Attitudes of Polish Entrepreneurs towards 65+ Knowledge Workers in the Context of Their Pro-Social Attitude and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract: In this article, we examine the issue of Polish entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards knowledge workers above the age of 65 in the context of pro-social and citizenship behavior. The article was written as part of the diversity management paradigm. Firstly, it presents the existing literature on the subject, and then, we present our analysis on the results of a longitudinal study conducted among 93 entrepreneurs, owners, and co-owners of small and medium enterprises, during 2014 and 2019. During this time, legal regulation took place twice, extending and then shortening the period of obligatory work enabling employees to acquire the right to retire. The study was carried out using a specially developed questionnaire, whose reliability met the requirements of methodological correctness and two other research tools. Positive, neutral and negative attitudes were identified among entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards knowledge workers aged 65+. The research results show a correlation between the attitudes of entrepreneurs in 2014 and 2019, stabilization of these attitudes (in relation positive, neutral and negative attitudes), and their particularly significant relationship with organization-oriented citizenship behavior.

Keywords: attitudes of entrepreneurs; 65+ knowledge workers; citizenship behavior

1. Introduction

This article has been prepared as part of the sustainable development paradigm. It focuses on diversity management in relation to the employment of employees with relatively long professional experience who are in late adulthood, i.e., above the age of 65.

The idea of sustainable development in theory and practice has been developing intensively for approximately thirty years [1–4]. The conducted research refers to the broadly conceived idea of sustainable development and its implementation in various spheres of human activity [1]. This includes the functioning of the organization in the natural environment and preservation of resources, [2,3] introducing specific broadly understood sustainable business practices, including their socio-organizational aspects [4], and the attitudes of good practices related to the social aspects of diversity management aimed at preventing discrimination in the labor market (due to age, gender, sexual orientation or disability level [5]).

This article falls within the paradigm of sustainable development relating to diversity management. The consequence of the conducted considerations is the need to further manage diversity also in
the working conditions of each person, regardless of their demographic characteristics, awakening employee motivation to engage in activities, i.e., implementing and appropriate behavioral patterns of people [6], and mutual working conditions. Fighting social exclusion and discrimination in the labor market is another level of consideration for problems to be solved and tasks arising from them. This phenomenon relates to such human characteristics as age, gender, sexual orientation, type of disability [5].

Although the situation on the labor market of employees in late adulthood as a matter of concern for broadly understood sustainable development policy has already been the subject of the authors’ consideration [7–10], there is relatively little research on the professional situation of a group of people older than 65, knowledge workers, employees in enterprises and attitudes towards this group of entrepreneurs who have a real impact on this situation, referring to Central and Eastern European countries Eastern Europe. In addition, there is a lack of research into the factors that co-occur and/or condition these attitudes. For this reason, it seems interesting to determine to what extent they are related to the pro-social attitude and citizenship behavior in the aspect of concern for an organization and employees.

It is true that it is very obvious that in the near future there will be a significant shift in the proportions between the number of people in the age before the new legal regulations, considered productive (up to 60 years for women to 65 years for men) and post-production. The period after 2020 will be characterized by rapid aging of the population. A significant increase will occur in the oldest age groups. The number of people aged 85 and more will increase by 2020 by 50% and reach half a million, and in 2030 to almost 800,000 (currently the number of people at this age is almost 320,000—in 2045 for the first time the number of people over 60 years of age will be greater than those under 30 years of age. There are data that the average age for the Polish population in 2050 will be 52, 4 years, while in 2005, it was 36.8 [11]. A similar situation is in Great Britain, Austria, and the United States [12]. In 2015, the population of 65+ people in the world was 617 million, which is 8.5% of the total population [13].

In Poland, as a country of Central Europe, in the last few years, two legal regulations have taken place regarding the retirement age for men and women. In the first case, such legal regulation took place in 2012 [14], and caused the retirement age of women from 60 years and men from 65 years to 67 years. The next regulation took place in November 2016 [15], and caused a return to the state before the first regulation.

Comparing the situation in Poland with other European countries, the retirement age in our country is lower than in most European countries (currently 60 years for women, 65 for men) which introduce legal regulations causing the retirement age to be extended and equality between genders. Western countries that are considered prosperous (e.g., France, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany. Norway, Spain) have a pension threshold of 67 for both men and women. Most of the remaining countries—65 years. (On the other hand, countries, such as Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Belarus and Albania, maintain gender disparities). The average retirement age in Europe for women is 63 years and nine months, and for men 64 years and six months.

As the cited data of society indicate, they face a new challenge. Taking into account the growing proportion of mature people in relation to young people (up to 35 years of age) on the labor market: How to create conditions for a sense of social security, opportunities for self-fulfillment and achieving their professional goals, such as to ‘discount’ the potential and social capital they accumulated during their work?

Awareness of aging populations requires action to be taken developing new forms of work organization, development and utilization of the potential inherent in “mature employees” while caring for a high quality of their lives.

Upcoming demographic changes entail the extension of human life (currently in Poland the average life expectancy for women is 79.5 men 77.9; GUS, 2014, data until 2018) and at the same time force taking actions aimed at the proper “use” the potential of a group of people reaching the age of late adulthood
(from around 65 years of age) both from the point of view of the organization and the employees themselves, professionally engaged during this period of their lives.

Introduced legal regulations inspired the authors of the article to deal with the problems of the professional situation of 65+ employees, knowledge workers at the age of their superiors, most often entrepreneurs, owners of small and medium-sized companies. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland constitute about 88% of all enterprises. Approximately 11 million employees have been recently employed in this sector [16].

Therefore, the authors of the article considered the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards employing knowledge workers aged 65+ in the context of their pro-social and organizational citizenship behavior. Knowledge workers perform knowledge-based work that can be distinguished from other forms of work, emphasizing “non-routine” problem solving that requires a combination of convergent and divergent thinking [17].

The research procedure used the results of research conducted as part of the National Center of Sciences Project “Competence management knowledge workers 65 and over. Good practices in area of employment”. These studies were carried out in 2014, and then the obtained data were compared with the results of studies carried out among the same research sample (entrepreneurs, company owners with higher education) in 2019. This article is a continuation of the research published by G. Bartkowiak [18,19].

