
Dysfunctional Behaviors at Work: The Case of Employees in Poland

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Abstract:

Purpose: The paper seeks to explore the scope and frequency of dysfunctional behaviors of Poles at work. Most broadly, they can be understood as intentional and conscious behaviors of employees violating the adopted rules, norms or values, offensive, unethical, destructive, bad, dangerous, pathological behavior. They may be related to the way the employee performs work and fulfills the obligations imposed on him, as well as directed towards other employees.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This problem has been presented on the basis of the results of primary quantitative research carried out in November 2020 with the use of the CAWI technique. The study covered 300 professionally active Poles between 20 and 65 years old, randomly selected from a panel of internet users. Scales were used to measure the scope and frequency of dysfunctional behaviors in the workplace, assuming that they have a unit of measurement, i.e., that the distances between adjacent scale items are equal.

Findings: The results of the research show that the majority of professionally active Poles, to a varying degree and extent, encounter dysfunctional behaviors in the workplace.

Practical Implications: This study could be potentially helpful for managers in identifying dysfunctional behaviours in their workplace in order to further prevent these behaviors.

Originality/Value: There were many arguments in favor of taking up such research issues. First of all, the role of work for the individual as an important area of life as well as the negative effects of dysfunctional behaviors considered both in the individual, organizational and social dimension. Professionally active people devote not only a significant part of their time budget to work, but also energy and feelings. Work is not only a way to raise funds to finance consumption, it also allows an individual to meet many important needs, related to development, belonging, achieving success or differentiation. Therefore, dysfunctional behavior of employees will have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the entire organization and their personal life. In social terms, the negative consequences of dysfunctional behaviors at work include costs of employees' medical treatment or paid social benefits, but also creating negative patterns of behavior.

Keywords: Human resources, behaviour, working conditions.

JEL Codes: 015, J81, M3.

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1. Introduction

Human behaviour can be broadly defined as responses to internal stimuli and those coming from the environment in which the individual functions. The variety of behaviours and the multiplicity of their determinants translates, among others, into the possibility of analyzing people's behaviour in different contexts, for example relating to the type of behaviour or specific areas of human life. The authors are interested in dysfunctional work behaviours of Poles, i.e. intentional and conscious behaviours of employees that violate the accepted norms, values, and rules, are unethical, offensive, and even destructive, dangerous or pathological. Generally, they can be divided into behaviours directed towards co-workers and negatively affecting relations between the employees and behaviours with a negative impact primarily on the manner of performing work and fulfilling the obligations imposed on the employee.

The main purpose of this publication is to assess the scope and frequency of dysfunctional work behaviours of Poles. This problem was also analyzed in relation to the position in the company's hierarchy, resulting from the type of professional activity carried out by employees. The considerations were based on the conducted primary research, preceded by literature studies.

There were many arguments in favour of taking up such a research subject. First of all – work is an important area of human life. Although it is an activity with a high degree of compulsion due to the necessity to finance consumption, it is an autotelic value and a source of value for an individual. For many years, work has been among the cardinal values indicated by Poles (CBOS, 2017; Czapiński and Panek, 2015). Professionally active people devote not only a significant part of their daily time (according to the research of the Central Statistical Office as much as 32%; 2014, p. 2), but also a lot of life energy and emotions.

Therefore, dysfunctional behaviour in the work environment will have a negative impact on employees, their sense of value, stress levels, motivation to work, interpersonal relationships, and will ultimately reduce job satisfaction. This in turn will also translate into the effectiveness of the entire organization and its image. Dysfunctional behaviour of employees in the work environment will also affect the personal life of an individual, taking into account the interdependence and complementarity of individual spheres of human life.

Each organization, establishing specific requirements towards employees, is also obliged to care for them and provide them with appropriate working conditions. Therefore, the high intensity of dysfunctional behaviours in the work environment and the lack of reaction to such behaviours indicate errors in the process of managing the organization and its organizational culture. On the other hand, taking into account the social context of the negative consequences of dysfunctional work

behaviours, we can mention, among others, costs of treating employees and paid social benefits, as well as creating socially negative patterns of behaviour.

