyist should be eloquent, have a sense of humour, and be well informed and highly credible, as well as empathetic, flexible, good-mannered, able to easily adapt to change, have an open mind, and behave in a pleasant manner towards decision-makers.

The range of services provided by professional lobbyists includes: access to key legislators, monitoring of legislative changes, networking and communication with decision-makers, protection against unexpected legislative changes, drafting of bills and other legislative acts, organisation of campaigns, development of relevant documentation and anticipation of the effects of legislative activity, influence on the legislative process, establishment of coalitions, and assistance to politicians in achieving electoral success or conducting other political activities (Caroll, 1993).

Sławik (2009) believes that a competent lobbyist should have the ability to: effectively influence decision-makers, control the communication tools, take decisions at different levels, build relationships (contacts) and interpersonal contacts, communicate, and know their way around business. According to Guéguen (2014), the competences of a lobbyist include the skills of constant participation in social dialogue, relationship building and strategic approach through analytical thinking.

A lobbyist should exhibit a professional approach to their profession, be communicative, and follow ethical principles. Since most lobbyists do not operate solely locally, the command of foreign languages is recommended, and they are also required to have knowledge of international relations and international law. Information management and communication are key elements of a lobbyist's work; therefore, skills in applying communication methods and techniques are important (Sady, 2002).

Rozwadowska (2002) presents a slightly different view on the competences of a lobbyist, believing that a competent lobbyist should be aware of their social responsibility and respect ethical standards. It is also important that they should maximise the good and minimise the harm done, making no exceptions for themselves, allowing others to make their own choices, respecting human rights, ensuring a fair distribution of benefits and burdens, respecting social agreements concluded, and acting in accordance with their character and the company's reputation (Androniceanu et al., 2022a). An individual who performs lobbying activities must realise that it is not possible to be successful if they perform the activities in question solely on their own. It is crucial for a lobbyist to know how political institutions operate and what language is appropriate for the legislative apparatus. The effectiveness of a lobbyist is guaranteed by their caution, tact and diplomacy, which are strongly combined with a sensitivity to social dynamics. Professional lobbying should not be equated with blackmail, exchange of benefits, or corruption (Ofmański, 2011; Androniceanu et al., 2022b).

A lobbyist should strive to represent the interests of their client in a professional and competent manner. The prerequisite for this is one's perfect knowledge of legislative processes, knowing one's way around political issues, and expertise, all of which should constantly be improved through methodical education, and participation in training courses, postgraduate studies, seminars and conferences. Since all information provided to clients must be reliable and accurate, a lobbyist should act loyally, conscientiously and diligently in the interest of their client, devoting adequate time, attention and resources to doing so. A lobbyist should keep the client methodically and thoroughly informed of their progress, as well as providing them with options from which to choose. An important element is the prohibition on disclosing the client's confidential information without their consent. At the same time, a lobbyist should not use the client's internal information to work to the disadvantage of the client or for any other purpose not mentioned in the contract. The following values are indicated for the lobbying profession: honesty, reliability, integrity, trust, professionalism, civil responsibility, openness, transparency, loyalty, respect, and politeness. The standards contained in the lobbyist's code of ethics revolve around the following issues: legalism, transparency, concern for the reputation and dignity of the profession, avoidance of corruption, conflict of interest, relations with clients, relations with decision-makers and public institutions, duties towards society, and relations with entities that create image and public opinion (Lewicka-Strzałecka, 2012, Androniceanu and Georgescu, 2022).