2. Theoretical Considerations

2.1. Attitudes Towards 65+ Knowledge Workers

As the authors of numerous articles indicate, attitudes towards people in late adulthood are characterized by the attitude of ageism. Ageism means a widespread tendency towards stereotypical, superstitious and discriminatory perception and treatment of seniors, which is a matter of public health concern [13]. This phenomenon, in its consequences, leads to a shortening of the professional involvement of people in late adulthood [20], their feelings of stress resulting from social rejection and a sense of loneliness [21,22], and consequently, to marginalization [23,24]. Therefore, this situation results in the process of excluding people in late adulthood from active participation in social life [25–28]. From the point of view of an organization, ageism not only leads to discrimination and reduces the quality of life of people in late adulthood, but in the workplace, the organization loses intellectual capital that they accumulated throughout their lives [7–10,29]. Most of the studies conducted on mature employees indicate the existence of stereotypes in thinking about mature people, their perception and assessment of their achievements. These stereotypes can take the form of lexical associations and a tendency to create their own “subgroups” within mature people.

Numerous studies have observed [30,31] that the term ‘older adults’ does not sufficiently characterize mature people. Assessment stereotypes referring to this group, however, tend to be very diverse in content, and further age diversification is not the only criterion that determines the assessment of the capabilities of this group of people [32–34]. Fiske with colleagues [35], conducting research on the “nature of stereotypes” towards mature people, found differences in the use of two grades of assessment—competence and “warmth” in interpersonal relations—depending on whether they concerned people in the late period adulthood (in the study to highlight an employee aged 65+, a synonym will be used senior or mature person, mature employee, in late adulthood), remaining within the assessment group, or those outside the group. People in the group were rated closer to extreme dimensions, obtaining higher scores in them. These studies confirm the classic, diversifying and popular in social psychology perception of people as ‘we’ (rated more positively) and ‘they’ (usually characterized by negative assessment). For heterogeneous, double criteria used in adults and younger people are also indicated by Erber [36]. This concerned assessment errors made in the memorization process, and the nature of the formulated assessments took the form of the so-called stable errors, more often attributed to mature people or “inattentive errors”, which according to the assessors are more
often made by younger people. The phenomenon of the unreliability of the assessment towards adults compared to the young also occurred during the assessment of language skills [37,38].

Capowski [39] drew attention to another type of unreliability of estimates, typical for thinking in terms of stereotypes. According to this author, there is no evidence that these stereotypes are also transferred to the context of professional life. Compared to younger people, mature employees are treated not only as less fit in terms of physical and health, but also as less productive, not very flexible, presenting resistance to the implementation of new solutions and ideas, achieving fewer results in learning as a result of training. According to this researcher, there is no evidence in real life that would indicate a relationship between age and lower productivity of mature people and their higher level of absence from work. Other studies emphasize the perception of a higher level of honesty in adults compared to younger ones [40].

There are also studies in the literature generally positively relating to the cognitive functioning of people in late adulthood, indicating the possibility of replacing the deteriorating cognitive capabilities of mature people with high social competence, endearing behavior or their wisdom [41,42].

In most studies (even among representatives of exact and technical sciences), attitude, as a concept occurring mainly in the field of social psychology, means an assessment of the object of attitude in cognitive, behavioral [43–45]. Attitudes are characterized by direction, e.g., hostility or willingness to cooperate and intensity—they can be strong or weak. They can be positive, neutral and negative [46]. Although attitudes in the opinions of social psychologists show some persistence and at the same time, are shaped by other variable experience and context factors [47,48].

Kadefors and Hance conducted interesting research on attitudes towards mature employees [49]. These authors examined 147 employers from the private sector, and demonstrated a diverse approach to competencies and motivation, and to learn new things in over 50 employees. However, these attitudes seem to depend on the age and gender of the employees affected. At the same time, it was found that younger employers presented more negative attitudes towards the possibility of learning from older employees.

The results obtained in the article cited above also confirms the conclusions of other authors [50] who conducting research among Dutch managers during 2010–2013, regarding the attitudes and conditioning towards older employees. Although research has shown lasting stability of attitudes, their slight variation was observed among others depending on the age of managers, their education, gender, seniority and experience in relations with older employees.

The results of studies referring to similar problems, conducted among Danish employers, regarding the existence of relations between employers’ attitudes regarding practices applied in relation to personnel management towards employees with long professional experience may be somewhat controversial [51]. As a result, it turned out that stereotypical attitudes towards older employees do not translate into the application of specific discriminatory practices towards this group of employees. The authors express the view that one of the reasons may be the specificity of Denmark as a country known for its non-hierarchical, egalitarian nature of society. In addition, with respect to studies with some discrepancy in the research results obtained by the authors of the article, the lack of translation of stereotypical thinking about older people does not necessarily mean concern for creating working conditions for them to ensure that their intellectual capital is used and to motivate them.

A feature of the modern approach to management is building a strategy based on obtaining intellectual capital, the potential of individual employees, their competence, motivation and ability to learn, as well as individual creativity. Practitioners are aware of the difficulty of finding the right people with high competence, broad knowledge, and experience of the attitudes of the management towards competent—and experienced employees who are 65+ play a special role both in terms of organization and the quality of life of mature employees themselves [18,19,52,53].

The fight against social exclusion and discrimination in the labor market is another level of taking into account the problems to be solved and the tasks arising from them. This phenomenon concerns such human traits as age, gender, sexual orientation, type of disability [5].
The results of research conducted by Bentley and colleagues [54], which concerned employees from New Zealand aged 55 and more, showed the great importance of their perception of organizational support as a factor determining their attitude to work. It turned out that some Human Resource Management (HRM) organizational practices were accompanied by greater involvement in the work of this group of employees and weakened the aspiration to leave the job. The obtained results justify the legitimacy of further research on the application of good practices by older entrepreneurs and managers.

This result was confirmed by research conducted by Harada and colleagues [55] in Japan, which also pointed to the need to introduce organizational solutions aimed at providing organizational support for older employees to maintain their activity in the labor market.

In another article, authors from the United Kingdom [56] suggest a gap in system solutions on the labor market in the face of ongoing demographic changes. Admittedly, when conducting qualitative research, the authors pointed to an individual approach to the possibilities of older employees in specific workplaces in the surveyed companies, while emphasizing the lack of specific or systemic organizational solutions for this group of employees.