2. Literature Review

The concept of dysfunctional behavior is a relatively recent one however, some research indicate that it is experienced by many organizations (MacKenzie *et al.*, 2011). It is stressed in the literature that the concept is contained within in the taxonomy of antisocial behavior (Giacalone and Greenberg, 1997) and refers to any behavior that can harm the wellbeing of an organization and is also harmful to members of the organization (Aamir *et al.*, 2008) as well as other company stakeholders (Savas, 2019). Ramzy *et al.* (2018) stress that that kind of behavior violates remarkably the accepted norms which results in destruction of the organizational performance. To conceptualize this phenomenon three approaches can be taken: individual, organizational, and institutional one.

At the individual level researchers refer to the dysfunctional behavior of the employees as a voluntary behavior that violated significant organizational norms. It is associated with intentional behavior that injures organization and/or its members (Griffin and Lopez, 2005). Peterson (2002) conceptualized it as an employee's bad conduct that adversely affects work quality and work relations and has a high cost both monetarily and socially for the organization. Kish-Gephart *et al.* (2010) and Levine (2010) stress that that kind of behavior occurs when any organizational member or group of members violates widely accepted societal moral norms that is against legitimate organizational interests. That kind of behavior results in impairing team functioning. The key examples of such behaviors are, deviant behavior, organizational wrongdoing or unethical behavior.

At organizational level that kind of behavior is associated with activities which have negative impact on company stakeholders, like, customers, competitors, government and even entire nations. These activities are undertaken by substantial number of organizational members, as well as the organization through consent or even encouraging leading selected policies or intentionally overlooking. These behaviors are a result of focusing on self-interest by an organization (Pinto *et al.* 2008). It is judged by social control agencies as illegal, unethical and irresponsible (Palmer, 2008). They include counterproductive organizational behavior, corrupt behavior or unethical corporate culture.

Finally, at institutional level dysfunctional behavior refers to ethics and corruption practices undertaken by the organizations and their interaction with other institutional actors such as government agencies, financial regulators and auditing firms (MacKenzie *et al.*, 2011). Contrary to the two other levels of dysfunctional behavior, discussed above, that kind of behavior is not connected solely with the organization itself but impacts both financially and societally. Haiss (2010) stresses that it refers to mutual imitations leading to a convergence in action space as well as

to institutional corruption and corrupt networks. These comprise institutional corruption, herding behavior and corrupt networks.

This paper focuses on dysfunctional behavior at the individual level. Individual actions influence the behavior of others in the organization and thus may influence embedding such behaviors at organizational and institutional level. It is thus vital to understand such behaviors at individual level to prevent these behaviors from arising at the organizational and institutional level. Generally, they can be divided into two main groups³: behaviours directed towards co-workers and negatively affecting relations between the employees and behaviours with a negative impact primarily on the manner of performing work and fulfilling the obligations imposed on the employee.

The first group includes, among others, aggression, quarrels, hostility, gossip, mobbing, bullying, violence, ignoring co-workers, blaming them for mistakes, jealousy of other people's professional successes, reporting on co-workers or unfair competition (Maher and Youssef, 2016; Salin, 2015, Branch *et al.*, 2013).

The second group includes, for example, lack of commitment to work, intentional improper performance of work, shortening the working time, destroying or appropriating the employer's property, dealing with private affairs during work or rude behaviour towards clients (Peterson, 2002).