According to LaPira et al., (2014), highly specialised lobbyists should have expertise

that would allow them to focus on broadly defined politics, which remains relatively beyond public control. Having contacts is a major success factor for a lobbyist. Therefore, the ability to build and leverage internal government relationships and effectively manage internal information gained through one's experience is important. An effective lobbyist should have a number of qualities that distinguish them from others. Such an individual must be well educated in the fields of politics, law, and economics. Professionalism is important in this profession. An individual wishing to represent the interests of a company, even though he or she is not a permanent employee, must convince their interlocutor or a group of people of their cause. This is only possible if the lobbyist is a specialist in the desired field. Therefore, someone who represents the interests of a pharmaceutical company should have a thorough knowledge of the industry in order to be able to communicate on a professional level. They must be able to easily establish contact with the political elite and speak a language appropriate for the legislative apparatus. They should easily analyse economic phenomena, the political mechanisms at work, and social processes. Their conclusions and recommendations must be adequately supported and duly justified (Kasprowicz, 2019).

There is no consensus in secondary sources on defining a unified catalogue of competences of a lobbyist. However, the analysis of the competences and qualities of an effective lobbyist allows us to notice numerous similarities between them. The same competences often appear in the catalogues presented by the authors, despite the fact that their research concerned the competences of lobbyists in different countries and was conducted at different times. The catalogues usually present the competences that are most relevant for the lobbying profession; therefore, the selection of the most important ones from among the presented catalogues is difficult, all the more so that the varied no-

menclature and information capacity of particular competences constitute an additional barrier.

2. Methodology

The main premise for undertaking the research problem is the lack of scientific studies on the lobbying profession as well as on the competences necessary to undertake such work. It can also be considered that there is a relatively modest theoretical, methodical and empirical output on lobbying in the field of management and quality sciences. To achieve the aim and implement the research questions, information from *desk research* and *field research* was used. The process of collecting information as a result of the author's own research was conducted in stages.

The first stage of research activities was *desk research*, consisting of the analysis of available solutions in the field of lobbying and the concept of professional competences. Sources of secondary information included both classic and recent literature on lobbying, the lobbying profession, competences, and models of competences.

Subsequently, an expert panel was conducted with an appointed team of experts, in order to select the most relevant competences of a lobbyist on the basis of a list of competences based on a review of national and international literature. The experts were also tasked with dividing the competences according to the components of the KSA model. The team consisted of 47 individuals, including: representatives of science (57.4%), professional lobbyists (25.5%), representatives of organisations that use the services of professional lobbyists (10.6%), and representatives of the media (6.4%). The research was conducted between May 2018 and June 2018. Surveys among lobbyists were conducted between November 2018 and April 2019. A total of 56 professional lobbyists took part in the research.

Based on a Google search, it was possible to identify the email contacts of 64 entities that use the services of professional lobbyists. The invitation to the research, together with an electronic link to the survey, was sent out to all entities whose email contacts could be established. On that basis, 64 electronic questionnaires were sent out. A total of 23 questionnaires were returned.

The next stage of the research was expert assessment – the assessment of competences of a modern lobbyist. The experts for the research were selected from among academics whose speciality is lobbying and the competences of professional lobbyists, as well as from among organisations that use lobbying services and media representatives who have contact with professional lobbyists. The aim of the research was to assess the suitability (relevance) of competences for the lobbying profession. The invitation to the research, together with an electronic link to the survey, was sent out to randomly selected experts, whose email contacts could be established. On that basis, 95 electronic questionnaires were sent out. A total of 47 questionnaires were returned. The research was conducted between January 2018 and May 2018.

Qualitative research was conducted among professional lobbyists registered in the Sejm (all 23 of whom were invited to take part in the research)[1].The individual in-depth interview method was used to collect the data. The interview scenario consisted of four parts. The first part was an introduction concerning the characteristics and aim of the research. The second part included questions about the professional profile of the lobbyist, and the third part included questions diagnosing the professional competences of the lobbyist. The fourth part of the scenario included questions on lobbying in business and diagnosing the image of lobbying. The research was conducted between January 2018 and June 2018. A total of 12 lobbyists participated in the research. The research concept was determined on the basis of a defined aim and research questions.