According to the opinion of social psychologists [57] indicating that the intensity of attitudes determines the level of their stability, the study assumed that attitudes as personality disposition could be characterized by varied stability. For this reason, in the research procedure described below, they will be the subject of research carried out in two time units, and attitudes will apply to knowledge workers.

The research subject described in the literature makes it impossible to determine the relationship between attitudes towards knowledge workers aged 65+ and pro-social behavior, and in particular civic organizational behavior directed at employees or/and organization, hence these factors will become the subject of analyzes undertaken in the empirical part of the article.

2.2. The Specificity of Knowledge Workers Functioning

A feature of the modern approach to management, and in particular knowledge management, is building a strategy based on obtaining intellectual capital, the potential of individual employees, their competence, motivation and learning ability, as well as individual creativity. Practitioners are aware of the difficulty of finding the right people with high competence, broad knowledge and experience. It is about knowledge workers with high qualifications, particularly valuable skills, specific professional preparation, and knowledge of the industry and business contacts.

Research manuscripts reporting large datasets that are deposited in a publicly available database should specify where the data have been deposited and provide the relevant accession numbers. If the accession numbers have not yet been obtained at the time of submission, please state that they will be provided during review. They must be provided prior to publication.

Interventional studies involving animals or humans, and other studies require ethical approval must list the authority that provided approval and the corresponding ethical approval code.

According to many authors [58,59], ownership by the organization of knowledge workers is of particular importance for the organization and provides them with broadly understood development opportunities. In justifying their position, these authors list the following arguments:

• The ability to compete depends on the quality of the company intellectual capital organization, whose owners and peculiar carriers are knowledge workers;
• The success of the organization depends on the competence of employees;
• Knowledge workers create key competencies for the company;
• Acquiring knowledge workers is costly for the company;
• Enterprises have a great demand for knowledge workers, professionals with experience, creative minded, with high internal motivation.

These criteria are perfectly fulfilled by 65+ knowledge workers, therefore maintaining them seems to be a key task for the organization. Therefore, the managers of the organization should be aware
of this and create convenient motivational systems for them, e.g., in the form of flexible forms of employment, flexible working hours, creating favorable working conditions in order not to lose their intellectual capital. From the point of view of this group of employees, these activities should lead to the fullest satisfaction of their needs and values.

There is no consensus in the literature on how to define knowledge workers. The first to use this term was Peter Drucker [60]. According to Drucker, a knowledge worker has the following features:

- Has valuable knowledge for the organization and is often the only person; is a person who is able to use this knowledge for the organization; their knowledge is hidden and unconscious;
- Sometimes the employee is unaware of its importance and importance. Other employees in the organization have limited access to it and are unable (for various reasons, e.g., financial resources, time resources; knowledge workers more often (than other employees) use their intellect, although this is not the rule. The same author emphasized in numerous of his studies that knowledge workers create values for the future of the enterprise.

Fifty years later, Alvin Toffler [61] refined the understanding of knowledge workers, perceiving them as representatives of science, technology, engineers who have mastered the secrets of modern technology, managing this sophisticated knowledge in employee teams [62]. Davenport [63] emphasizes that knowledge workers have specialized professional preparation, are experts in their field, deal with the creation, distribution and implementation of the ideas they create. Creative thinking is the goal of their lives. Another author (Speyer, 2008) draws attention to the fact that it is difficult to define the concept of the knowledge worker. According to this author, this concept is slightly differentiating and not precisely separating this category of employees from others.

Research conducted a few years ago showed that the productivity of knowledge workers is largely determined by relations with immediate superiors and the way they are treated by immediate superiors and working conditions [62,64,65].

Reboul made a summary of the understanding of the term knowledge worker [66]. It led to the formulation of the following, though sometimes surprising in its validity, statements that characterize this type of employees:

- The basic tool of knowledge workers’ work is their “intellect”. Their loss is also a loss of the intellectual capital of the organization;
- Knowledge workers use knowledge in their work, by creating it, sharing knowledge and using it in both explicit and tacit knowledge;
- Maintaining the professional position of knowledge workers requires them to continually improve through learning;
- Knowledge workers create new value for the organization through their actions and accumulating knowledge;
- Knowledge workers change their jobs by following their own path. Their characteristic feature is the constant desire to change the nature of their work;
- The productivity and quality of their work is difficult to measure;
- Knowledge workers organize their workday themselves. Maintaining their professional position requires creative thinking, possessing competencies that allow them to solve problems. For this reason, they do not accept management’s imposing on them ways of performing certain tasks.

In this sense, 65+ knowledge workers have significant capital potential intellectual and social, the restoration of which is time-consuming and very expensive.

2.3. The Essence of Pro-Social Behavior

The individual’s pro-social behavior is a specific form of orientation processes and activities that is oriented to the needs of other people [67]. These behaviors require adopting the perspective of perceiving and thinking of others [68], and assessing them from their point of view. Thinking from
the point of view of another person means a broadly understood diagnosis of their situation, causative mechanisms, causality to predict “with their eyes” the consequences of important events for them, in order to find the right solution (from both our and their perspective). In this stage, it is important to be able to adopt the perspective of not only the actor, but also the observer [69]. It requires predicting their future consequences and developing a more or less precise plan or postulates, directing further action because of their interests. The analysis of the emotional perspective is associated with sensitivity to other people’s emotional states, the ability to identify with them, to experience their emotional states and respond to the situation adequately. It requires a person undertaking pro-social activities a certain level of emotional intelligence [70], and appropriate motivation to recognize emotional states of another person. In addition, a person undertaking pro-social activities should know the techniques of social existence and objective, i.e., real possibilities of helping another person or a group of people. Thus, in the case of pro-social behavior, it becomes necessary to focus on other people, their needs, values, emotions, as well as a conviction about their own effectiveness [71]. Giving help to another person in each case requires recognition of their subjectivity and their acceptance as a respectable individual who has found themselves in the situation of a person in need of help at a given moment.

Such a positive orientation towards the needs of employees should characterize the management in the organization, managers of various levels by the fact that they exert influence on other employees and are responsible for creating pro-social attitudes in the organization, by shaping the conditions in which these attitudes can be educated. In this way, they build the organizational culture of the organization, although its final result will depend on the level of internalization of norms postulating actions for the benefit of others, as well as attitudes towards another person treated as an entity of autonomic value [72].