That kind of behaviors can be the source of many negative outcomes, like tension, anxiety, fatigue, mental health, low self-esteem and stress as well as destroying overall employees' performance, reduction of employees' loyalty and organizational commitment and finally, overall organizational performance and reputation (Siverbo *et al.*, 2019; Nehme *et al.*, 2016; Baldacchimo *et al.*, 2016; Maher and Youssef, 2016; MacKenzie *et al.*, 2015)

3. Methodology

Primary research was carried out in November 2020, using an own questionnaire survey conducted using the CAWI method⁴. The actual research was preceded by a pilot test of the research website. After the survey was programmed, a link for its verification was made available. The analysis of the results of the pilot survey confirmed the proper preparation and scripting of the survey. The actual research covered 300 respondents randomly selected from a panel of internet users (direct

³The authors would like to emphasize that the proposed division is not strict and that a significant part of dysfunctional behaviour of employees may affect both the manner of performing work and relations between the employees.

⁴The contractor for the research was the Research and Development Centre of the University of Economics in Katowice.

draw), with the following filters admitting to the research: the respondent's age from 20 to 65 years and employment on the day of the survey.⁵

The questions included in the survey concerned, among others, the respondents' attitude towards work, the scope and frequency of dysfunctional behaviours that the respondents encountered at work and their attitudes towards specific behaviours.⁶ Five-point scales were used to measure the analysed phenomena, assuming that they have a measurement unit, i.e., that the distances between the adjacent scale positions are equal to each other.

The data collected in the research were processed using the Statistica software and statistical analysis methods, including the analysis of interdependencies and the analysis of cross-tabulation results to assess, among others, the frequency and scope of dysfunctional behaviour of employees at individual management levels.

4. Research Results and Discussion

Contemporary Poles define themselves very strongly through work. The CBOS research shows that as many as 90% of Poles believe that work gives meaning to life and is a condition for success, so it is worth being diligent (<http://www.bankier.pl>). Work is a determinant of the socio-professional position of an individual, but it also allows for satisfying many needs essential for a human being, such as recognition, respect, belonging, competition, success, distinction, and development.

Many nationwide studies show that in the current job market, non-wage benefits guaranteeing comfort at work, such as good relations with colleagues, communication at the workplace, fair treatment by the manager, compliance of the employer with the labour code or the atmosphere in the workplace are particularly important for employees (Bezpieczeństwo pracy..., 2019, Dobra atmosfera pracy..., 2019, Good working atmosphere..., 2018). Therefore, in the context of the discussed issues, it is particularly important how the employees perceive their own situation in

⁵The structure of the studied sample was as follows: gender: women – 53.3%; men – 46.7%; age: 20-25 years old – 18.0%; 26-35 years old – 25.3%; 36-45 years old – 29.0%; 46-55 years old – 19.7%; 56-65 years old – 8.0%; education: vocational – 7.0%; secondary – 30.0%, higher – 63.0%; type of professional activity: manual worker – 17.3%; lower-level intellectual worker – 37.0%; middle-level intellectual worker (managerial position) – 21.3%; director, manager, high-class specialist – 8.7%; self-employed – 15.7%; place of residence: city with over 500k inhabitants – 39.7%; city from 200k up to 500k inhabitants – 20.0%; city from 20k up to 200k inhabitants – 24.3%; city below 20k inhabitants – 7.0%; village – 9.0%; employment sector: public – 29.3%; private – 69.7%; non-profit – 1.0%.

⁶The respondents were asked to assess the scope and frequency of dysfunctional behaviours in their workplace, which, according to the authors, gives a more credible picture of the situation than if the respondents were asked to indicate what dysfunctional behaviours they performed in their current workplace or what behaviours were directed towards them by their co-workers.

the workplace, as well as how they assess the behaviour of colleagues, a sense of meaning and fair treatment, and an implementation of specific values.

However, the conducted primary research does not show a very optimistic picture of the situation in this area, as most of the respondents replied that in their current workplace they had encountered dysfunctional behaviours to a varying extent. At the same time, the dysfunctional behaviours towards co-workers and negatively affecting interpersonal relations in the workplace were indicated relatively more often than the dysfunctional behaviours related to work performance, directed towards the employer.

In the first group of behaviours, the respondents mentioned most often (Table 1), slander, intriguing and gossip (23.3% of responses that the said behaviours are very frequent or frequent in the workplace) and flattery to important people (21.0%).