3. Research results

When building a practical model of the competences of a contemporary lobbyist, it was assumed that the competences to be included would be those for which there was no statistically significant difference in opinions for at least five variants. Thus, the practical model is to take into account those of the competences of which the level is perceived as most consistent among the individual groups of respondents. Table 1 presents a list of competences that meet this condition. Based on the data in the table, it can be observed that the respondents agree in defining the level of competences of a modern lobbyist in the case of ten competences. Those for which there is the greatest consensus of opinion include: professional knowledge, record-keeping skills, and knowledge and experience sharing.

[1] http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/lobbing_osoby_tab.xsp, (accessed: 13.06.2021)

Table 1. Competences included in the practical model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist

No.	Competences	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
	KNOWLEDGE										
1.	Professional knowledge	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	−
2.	Expertise	−	−	+	+	−	−	+	+	+	−
	SKILLS										
3.	Skills in applying PR methods and techniques	+	−	+	−	−	+	+	+	−	−
4.	Record-keeping skills	−	+	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	−
5.	Knowledge of diplomatic etiquette	+	+	−	−	+	−	−	+	+	−
6.	Knowing one's way around business	+	+	−	+	−	−	−	+	+	−
7.	Knowledge of the new media	+	−	−	+	−	−	+	+	+	−
	ATTITUDES AND VALUES										
8.	Analytical thinking	−	+	−	−	+	−	+	+	+	−
9.	Knowledge and experience sharing	+	−	+	−	−	+	−	+	−	−
10.	Client-oriented approach	+	−	+	−	−	+	−	+	+	−

Key:
"+" – there is a statistically significant difference in opinions on competences,
"−" – there is no statistically significant difference in opinions on competences.

Source: Own elaboration

Statistical analysis of the practical model of the competences of a contemporary lobbyist is presented in Figure 1. On the basis of the competences specified, a practical model of the competences of a contemporary lobbyist was created (based on the above), the graphical representation of which is as follows:

Figure 1. Practical model of the competences of a contemporary lobbyist
in the light of empirical research
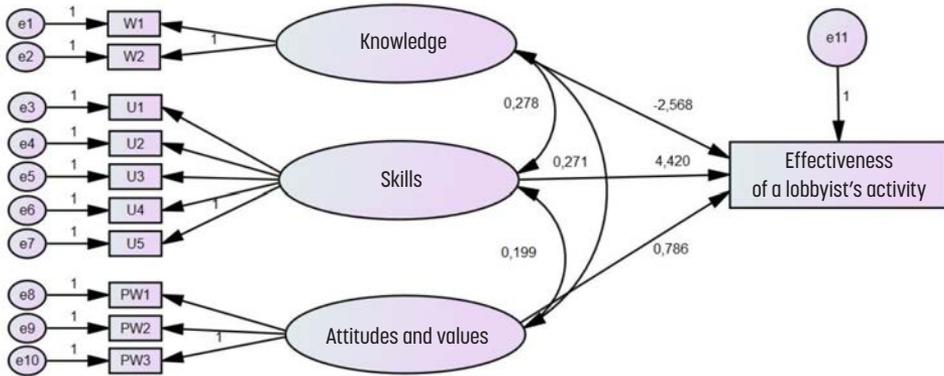
Source: Own elaboration

Input variables representing three latent factors on the basis of expert knowledge, which denote knowledge (W), skills (U), and attitudes and values (PW) respectively:

W1 – professional knowledge
W2 – expertise
U1 – applying PR methods and techniques
U2 – record keeping skills
U3 – knowledge of diplomatic etiquette
U4 – knowing one's way around business
U5 – knowledge of the new media
PW1 – analytical thinking
PW2– knowledge and experience sharing
PW3 – client-oriented approach

The figure represents a multiple regression model, which in mathematical form can be represented as follows:

$$Y_i = \hat{a}_1 X_{i1} + \hat{a}_2 X_{i2} + \hat{a}_3 X_{i3} + \varepsilon_i,$$

where:
$\hat{a}_{ij}, j = 1, \ldots, 3$ – denotes the estimates of structural parameters of the multiple regression model for this observation,
X_{ij} – denotes the explanatory variable for this observation,
ε_i – denotes the random component in the multiple regression model.