Authors addressing the issue of recent pro-social behavior [73] conducted a multidimensional analysis of the relationship between the tendency to undertake favorable behaviors of all employee groups regardless of age in the academic environment with a sense of job satisfaction. As a result, a significant relationship was found between behaviors serving to achieve the goals of this environment and job satisfaction. Similarly, significant inverse relationship was found between organizational citizenship behavior and unethical pro-social behavior [74].

3. Citizenship Behavior in the Organization

3.1. Dynamics of Concept Formation

Premises of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) could be found in the first half of the last century. For example, Barnard [75] after Harvey et al. [76] pointed out that organizations “need” people who are able to cooperate, are dedicated to the organization and show a high level of loyalty to it. At the same time, researchers conducting the experiment in Hawthorne: Roethlisberger and Dickson [77] pointed out the difference between the organization recognized as a formalized control system (principles and rules determining the behavior of pacifiers) and the organization functioning as a non-formal system (referring to the feelings of employees, their value system, relations between employees and the team).

This view was developed in 1964 by Katz [78], pointing out that organizations should employ people who are creative and spontaneously undertake tasks that go beyond the tasks assigned to them. However, it was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s, researchers began to systematize and study the relationships between job satisfaction and productivity, a willingness to cooperate in employee teams in which good atmosphere prevails [79]. In 1983, the first article containing a report from empirical research appeared indicating a relationship between the level of employee satisfaction with work and their involvement in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) activity, including concern for maintaining the organization’s resources, teaching and helping other employees while performing their work [80]. OCB defines an authority that is considered a precursor of citizenship organizational behavior as “individual behaviors that are voluntary, not recognized directly and unambiguously by
the formal reward system, and which jointly support the effective functioning of the organization [81] (see Table 1). He defined the organizational citizenship behavior as Podsakoff and his team in a similar way, recognizing them like behaviors that do not appear in the formal and available job description, but facilitate the organization’s tasks [82].

Table 1. Types of behavior, conditions and trends presented in the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) area (source—own study).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Type of Behavior within the OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith et al.</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Altruism (helping others) following procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organ</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Altruism (helping others), diligence (being punctual and responsible).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams and Anderson</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Organizational behavior directed at the person—OCB-P; organizational behavior directed at the organization—OCB-O.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Dyne et al.</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Loyalty to the organization, organizational compliance (organizational compliance, acceptance and subordination to existing procedures and customs, social involvement, promoting the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorman Blakely</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Helping others, taking individual initiatives, keeping employees’ commitments, punctuality; promoting organization outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farth et al.</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Perseverance (good nature, dealing with inconveniences) courtesy, positive interpersonal relations, concern for the organization’s resources, identification with the organization (civic virtue) willingness to help others (altruism).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podsakoff et al.</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Helping others, giving them support, sports behavior, interpersonal facilitation, involvement in work in the organization (civic virtue), expressing a positive opinion about the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman and Borman</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Helping colleagues, supporting the organization and caring for its good functioning, compliance with procedures and applicable rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewicka</td>
<td>2004, 2005</td>
<td>Activity resulting from a conscious and intentional analysis of the situation, which, apart from activities aimed at helping individuals, takes into account the group interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grzelak</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Actions taken for people in need or supporting grassroots initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skarżyńska</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Personality variable and voluntary activities and national attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radkiewicz, Skarżyńska</td>
<td>2006, 2007</td>
<td>Social activity focused on the interest of the group/society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zalewska, Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>The development perspective of increased activity is combined with the distinction of diverse civic activities in a passive, semiactive and active form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chwalibóg</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Social facilitation, supportive behavior, supporting others, OCB-1 behavior, motivated by altruism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dekas et al.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Helping others, promoting organization, civic virtue, manifesting in commitment, social activity perceived as the ability to cooperate with people, promoting healthy behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Type of Behavior within the OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Klamut</td>
<td>2013, 2015</td>
<td>It includes four types of activity: Social activism (individual assistance to others, volunteering), supporting those in need, offering their own work and time; social participation—cooperation with others (assistance groups, associations, NGOs); individual political activity (activities that increase the level of conscious understanding of reality socio-political political participation (impact on law and procedures of the state’s functioning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey et al.</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Social trends that trigger civic behavior in the 21st century: Lower labor supply, globalization, migration and emigration, knowledge-based work of freelancers, the need to manage employee diversity, diversity of values at work, technology development, and gaps in employee competence, employer’s brand.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Glińska-Neweś [83] draws attention to the multidimensional nature of organizational citizenship behavior, whose diversity results from both sources and manifestations.

This view is developed by other authors [84], because the employee may undertake such behavior both because of their internal motivation to support the development of both the organization itself and its members, and because of the desire to help individual persons employed in a specific organization, which can only manifest itself in presenting the organization outside or in specific acts of activity.

Since the first publication of Organ until 2014, about 2100 articles have been published on organizational citizenship behavior [85] understood as a personality variable manifested in a specific action. In these studies, the authors sometimes make a distinction between organizational citizenship behaviors of a contextual nature that support the organization in the aspect of broadly understood activities in the social sense (in relation to the social environment) and psychological when they refer to individual units and activities, and initiatives aimed at organization improvement in technical aspect resulting from the organization’s mission. However, the authority was inclined to understand citizenship behavior as contextual behavior, i.e., aimed at improving the functioning of the organization, and in particular the tasks it performs also in the social and psychological aspect, which do not result from role played by employees and are not strengthened by the reward system [79]. In a later study [86], the author somewhat narrowed the concept he proposed by defining it as the behavior of individual discretionary entities, not subject to formal rewards from organizations that promote efficiency, tend to improve the functioning of the organization. Behavior classification criteria for citizenship behavior were later relaxed by other researchers [87] who made modifications that citizenship organizational behavior means employee behavior that is less related to the formal reward system and constitutes the employee’s individual contribution to creating and promoting a positive and social climate [88].