Table 1. *The frequency of occurrence of specific dysfunctional behaviours directed towards other people in the respondents' workplace (in % of responses)*

No.	In my work, the following employee behaviors occur:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never
1.	Aggression (verbal and/or physical)	3.3	8.7	18.7	33.0	36.3
2.	Anger	5.0	12.3	29.4	36.3	17.0
3.	Hostility	6.3	6.7	20.0	34.7	32.3
4.	Arguments	3.3	11.0	29.4	40.0	16.3
5.	Slander, intriguing, and gossip	8.3	15.0	22.4	31.3	23.0
6.	Disseminating/giving false information	4.0	10.3	20.4	31.0	34.3
7.	Unfair/unhealthy competition	5.3	11.3	17.7	29.7	36.0
8.	No trust in co-workers	5.0	13.7	18.0	36.0	27.3
9.	Ignoring co-workers	4.7	10.7	17.0	30.0	37.6
10.	Mobbing, harassment, humiliation of employees	3.3	8.0	8.7	20.3	59.7
11.	Malicious jokes of employees, mockery of their private life or other minor maliciousness	4.0	8.3	16.1	25.3	46.3
12.	Refusing to help other employees	2.3	7.7	13.4	33.3	43.3
13.	Jealousy of the successes of co-workers	7.0	10.7	19.0	30.0	33.3
14.	Reporting on co-workers to managers	4.3	8.0	14.0	30.0	43.7
15.	Looking at someone's private messages at work without permission	0.3	2.7	7.6	9.7	79.7
16.	Flattering important people	6.3	14.7	21.0	28.3	29.7
17.	Abuse of power by managers, lack of concern for maintaining good relations between employees	6.3	9.3	19.1	22.0	43.3

Source: Own study based on the results of the survey.

The problem is also the lack of trust towards co-workers (18.7%) and anger (17.3%), which may, at least partially, result from the behaviours presented above. As many as 17.7% of the respondents answered that in the workplace, they very often or often

encounter jealousy of the successes of co-workers, and not much less (16.6%) indicated unfair/unhealthy competition at work. The abuse of power by managers and the lack of concern on their part for maintaining good relations between employees very often or often occurred in 15.6% of cases, and sometimes in as much as one in five organizations. 15.4% of the respondents saw a problem in very frequent or frequent ignoring of employees in their workplace.

Other behaviours listed in Table 1 were indicated as very frequent or frequent by 3% to 14% of the respondents, which obviously does not mean that such behaviours can be underestimated. It can be noted, that dysfunctional behaviours such as looking at private messages of co-workers without permission or refusing to help others occurred relatively less frequently in the workplace of the respondents. Taking into account the percentage of indications that a given behaviour has never taken place in the respondents' current work – it was the highest in relation to such behaviours as, looking at private messages of co-workers without their permission (79.7% of responses), mobbing, harassment, humiliation of employees (59.7%), malicious jokes and mocking the private life of employees (46.3%), reporting on co-workers to managers (43.7%) and refusing to help others (43.3%). In the remaining cases, the response rate that a given behaviour does not occur in the respondent's workplace was in the range of 16-36%, which confirms that dysfunctional behaviours in the workplace are a problem of most organizations on a different scale.

Another analyzed group of dysfunctional behaviours were behaviours related mainly to work performance and fulfilling the professional duties. The responses of the respondents demonstrate that the frequency of their occurrence is lower in relation to the above-mentioned behaviours from the first group. The most common in this group include (Table 2): pressure to increase individual results (23.7% of answers: very often and often), dealing with private matters at work (20%), lack of employee engagement in work (15%), taking undeserved credit (14.6%), and blaming others for mistakes or omissions at work (14.4%).