In the analysed model, the explanatory variables (measured on an ordinal scale taking integer values) represent the following factors, specified on the basis of expert knowledge:
X_1 – **knowledge,**
X_2 – **skills,**
X_3 – **attitudes and values.**

The explained variable represents the number of successfully completed cases (quantitative variable, positive values).

The multiple regression model is a special case of a broader class of models, which are referred to as structural equation models. The application of this statistical tool is conducted on the basis of the results of classic factor analysis. Latent, unobservable factors are generated based on a set of explanatory variables, confirming the multidimensionality of the analysed phenomenon. The factors are mutually independent, so they satisfy all the assumptions of the regression model. In the approach discussed, the factors are generated on the basis of statistical analysis; however, it is also possible to apply expert knowledge on the basis of which they are

created. The latter was done for the specification of the three factors affecting the number of successfully completed cases. They are the result of expert knowledge, but not of statistical analysis. In order to be able to use the relationships between the latent factors and the explained variable, as well as to interpret the results of the analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (which is the basis of structural equation models) should be applied. Taking into account the proposed factors, the estimated model parameters, together with estimation errors and significance levels, are presented in Table 2, while the mathematical notation of the model is provided below the table.

Table 2. Parameters of the practical model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist

	Parameter estimation	Standard error	p-value
$Y \leftarrow X_1$	-2.568	5.378	0.633
$Y \leftarrow X_2$	4.420	12.802	0.730
$Y \leftarrow X_3$	0.786	4.168	0.850

Source: Own elaboration

$$Y_i = -2,568X_{i1} + 4,420X_{i2} + 0,786X_{i3} + \varepsilon_i$$

The results of the analysis show that while the analysed factors indicate a multidirectional influence on the explained variable, they all turn out to be statistically insignificant. When interpreting the results, it should initially be pointed out that the verified hypothesis shows the described factors as statistically insignificant (i.e. equal to zero). Hence, an increase in the assessment of the "knowledge" factor by one unit of this variable results in a decrease in the number of successfully completed cases by 2.568 cases on average. An increase in the assessment of the "skills" factor by one unit of this variable causes an increase in the number of successfully completed cases by 4.420 cases on average. An increase in the assessment of the "attitudes and values" factor by one unit of this variable causes an increase in the number of successfully completed cases by 0.786 cases on average. It should be remembered that the interpretation of the parameters of statistical models is carried out using the *ceteris paribus* principle. The assessment of the quality of model fit was performed on the basis of selected fit measures: CMIN/df, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and RMSEA. Indicator values are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Indicator values for the practical model of competences
of a contemporary lobbyist

Indicator name	Indicator value
CMIN/df	1.187
GFI	0.926
AGFI	0.847
CFI	0.973
RMSEA	0.049

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4. Assessment of the practical model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	34	37.970	32	.216	1.187
Saturated model	66	.000	0		
Independence model	11	274.865	55	.000	4.998

RMR, GFI

Model	RMR	GFI	AGFI		PGFI
Default model	.087	.926	.847		.449
Saturated model	.000	1.000			
Independence model	.312	.533	.439		.444

Baseline Comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.862	.763	.975	.953	.973
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Parsimony-Adjusted Measures

Model	PRATIO	PNFI			PCFI
Default model	.582	.501			.566
Saturated model	.000	.000			.000
Independence model	1.000	.000			.000

NCP

Model	NCP	LO 90			HI 90
Default model	5.970	.000			25.598
Saturated model	.000	.000			.000
Independence model	219.865	171.840			275.421

FMIN

Model	FMIN	F0	LO 90		HI 90
Default model	.481	.076	.000		.324
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000		.000
Independence model	3.479	2.783	2.175		3.486

RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90		PCLOSE
Default model	.049	.000	.101		.483
Independence model	.225	.199	.252		.000