Another author thoroughly analyzing citizenship organizational behavior E. Chwalibóg focused on interpersonal relations, cooperation with others and interpersonal facilitation [89]. Within citizenship behavior, as did William and Anderson [90], the author identified the following motives and types of activity:

- Altruism as help directed at another employee in dealing with a specific professional problem, e.g., support in the implementation of a difficult task, help in completing overdue tasks, etc.;
- OCB-1 as behavior that brings immediate help to a specific person, e.g., as assistance in duties after a prolonged absence, which is also beneficial to the entire organization;
- Assistance directed to co-workers as a voluntary form of assistance, thanks to which support is provided in achieving goals and tasks (e.g., appropriate distribution of resources, support for people most burdened with work, etc.);
- Interpersonal facilitation, which consists of other collaborator-oriented behaviors;
OCB-Behaviors directed at organizations that contribute to improving the image of the organization, promote efficiency. These behaviors help the organization achieve its goals more easily.

By constructing the research tool described in the following part of the work, the author identified in the organizational behavior of citizenship behavior in categories of assistance behaviors directed at colleagues (OCB-P) and in categories of behavior directed at organizations (OCB-O).

3.2. OCB Focused on Providing Help and Related to the Functioning of the Organization

Relatively early research on OCB boiled down to help-related behaviors, referring to altruism, and then to diligence, and thus, maximum compliance with the required rules, proper use of working time [91]. At the same time, it was observed that the employee is more involved in OCB if he feels “kind of care” on the part of the employer. Then he is able to engage in voluntary activities for the organization, contributing to its success—according to the assumptions of the theory of social exchange [92,93]. This theory was relatively often used in the literature on the subject to explain employees’ involvement in organizational citizenship behavior [94]. If an employer offers their employees a job consistent with their interests, adheres to the psychological contract, ethical behavior in the organization, the frequency of organizational citizenship behavior increases [95]. A continuation of these considerations can be found in numerous studies presenting the results of research relating to the existence of positive relations of citizenship behavior regarding attitudes towards work, job satisfaction, commitment to work, organizational joining [96,97]. Other studies have shown that organizational culture characterized by fair treatment of employees is an excellent predictor of citizenship behavior [98]. Similarly, an authentic, transformative, ethical and supportive style of management is a moderator of civic behavior [99–102].

3.3. Citizenship Behavior and Pro-Social Behavior

Pro-social values belong to the relatively most frequently mentioned ‘primary’ motives of citizenship organizational behavior. These behaviors have been shown by a number of analyzes [85,103]. Relatively early studies have shown that the pro-social activities of individual individuals have positive and negative consequences for themselves. The research showed that there is a correlation between undertaking OCB behavior and having specific personality traits [104], a pro-social personality [105], conscientiousness [106], collectivism [107]. There was also a correlation between civic behavior and the positive mood of the individual [69,108]. The results of other studies indicate the interdependence of pro-social values that, when interacting with other personality traits, trigger citizenship organizational behavior [109,110].

Thus, Chwalibóg [89] emphasizes that assistance behavior as the first category of citizenship behavior, constituting a personality variable which, along with temperament, coexists with broadly defined pro-social behavior.

Lewicka presents a different view [111]. This authoress emphasizes the existence of a relationship between citizenship behavior and proactive behavior, which is the result of an intentional analysis of the situation as opposed to pro-social behavior, which is most often of a reactive nature, i.e., not directly initiated by the individual, but responding to the needs signaled by other people.

The authors of the study clearly define the relation of pro-social behavior to organizational citizenship behavior, treating the latter as a type or special case of pro-social behavior.

To sum up, regardless of the recently presented position, there is much relatively evidence in the literature of the subject indicating the direction of the relationship between dependence and subordination of organizational pro-social behavior and pro-social behavior, which is a more general category.

4. Research Issues and Methodology

The analysis of the presented literature on the subject allows the authors of the article to construct the following model between the dependent variable, which are entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards
knowledge workers older than 65, recognized as personality disposition and independent variables: Citizenship behavior, and in particular in relation to the organization and the employee and pro-social behavior. The authors assume that from the attitude of entrepreneurs towards a specific object which is knowledge workers aged 65+ are conditioned by their pro-social attitude and citizenship behavior (mediation variable, mediator) related to employees and/or organizations. Similar to these attitudes, these variables are theoretical constructs whose indicators are the values obtained in the research tools used in the research.

Taking into account the fact that in November 2016 a new legal regulation took place regarding the possibility of the retirement of women aged 60, men 65 [15], compared to the period from 2013, in which this obligation covered both women and men from 67 years [14] of age, in the second stage of the research (2019), as well as continuing to consider and previously conducted research, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the attitudes of entrepreneurs, and what is their relation to the employment of 65+ knowledge workers in 2014 and 2019, in the context of applicable legal regulations?
2. To what extent do certain attitudes towards employing knowledge workers who are older than 65 depend on the pro-social attitude of entrepreneurs?
3. To what extent do certain attitudes towards employing 65+ knowledge workers depend on citizenship behavior, and in particular in the aspect of citizenship organizational behavior and/or citizenship assistance (bringing person help) behavior?
4. Is the gender of entrepreneurs a factor determining attitudes towards 65+ knowledge employees, citizenship behavior (including organizational and assistance) and pro-social behavior?
5. Is there a difference in the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards 65+ knowledge workers, their citizenship behavior (including organizational and assistance) and pro-social behavior in the service sector (including construction companies) and other business sectors?
6. Hypothesis 1. The attitudes of entrepreneurs towards knowledge workers are varied, in most cases (positive and persistent), both periods studied.
7. Hypothesis 2. More positive attitudes towards employing 65+ knowledge workers are found in entrepreneurs with a higher level of pro-social attitude.
8. Hypothesis 3. More positive attitudes of entrepreneurs towards knowledge workers are accompanied by a higher level of organizational citizenship behavior, and in particular, behavior related to the organization than assistance behavior.
9. Hypothesis 4. The attitudes of entrepreneurs towards 65+ knowledge workers and citizenship and pro-social behavior differ depending on their gender.
10. Hypothesis 5. There is a difference between entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, citizenship behavior and pro-social attitude of entrepreneurs from the sector of service companies (including construction companies) compared to companies from the other sectors.