When referring to the pressure on results, blaming others for mistakes or taking credit for other people's achievements, it should be pointed out that the conditions and requirements for the work performed by an individual which exceed personal capabilities, constitute, in the opinion of the National Labor Inspectorate, a significant cause of mental discomfort of an employee and a source of strong stress, the result of which is, among others, decrease in motivation to work (<http://www.pip.gov.pl/pl/bhp/stres-w-pracy/6421,czego-jest-stres.html>). It can be noted, that only 27% of the respondents declared that their organization did not put pressure to increase individual results, and another 30% answered that such a situation occurred sporadically. In this context, it is not surprising that the stress related to professional activity has become one of the most important problems that employees complain about not only in Poland. According to the OECD research, more than a half of professionally active Poles struggles with it (*Zestresowany jak Polak w pracy*, 2018).

More and more organizations care about their image and appreciate its importance in the increasingly competitive modern market. Undoubtedly, the opinions expressed by employees about their workplace and co-workers have a significant impact on this image. The very frequent or frequent expression of opinions discrediting the company and its employees was indicated by as many as 13.7% of the respondents. Only 34.3% declared that there was no such problem in their current workplace.

Almost one in eight of the surveyed employees admitted that the dysfunctional behaviour consisting in adding overtime, shortening the working time, extending the break time or leaving the workplace early occurred very often or often in their companies. The same number of people indicated hiding information about the tasks performed from their colleagues, and on average one in eleven respondent admitted that the situation at their workplace was made worse by failing to report important problems to their managers. Such responses can be associated with the above-described (Table 1) lack of trust in co-workers and ignoring them, or with unhealthy competition between employees.

7.3% admitted that rude and unkind behaviour of employees towards customers was a significant problem in their organization. This may mean the need to train employees in the manner of customer service, as well as make changes in the motivating system, especially taking into account the above-mentioned problem of the lack of employee engagement in work, which was indicated to a varying degree by nearly 44% of the respondents (Table 2). The remaining dysfunctional behaviours concerning the manner of fulfilling professional duties were indicated (responses: very often or often) by approx. 3% (destruction or misappropriation of company property, refusal to perform tasks) to 6% of the respondents (deliberate improper work performance, pretending to work, behaviour contrary to instructions).

Table 2. *The frequency of occurrence of specific dysfunctional behaviours directed towards other people in the respondents' workplace (in% of responses)*

No.	In my work, the following employee behaviours occur:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never
1.	Taking undeserved credit	7.3	7.3	17.1	26.0	42.3
2.	Blaming others for mistakes or omissions at work	5.7	8.7	18.6	29.3	37.7
3.	Failure to report significant problems to managers, which makes the work situation worse	2.7	6.7	19.0	32.3	39.3
4.	Hiding information about work or tasks performed from co-workers	4.0	8.7	16.3	27.0	44.0
5.	Refusing to perform tasks when asked to do so	1.0	2.7	12.3	38.0	46.0
6.	Pressure to increase individual results	10.7	13.0	19.3	30.0	27.0
7.	Rude, unkind behaviour towards customers	2.0	5.3	15.4	32.3	45.0
8.	Deliberate incorrect/bad work performance, pretending to work, deliberate failure to comply with the	1.3	5.0	13.4	25.3	55.0

	instructions					
9.	Lack of employee engagement in work	3.3	11.7	28.7	33.0	23.3
10.	Handling private affairs during work	4.0	16.0	29.0	35.7	15.3
11.	Adding overtime, shortening the working time, taking longer breaks from work than allowed/defined by the regulations, leaving work early	5.0	7.7	16.0	33.0	38.3
12.	Destruction or misappropriation of the company property	1.0	2.3	5.7	18.0	73.0
13.	Expressing negative opinions about work and co-workers outside the company	3.7	10.0	18.7	33.3	34.3

Source: Own study based on the results of the survey.