AIC

Model	AIC	BCC	BIC		CAIC
Default model	105.970	118.149	186.959		220.959
Saturated model	132.000	155.642	289.214		355.214
Independence model	296.865	300.805	323.067		334.067

ECVI

Model	ECVI	LO 90	HI 90		MECVI
Default model	1.341	1.266	1.590		1.496
Saturated model	1.671	1.671	1.671		1.970
Independence model	3.758	3.150	4.461		3.808

HOELTER

Model	HOELTER .05				HOELTER .01
Default model	97				112
Independence model	22				24

Source: Own elaboration

The CMIN/df measure is a quotient of the chi-square statistic and the number of *degrees of freedom* (df). It is classified as one of the relative measures of divergence and, in a sense, informs whether the model is significantly different from the data or not. In practice, the aim is to choose such a model that the values of this measure exceed the level of 2. In the analysed case, it can be seen that the value of 1.187 indicates a large discrepancy of the model in relation to the considered data, which is an undesirable result. The GFI (Goodness-of-Fit-Index) is a measure of the goodness of fit of the model. It takes values ranging from 0 to 1; the higher the values, the better the model fit. It is assumed that the model fit is satisfactory if the indicator value exceeds 0.9. In the analysed case, the result was above that level (0.926), which indicates a good model fit to the empirical data. The AGFI measure (Adjusted-Goodness-of-Fit-Index) is, similarly to GFI, a measure of the goodness of fit of the model and meets exactly the same criteria as to its definiteness,

acceptable values, and interpretation. The obtained result of 0.847, which is below the level of 0.9, indicates the insufficient goodness of fit of the model to the empirical data. The CFI (Comparative-Fit-Index) measure is a comparative measure for the analysed and saturated model (generated internally by the statistical tool, and assuming significant influence of all the input variables forming the factors), or for comparing multiple models. The measure takes values ranging from 0 to 1, with an acceptable threshold set at 0.95. When interpreting the obtained result of 0.973, it can be said that the model is well fitted in relation to the saturated model. The RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) is a measure of the error of approximation. As a measure of error, it should take values close to the 0 level. In practice, it is assumed that the value of the measure for the estimated model should not exceed the level of 0.08. In the analysed case, the result of 0.049 was obtained, which proves that the presented model is of good quality.

Table 5. Detailed results of estimation of the characteristics of the practical model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
U5	←	Skills	1.000			
U4	←	Skills	1.358	0.392	3.466	***
U3	←	Skills	1.164	0.421	2.767	0.006
U2	←	Skills	0.871	0.296	2.946	0.003
U1	←	Skills	0.990	0.325	3.047	0.002
PW3	←	Attitudes and values	1.000			
PW2	←	Attitudes and values	0.994	0.349	2.848	0.004
W1	←	Knowledge	1.289	0.194	6.630	***
W2	←	Knowledge	1.000			
PW1	←	Attitudes and values	1.295	0.398	3.252	0.001
Effectiveness of a lobbyist	←	Attitudes and values	0.786	4.168	0.189	0.850
Effectiveness of a lobbyist	←	Skills	4.420	12.802	0.345	0.730
Effectiveness of a lobbyist	←	Knowledge	-2.568	5.378	-0.478	0.633

Source: Own elaboration

Column P indicates significance. As can be seen, everywhere except where marked in green, there is a value below 0.05 in this column (*** means a value below 0.001), so all variables marked in blue significantly shape the knowledge, skills, and attitudes and values respectively.

When holistically interpreting the results for the presented model, discrepancies related to its quality were observed. Some results (CMIN/df, AGFI) indicate insufficient quality of the model; by contrast, according to the CFI, GFI and RMSEA measures, the model is correctly fitted. As for the assumptions of the model, discrepancies may result from premises such as: sample size (here: 80 observations), normality of the distribution of explanatory variables (for the ordinal scale, this assumption is rarely met, especially with a small number of categories and insufficient sample size; here: the normality assumption is not met), or independence of random components for variables generating the factors (a purely theoretical assumption, not met in practice). An additional causal factor for the quality of the model may be the significance of the estimated structural parameters. In this case, all the structural parameters turned out to be statistically insignificant at the level of 0.05, which means that only for the analysed sample of 80 respondents can these values be interpretable, whereas if we would like to relate them to the population of lobbyists, the knowledge, skills and attitudes and values alike all take the value of 0, i.e. they are statistically insignificant.