4.1. Description of the Research Sample

Ninety-three entrepreneurs, owners and co-owners of 64 companies with 51 to 94 employees participated in the studies analyzed in the article. These companies are service enterprises (22, including 11 in the construction industry), commercial (13), commercial and service (17), industrial (17) and industrial and commercial (5). They were carried out on the same research sample, during 2014 and 2019. Participants of the first stage of the research were part of the research sample, comprising a group of 296 entrepreneurs and representatives of the management staff of Polish small and medium-sized enterprises. The selection for research carried out in 2014 was intentional. Entrepreneurs who voluntarily declared their participation in the survey participated. In the second stage of the study (2019), the selection of people for the study included all available entrepreneurs who did not change their workplace in the last five years—this information was included in the publication of G. Bartkowiak [18,19].
As a result of the research carried out in the first stage, it was found that there is a relationship between the positive attitudes of entrepreneurs and management representatives towards the employment of 65+ knowledge workers, and their perception of the advantages (relative to the risks) resulting from employing this group of employees and their use of good practices in the area of their work (the reader will find more information in the publication G. Bartkowiak [18]).

Taking into account the availability of respondents, 93 entrepreneurs and management representatives participated in further proceedings.

As mentioned, in the second stage implemented in 2019, the selection of people for research covered only all available entrepreneurs, as in the previous stage, having a university degree who did not change their workplace in the last five years.

4.2. Description of the Research Tool

The implementation of the study required the development of a specially tailored questionnaire, examining both attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, as well as the benefits and risks of employing this group of people, as well as good practices in employing 65+ knowledge workers among surveyed managers and entrepreneurs. This questionnaire was composed of four parts A, B and C D. This questionnaire was built partly based on the adaptation of the Polish version of the questionnaire to the study of attitudes towards mature (older) Kogans in the Polish version of P-LS [112], and the questionnaire for students’ perception of working with people older [113], as well as the suggestions of entrepreneurs and management representatives—persons participating in pilot studies (58 people). The reliability of the research tool for individual scales measured by Cronbach’s alpha is not less than 0.71.

Part A contained five statements regarding attitudes towards 65+ employees using a five-point Likert scale: I agree, I partially agree, I have no opinion, I do not agree, I completely disagree. Each assertion was assigned from 1–5 points. The highest value of the scale of benefits and threats was 25 points—the lowest 5 points. Part B, developed on the basis of literature analysis [114,115], contained questions related to the perception of the benefits and risks of employing knowledge workers, a total of 10 statements were made, (five relating to benefits and five to threats). Part C of the questionnaire contains suggestions for good practices in the area of employment, referring to the literature on the subject [116,117], and suggestions of persons participating in pilot studies. It includes selected good practices in the area of employing 65+ knowledge workers. This part also included five statements. Part D contained bibliographic data of the subjects. In the construction of the questionnaire, the results of pilot studies were used, submitting to the subjects an expanded list of statements that the subjects then considered reasonable. The decision to qualify the claim for the questionnaire was made when more than 50% of the study participants agreed. Thus, the questionnaire in its entirety contained 20 statements.

The study also used the Polish adaptation of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Checklist (CB-C) questionnaire, whose author was Paul E Spector [118], and the adaptation was made by Elżbieta M. Chwalibóg [119].

Chwalibóg [119] by examining 121 people, obtained the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the entire questionnaire 0.95 (42 items); for sub-scales OCB-O 0.95 for sub-scales OCB-P 0.95. In addition to translating the research tool, the process of its adaptation also included the assessment of competent judges.

The Citizenship Behavior Scale is made up of a total of 42 items, of which 15 OCB-O items deal directly with organization-oriented behaviors that benefit the organization itself, and 14 items directly related to colleagues that help them with work-related issues.

Another research tool used in this study was the Social Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ-20) by Marcin Moroń [120]. In the construction of the tool, the author used tools to study pro-social behavior described in world literature. This tool—Self Reported Altruism (SRA) was developed early by the authors: Rushton, Chrishjohn and Fekken [120,121]. In this questionnaire, the respondent reported
how often he undertook specific pro-social activities. Then the questionnaire was translated into Polish and then confronted with other tools for studying pro-social tendencies. Subsequently, 70 claims were prepared using the method of competent judges. The content ratio was CVR=0.50. Finally, the Pro-Social Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ-20) was developed, consisting of 20 statements, including three subscales: Charity and Charity (8 items), Active Pro-Social Activities (six items), Pro-Social Support Activities (six items). The reliability of the questionnaire was determined on the basis of an analysis of the statements of four research samples: women (71), men (86), volunteers (71), and people not involved in volunteering (116). As a result, the lowest Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the Pro-social Activities subscale was alpha = 0.59; for the other subscales, this value exceeds the value of alpha = 0.76 [120]. The respondents had to assign each statement a specific number of points from 0 (never) to 4 (very often) in accordance with the assumptions of the Likert scale.

5. Findings

5.1. Attitudes of Entrepreneurs Towards 65+ Knowledge Workers

Comparing the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards 65+ knowledge workers in the two periods studied, only a slight increase in the number of positive attitudes (the difference does not meet the criterion of statistical significance) can be observed in 2019 compared to surveys five years ago. This relationship was tested using the Student’s t-test (for two dependent samples) according to the formula used is t = 1.397 and is not statistically significant. The conducted research (Figure 1) showed that both in 2014 and 2019 there is a relationship between the number of points obtained by the respondents in the questionnaire determining “goodness of attitudes” (the value of the attitude scale for positive attitudes was 1925 points, for neutral attitudes 218 points, for negative attitudes 511 pts.).

![Figure 1. Attitudes of entrepreneurs towards the employment of 65+ knowledge workers in 2014 and 2019 (source—own study).](image)

Therefore, the interpretation of the data indicates the stability of the attitudes of entrepreneurs participating in the study towards 65+ knowledge workers despite the modification of legislative regulation, which may result from the fact that shaping attitudes is a process which, according to social psychology [47,48] is based on experience accumulated over many years in relationships with this group of people.

The presented stability in terms of positive attitudes is optimistic in the context of forecasting the future professional situation of 65+ knowledge workers and may indicate a relatively high level of
awareness regarding the possibility of using the intellectual capital of experienced employees. It can also be expected that from the point of view of 65+ employees, an attitude is a premise for the security of their longer employment, despite exceeding the age being the criterion for retirement.

Therefore, the results confirm the first hypothesis that the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards knowledge workers are varied, and in most cases (positive and persistent) both periods studied.