Analysis of research results using cross tabulation and chi-square (χ^2) independence tests⁷ allowed the conclusion that one of the factors significant from the point of view of the scale and type of dysfunctional behaviours in the workplace is the position in the company's hierarchy. The following five groups were distinguished in the research:⁸ physical workers, lower-level intellectual workers, middle-level intellectual workers (in managerial positions), directors, managers and high-class specialists, as well as the self-employed or freelancers. Taking into account the percentage of responses: "very often" and "often" given by the total respondents and such responses from respondents at individual management levels, it can be noted that:

1. Intellectual workers, freelancers and self-employed workers, relatively more often than the respondents from other groups, indicated the presence of various types of dysfunctional behaviours of employees in their workplace. However, less than average indications for such behaviours can be noticed in the group of middle-level intellectual workers performing managerial functions.
2. At the lowest management level, i.e., in the group of manual workers, dysfunctional behaviours such as gossip or intriguing (26.9% of responses: very often and often), lack of engagement in work (23.1%), arguments (21.2%), hostility and refusal to help other employees (15.4% each) and destruction or misappropriation of the company property (5.8%) occurred more often than the average. The following were indicated relatively less frequently: pressure to increase individual results and flattering important people (11.5% of responses

⁷The chi-square (χ^2) independence tests were used to verify the null hypotheses about the independence of the frequency of occurrence of individual dysfunctional behaviours in the workplace from the respondents' characteristics, including age, organization sector, and the type of professional activity. Due to the limitations of the volume of the publication, it is not possible to present all research results, hence the focus was on the most important of them concerning dysfunctional behaviours at individual management levels.

⁸The structure of the sample according to the type of economic activity of the respondents is presented in footnote 3.

- each), jealousy of co-workers' successes (11.1%), unfair competition (9.6%) and hiding information about work from co-workers (3.9%).
3. Intellectual workers more often than others declared the presence of such behaviours in the workplace as, gossip, intriguing (29.7%), pressure on individual results (26.1%), dealing with private affairs at work (22.5%), jealousy of successes of co-workers (22.4%), expressing negative opinions about work and co-workers outside the company (19.8), blaming others for mistakes or omissions at work and disseminating false information, abuse of power by managers (18% each), hiding information about at work (17.1%), rude behaviour towards customers (9.9%), and refusal to complete a task (6.3%). Only in this group, none of the analysed behaviours received the smallest number of indications in terms of frequency of occurrence.
 4. At the middle managerial level, specific problems are: pressure to increase individual results (29.7%) and unhealthy competition (17.2%), and these were the only dysfunctional behaviours that obtained a higher number of indications (very often and often) than the average for all the respondents. At the same time, the lowest number of respondents in this group, in relation to the others, indicated: hostility (6.3%), arguments (6.5%), ignoring co-workers (9.4%) and refusal to perform tasks or destruction or appropriation of the employer's property (0.5% each).
 5. Among directors, managers and high-class specialists, the most frequently (above the average) indicated problems include: pressure to increase individual results (26.9%), arguments and anger (19.2% each), hostility, blaming others for making mistakes, malicious jokes about employees and mockery of their private life (15.4% each). Less frequently than in other groups, employees at this management level (according to declarations) deal with: refusal to provide assistance, mobbing behaviour or deliberate improper work performance (3.9% each), as well as aggression and providing false information (7.7% each). However, no one indicated frequent or very frequent behaviour such as: destruction or appropriation of private property, refusal to perform tasks, rude behaviour towards customers.
 6. In the last analysed group, i.e., among the self-employed or freelancers, more frequent than in other groups are: flattering important people (34%), abuse of power by managers, lack of concern for maintaining good relations between employees and dealing with private affairs during work (25.5% each), jealousy of co-workers' successes (25.0%), unfair competition (23.4%) and lack of employee engagement in work (21.3%). Malicious jokes about employees and their personal life (8.5%) and refusal to complete a task (2.1%) are less common.