The collected survey results allowed us to determine the level of competences of a lobbyist (the level required to practice the profession) in the opinion of experts, lobbyists, and representatives of organisations. The results of the analyses indicate that organisations using the services of professional lobbyists require the lowest level of competences among the surveyed groups of respondents. These opinions are all the more surprising when compared to the data on the effectiveness of lobbyists, which in the vast majority

are almost zero or weak. Therefore, the opinions of all the surveyed groups of respondents were comprehensively collated, thus making it possible to develop a practical model of a contemporary lobbyist on the basis of those of the competences on which the respondents agree the most.

Conclusions

The model of competences of a contemporary lobbyist presented in the study is an important, but only the first, step in the process of professionalisation of lobbying. The process in question is multi-stage and multi-directional. It also requires time. In this process, the most difficult element is not the institutionalisation that conditions the implementation of the model into practice, but the formation of an active orientation of lobbyists to improvement and development of their competences, as well as a change of the negative perception of lobbying in the social environment.

The experience gained from the research field of lobbying competences indicates that there are still issues in this area that are little recognised, and to which special attention should be paid. An interesting, although extremely difficult, research problem is undisclosed lobbying. Pathologies accompanying lobbying, such as the operation of financially powerful domestic and foreign interest groups in this area, form another broad field of research.

On the basis of the research carried out, it can be concluded that it is necessary to establish an organisation whose task would be to assess the professional competences of lobbyists at the stage of registration of entities performing lobbying activities. A positive assessment of the level of professional competences of a lobbyist would be a prerequisite for entry in the register of entities exercising professional lobbying activities. Such actions would also allow for the selection of professional lobbyists who would shape the positive image of the

profession through the structure of the lobbying activity. It should be stressed, however, that the assessment of professional competences of lobbyists should be carried out periodically (every two years), which would oblige a given lobbyist to develop and improve their competences. A negative assessment of the professional competences of a lobbyist would form ground for removing the lobbyist from the register of entities exercising professional lobbying activities. In this way, professional lobbying would gain professional lobbyists with the highest level of competences. It would also be worth considering extending the organisation's tasks so that they include supervision of the reporting of lobbyists' activities, which in turn would also improve the effectiveness of lobbying activities in Poland.

Unlike professionalisation, the institutionalisation of lobbying remains ambiguous in its value judgement. Its positive side, however, as is the case with professionalisation, is defined by an aspiration to organise lobbying. Nevertheless, it is not possible to determine the scope of the latter. This is because institutionalisation enters more or less deeply into the area of freedom of lobbyists. The phenomenon is also accompanied by specific sanctions for non-compliance with the established rules of behaviour. It can thus limit their creativity and entrepreneurship, which the lobbyists themselves have claimed to be valuable attributes of the structure of their competences. The success of the institutionalisation process does not lie solely in the establishment of organisations that regulate the status and the way in which lobbyists acquire their professional competences. The essence of the practical usefulness of institutionalising lobbyists' competences lies then in the social and cultural assimilation which ensures that formal regulations become elements of commonly shared values and standards of behaviour. The process of achieving such a state as a result of institutionalisation of lobbyists' competences is certainly lengthy and not easy. However, it provides an opportunity to consolidate the institution of lobbying and its role in civil society.

In conclusion, the practical model of competences remains with the conviction that it will contribute to the search for answers to the new research problems signalled. It will also encourage a special appreciation of the competences of lobbyists, since it is in their professionalisation that the hope for the efficiency of relations between interest groups represented by lobbyists and institutions operating in the law-making sphere should be sought above all.

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