5.2. Attitudes Entrepreneurs Towards 65+ Employees Knowledge, Citizenship Behavior, and Pro-Social Behavior

The obtained data showed the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the persistent (despite changing legal regulations) attitudes of entrepreneurs towards employing 65+ knowledge workers and organization-oriented citizenship behavior, then on employees employed in the organization, then between attitudes and pro-social behavior, and then citizenship behavior (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlations between variables attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, citizenship behavior, and pro-social behavior (source—own study).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable X and Y Variable</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>The Determined Correlation Coefficients Are Significant with $p &lt; 0.05000$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Constant: Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB-O $^1$</td>
<td>21.99151</td>
<td>0.934518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB-P $^2$</td>
<td>23.67901</td>
<td>0.696806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Pro-social behavior</td>
<td>19.93809</td>
<td>0.501766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB</td>
<td>94.79501</td>
<td>1.040357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ OCB-O—organizational citizenship behavior. $^2$ OCB-P—organizational support behavior, targeted at specific people.

As indicated by the cited data resulting from the application of regression analysis (Table 3) between employers’ attitudes towards employing 65+ knowledge workers (which were the average of the attitude indicator surveyed in 2014 and 2019) as an explained (dependent) variable, citizenship behavior directed at organizations in about 65% shows the adjustment of the regression function to the relationship of both variables (including this explanatory variable, independent, which are the mentioned citizenship behaviors). Citizenship behavior directed at the employee, as another explained variable (independent) explains the matching of about 34% of variable relations. Other variable pro-social and citizenship behaviors taken as a whole show a match in approximately 18% and 17%.

Table 3. Relationships of variables determining the fit of the explanatory and explanatory variables—regression analysis (source—own study).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable X and Y Variable</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>The Determined Correlation Coefficients Are Significant with $p &lt; 0.05000$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB-O $^1$</td>
<td>37.9677</td>
<td>6.65689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB-P $^2$</td>
<td>35.5914</td>
<td>6.84016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Pro-social behavior</td>
<td>28.5161</td>
<td>6.93230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes OCB</td>
<td>112.5806</td>
<td>14.09234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ OCB-O—organizational citizenship behavior. $^2$ OCB-P—organizational support behavior, targeted at specific people.
Therefore, it can be said that the second and third hypotheses have been confirmed: More positive attitudes towards employing 65+ knowledge workers are found in entrepreneurs with a higher level of pro-social attitude workers and are accompanied by a higher level of organizational citizenship behavior, and in particular, behavior related to the organization than assistance behavior.

The last of the obtained data—pro-social behavior—as factors determining the motivation for citizenship behavior cause a bit of controversy. In the face of the adopted model, dominated by organizational citizenship behavior.

It can be expected that the result obtained is based on the attitude of entrepreneurs on the implementation of functions resulting from their position, i.e., that they consider the degree of achievements and current functioning of the organization regarding the the objectives planned in a relatively short period.

This means that the basis of the positive attitudes of the largest number of entrepreneurs towards the employment of 65+ knowledge workers lies the organization’s concern, i.e., the possibility of full use of their intellectual capital, estimation of possible losses caused by loss of benefits for the company [18].

The issue of care for the functioning of knowledge workers, taking into account their well-being in the organization, a sense of satisfaction with their work, and other factors that may secondarily increase their productivity [122] seems to play a secondary role.

The obtained data confirm the introduced diversification within the categories constituting citizenship behavior. However, one should consider whether diversification, which was included in the research procedure in the form of a research tool used, does not introduce unnecessary, somewhat artificial differentiation of the implemented values [89,98]. According to the authors of the article, separating the concern for organization from the concern for the employee as the concept of interest refers to concentration on a narrow time perspective and does not take into account the fact that a job-satisfied employee is in most cases more productive and creative [123], i.e., can achieve organizational goals more fully.

5.3. Attitudes Towards 65+ Knowledge Workers, Citizenship Behavior and Pro-Social Behavior Depending on the Gender of Entrepreneurs and on the Business Sector

The chi-square test ($\chi^2$) was used to determine whether there was a relationship between the employers’ behavior and their gender, and employers’ behavior and the employment sector. The test is based on a comparison of observed values (obtained in the study) and theoretical values (calculated assuming that there is no relationship between the variables).

A significance level of 0.05 was adopted for the statistics. As a result of calculations, it turned out that with a 95% probability, it can be said that the behavior of employers depends on their gender (Figure 2). The percentage chart also signifies the calculated relationship (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>OCB-O $^1$</th>
<th>OCB-P $^2$</th>
<th>Pro-Social Behavior</th>
<th>OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>1703</td>
<td>1726</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>5170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>1828</td>
<td>1584</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>6300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^1$ OCB-O—organizational citizenship behavior.  
$^2$ OCB-P—organizational support behavior, targeted at specific people.
The obtained relationships being the sum of values obtained by individual persons in the questionnaire examining attitudes, and then in the tests indicate the existence of a statistically significant discrepancy between both attitudes, organizational and assistance citizenship behavior of entrepreneurs of women and men, their pro-social attitude and total citizenship behavior. The attitudes of female entrepreneurs towards 65+ knowledge workers are less positive than in the case of men. In addition, it was observed that men more often present organizational-oriented citizenship behavior (OCB-O) than women who, in turn, are more involved in behavior-oriented assistance to individuals, employees in the organization (OCB-P). Moreover, women entrepreneurs undertake wider social behavior more often than men.

Perhaps the attitudes of female entrepreneurs towards employing 65+ employees are more burdened with stereotypical thinking, assuming that this is the age when, e.g., for health reasons, one should not engage in professional work. There were differences in relation to citizenship behavior, and pro-social behavior may arise from a culturally different, traditionally sanctified upbringing system—leading to the formation of specific values, which in the case of girls prefers and rewards behavior aimed at helping others. In the case of men, it may also result from the identification of role models of the manager in the enterprise more focused on achieving organizational goals.

To sum up, the obtained results allowed the researchers to confirm the fourth hypothesis about existing the difference between the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards 65+ employees, citizenship behavior and pro-social attitudes between women and men.

Obtained research results indicate the existence of more positive attitudes of entrepreneurs towards employing 65+ knowledge workers, both among representatives of service companies, including construction companies, as compared to enterprises from other sectors.