Despite the negative impact of dysfunctional behaviours on both employees and the functioning of the entire organization, the issue of the consent of employees or employers to such behaviours remains an issue for discussion. The results of the primary research indicate that dysfunctional behaviours are not always assessed negatively, and a significant number of the respondents consider them justified or

even reasonable in certain situations. As many as 65% of the respondents agreed with the statement that nowadays people often behave unethically if it gives them specific benefits, while only 9.4% were of the opposite opinion. Not much less (59.7%) believe that if someone makes us angry, we have the right to tell them what we think about them. Only 14.5% of the respondents disagree with this attitude. 57.7% of the respondents admitted that each person is prone to crime, which may reveal itself in certain circumstances. Only 14.7% supported the opposite opinion.

Almost every second surveyed employee stated that there were situations in which lying was justified (23% did not agree with this). Moreover:

- one in four respondents agreed with the statement about the right to violence, if it is related to the protection of own rights or if provoked,
- on average, one in seven thinks that if we care about something, we should not take into account the feelings of other people,
- one in eight agrees that people can be manipulated if it brings benefits.

Such opinions and attitudes result mainly from individual personality traits and their situation in the workplace (including the scale of dysfunctional behaviours that an individual has to deal with), but also from the growing social pressure (as indicated by as many as 88.3% of the respondents), high (often dishonest) competition in the workplace, and a fast pace of life. This last aspect is, in turn, associated with the need to reconcile many roles and achieve the assumed professional and private goals resulting from the system of values of an individual and comparing one's own situation with that of other people (reference groups).

Interestingly, two-thirds of the surveyed employees declared that their behaviour is generally perceived by others as acceptable in today's society. Only 6% of the respondents admitted that this was not the case. As many as 41% answered that sometimes they behaved in a way which could be seen as inappropriate (the opposite answer was given by less, i.e., 31% of people). At the same time, two out of three respondents declared that their image, i.e., how they are perceived by others, is very important or important to them (only 12% of the surveyed employees do not attach great importance to this aspect). Less than a half replied that their attitude cannot be characterized as giving their own "self" and "self-interest" the greatest importance, the opposite answer was given by twice as many people.

Although the presented research results indicate a large scale and frequency of dysfunctional behaviours of employees, more than a half of the respondents (55.4%) expressed the opinion that "most people are generally good and kind". The positive attitude of the majority of the respondents to work is also an optimistic aspect – as many as 87% declared that they liked their work, including: one in eleven respondents replied that work was their passion, for which they were able to devote a lot; more than half of them liked their job but would not like to sacrifice everything for it; and one in four persons with a positive assessment of their work sees no

problem if they were to change it. Only 5% of the respondents expressed a negative attitude to work. Such results correspond to the considerations presented in the introduction on the role and importance of work in the lives of Poles.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The results of primary research carried out among professionally active Poles indicate that dysfunctional behaviour of employees occurs in most organizations, only their scale and scope differ. These are relatively more often behaviours directed at co-workers (especially slander, gossip, intriguing, flattering important people, lack of trust in co-workers, jealousy of their successes or unfair competition) than behaviours towards the employer (most notable in this group: pressure on results, lack of motivation to work and dealing with private affairs during work). Such behaviours result, of course, from the personality traits of the people who demonstrate them, but the attitudes of other employees (especially managers) towards these behaviours are equally important in this aspect.

The research shows that some employees consider dysfunctional behaviours to be justified or even reasonable in certain situations, e.g. if they derive certain benefits from it, if they are provoked or protect their rights. Over 40% also admitted that they had acted in a way that other people would consider inappropriate. The working conditions and the treatment of employees created by the employer are also important in this respect. The way of managing the organization, including human resources management, and the organizational culture of the company may favour the occurrence of undesirable behaviours from the point of view of achieving the goals of the organization.

The research results presented in this publication also prompted further research and discussions, which will allow to obtain answers to the following research questions: What behaviours of the organization are conducive to dysfunctional behaviours of employees? What actions should organizations take to prevent such behaviours? How should an organization react if its employees carry out such activities? Underestimating these problems affects both employees and the organization, and has a negative socio-economic impact.

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