The described relationships in percentage relations are presented in the chart below (Figure 3).
Figure 3. Entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, their citizenship behavior and pro-social behavior depending on the business sector (source—own study).

Obtained research results indicate the existence of more positive attitudes of entrepreneurs towards employing 65+ knowledge workers, both among representatives of service companies, including construction companies, as compared to enterprises from other sectors (Table 5). The situation is similar when analyzing organizational citizenship behavior (OCB-O) promoting concern for the organization’s functioning, its positive image and assistance citizenship behavior (OCB-P). In the latter case, construction companies perform the most favorably (even in relation to all service companies). Comparing pro-social behavior in the analyzed companies, the most favorable results can be observed among representatives (entrepreneurs) of all service companies, compared to other companies. In turn, the index of total citizenship behavior is most favorable in companies that are not service.

Table 5. Entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, their citizenship behavior and pro-social behavior depending on the business sector (source—own study).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Sector</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>OCB-O ¹</th>
<th>OCB-P ²</th>
<th>Pro-Social Behavior</th>
<th>OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction Sector</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services sector</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sectors</td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>2638</td>
<td>2461</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>8866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ OCB-O—organizational citizenship behavior. ² OCB-P—organizational support behavior, targeted at specific people.

More favorable entrepreneurial attitudes towards employing 65+ knowledge workers may result from appreciating the professionalism of employees with extensive professional experience and social competencies by entrepreneurs cooperating with clients. In the case of service companies, the customer is a very important business partner and their level of satisfaction with the service performed determines the demand for further services, and thus, is a condition for the success of this type of enterprise.

Similarly, in the case of citizenship behavior (both organizational and assistance) and pro-social attitude, determine success in customer relations, as well as the stability and development of the organization. Higher results in the case of total organizational behavior obtained by entrepreneurs,
representatives of companies participating in research from other sectors suggest willingness or balance in the care of the enterprise and employees, or greater concern for the interests of the organization itself.

Summing up, the obtained research results confirmed the fifth of the hypotheses formulated assuming the existence of discrepancies between entrepreneurs’ attitudes towards 65+ knowledge workers, citizenship behavior and pro-social attitude of entrepreneurs from the sector of service companies (including construction companies) compared to companies from the other sectors.

6. Discussion of Results and Conclusions of the Research

As the obtained data indicates, both in the 2014 and 2019 surveys, the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards employing 65+ knowledge workers, in most cases, were positive and consistent. This result confirms the results of previous research conducted on this 93-person sample being a part of 296 entrepreneurs and representatives of the management. The results obtained are evidence that the high level of awareness and positivity of entrepreneurs in the field of cooperation with 65+ knowledge workers. Positive attitudes are associated with the perceived benefits of cooperation with 65+ knowledge workers. Therefore, it can be assumed that they appreciate the skills of this group of employees, recognizing that 65+ knowledge workers constitute a significant potential of intellectual and social capital, the restoration of which would be time-consuming and very costly. So, as Marin [124] suggests, we cannot give up this potential. This would be an unjustified waste of resources. In this situation, it is a truism to say that knowledge employees are of particular importance for the organization and provides its broadly defined development opportunities [58, 59].

Continuing these considerations, the research confirmed the results of analyzes carried out by Marnewick and his team [6] emphasizing the need to manage diversity, to motivate employees to engage in activities, implement good practices and appropriate behavior patterns. This indicates the role of employer confidence in an employee with advanced seniority, who builds positive relationships and is a factor in job satisfaction. This solution seems particularly suitable for 65+ knowledge workers, and it can include both mobile working time and individually negotiated content and scope of tasks performed.

The obtained research results allow for the formulation of specific conclusions and inspire to make further hypotheses:

- From the point of view of a 65+ knowledge worker, positive entrepreneurial attitudes build their confidence in the organization, increase the sense of security of employment after retirement, even if they experience some health problems and create opportunities to negotiate the scope and content of their work. This situation certainly contributes to improving their well-being and improves the subjectively assessed quality of life.

- From the organization’s point of view, positive attitudes towards mature knowledge workers and the associated perception of the advantage of benefits over the risks arising from the employment of this group of people means that they will be willing to use their intellectual and social capital. In this way, entrepreneurs optimize human capital management in the organization, and do not allow it to be wasted. At the same time, the observed modification of good practices used, enabling the modification of work in late adulthood, can cause that depending on the needs, they will modify, create and implement subsequent practices.

Considering the obtained data from a broader perspective, it would be cognitively interesting to examine the extent to which the continuing trend of positive attitudes towards the employment of 65+ knowledge workers characterizes the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe or possibly to what extent is it characteristic of Poland? The inspiration for subsequent research carried out as part of the diversity management paradigm could be to examine whether and to what extent positive attitudes of entrepreneurs could also include employees with disabilities from diverse environments.

The obtained research conducted among entrepreneurs with certain permanent attitudes towards employing knowledge workers showed a directly proportional relationship between these attitudes
and a relatively high level of organization-oriented organizational behaviors. It was also found that this correlation to a lesser extent related to citizenship behavior aimed at employees, citizenship and social behavior as a whole.

A similar relationship has previously been established in recent and published studies carried out by Krugielka [125], which referred to factors building the image of the company. Almost all of the entrepreneurs participating in the research showed concern for external customers in the first place, and their employees as an object of interest definitely occupied a further place.

The researchers inspire to undertake further studies that would allow them to verify the occurrence of the analyzed relationships in the context of the age and gender of employers and employees. Research conducted by Kadefors and Hance [49], as well as Van Dalen, Henkens [50], showed that these are factors that impact attitudes towards employing 65+ employees, while it would be good to check to what extent they translate into pro-social behavior and citizenship behavior.

The data presented are not free from restrictions. Their main limitation is the small research sample. At the same time, the established research procedure, which required undertaking research in two periods (which was separated by five years), was an important factor limiting the size of the examined sample.

The article was written as part of the humanistic diversity management paradigm, emphasizing the significant role of humans in the organization, regardless of their age, the importance of their intellectual capital for the development of the organization, and consequently concern for the high quality of their life. This paradigm forces the organization, and thus, its decision-makers, a new pattern of functioning. This study is devoted to the analysis of this pattern.


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