

NEURODIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN POLAND – EXPERT PERSPECTIVE

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Purpose: This study aims to determine the areas of influence of the neurodiversity concept on the management of organizations in Poland.

Design/methodology/approach: We evaluated the above-mentioned areas on the basis of a qualitative analysis of the content of the expert panel entitled "Neurodiversity in management" which took place during the 15th International Scientific Conference "Knowledge - Economy - Society" CMQ2023 - May 25, 2023 at the Cracow University of Economics.

Findings: Having studied the opinions of experts, we found that the concept of neurodiversity may influence the following areas in the management of Polish organizations: talent management, recruitment and selection methods, sensory accessibility, inclusive organizational culture and training policy, support for professional activation and career counseling.

Research limitations/implications: The limitation of the conducted research is the number of experts who took part in the discussion. It needs to be emphasized that due to the assumptions of the qualitative study, the selection of experts was guided by the criterion of knowledge of autism issues and the diversity of experiences in cooperation with neurodivergent people.

Practical implications: The practical rationale for undertaking research in this area is the five times lower employment rate of neurodiverse people in Poland compared to the average for the European Union. Taking into account the experts opinions about mentioned issues allows for institutional and organizational solutions to be prepared thus to increase the employment of these people. Conducted panel, in which the academic community participated, contributes to raising awareness of neurodiversity and may be the basis for further research. Furthermore, the findings are relevant to managers since they suggest the use of effective strategies that could design solutions tailored to the needs of neurodivergent people and thus increase their employment.

Originality/value: This article organizes the existing knowledge about neurodiversity and specifies the areas in the organization's activities that may be particularly influenced by it. Findings from this study may be of interest to various groups, including neurodiverse people, organizations, state institutions and other researches.

Keywords: neurodiversity, autism, employment, customization of products and services, public policy.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

The term neurodiversity currently refers to many neurodevelopmental differences, but its original understanding (Singer, 1999, after Jaarsma, Welin, 2012), adopted in this article, is related to the autism spectrum. The validity of separating neurodiversity, considered in relation to the autism spectrum, from other dimensions of human diversity results from its specificity, which is revealed in all spheres of human development and its strong impact on the functioning of a given person in society.

Moreover, the topic of neurodiversity is a relatively under-researched field of research in relation to other dimensions of diversity, developed within the framework of diversity management, which is well-established in management and quality sciences.

The issue of neurodiversity is a current and important issue in the practice of managing organizations due to the growing dynamics of autism diagnoses and the extremely low employment rate of neurodiverse people in Poland, which states at only 2% (Polish Economic Institute, JIM Foundation, 2022, p. 4). The participation of neurodiverse people in organizations includes not only their employment but also their role as stakeholders, including customers of the organization. In management practice, there are difficulties in adapting the way products and services are offered to the needs of neurodivergent people. Due to the above premises, the following research question can be asked: in what areas can the neurodiversity perspective influence the management of Polish organizations?

The aim of the article is to identify the areas of influence of the neurodiversity concept on the management of organizations in Poland. To achieve this goal, the opinions of experts in the field of neurodiversity are presented on:

- opportunities and challenges in employing neurodivergent people in Poland,
- the role of state institutions in the professional activation of these people,
- preparing managers and employees to cooperate with neurodiverse people and taking into account their perspective as stakeholders in the organization's activities.

The research is innovative in its use of a qualitative approach within the context of Polish organizations. This approach facilitated a thorough analysis of management areas that are pertinent to neurodiversity. Considering that research on neurodiversity is at a relatively early stage and that the employment of people on the autism spectrum in Poland is at a much lower level than the average for EU countries, the authors felt that the research should take into account this particular context and subject it to in-depth analysis. The empirical material was collected through qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management", which took place during the 15th International Scientific Conference "Knowledge - Economy - Society" CMQ2023 - May 25, 2023 at the Krakow University of Economics.

2. Literature review

The term neurodiversity was first used in relation to autism (Singer, 1999, after Jaarsma, Welin, 2012) and then also included other neurodevelopmental differences, such as ADHD, Tourette syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia. The authors of this article express the view that the mentioned neurodevelopmental differences are so distinctive that they should be considered separately. However, this assumption does not deny that all these differences reflect the essence of neurodiversity. Therefore, when relating the concept of neurodiversity to the autism spectrum, it is necessary to determine what makes this approach unique.

The concept of autism as a diagnostic category within pervasive developmental disorders was used in the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association in 1980 (Grandin, Panek, 2021). Research on autism was initiated and then presented in the article *Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact* in 1943 by Leo Kanner. In current medical classifications, the term pervasive developmental disorders has been abandoned and replaced by the term Autism Spectrum Disorder – ASD. The term was used in the fifth edition of the Diagnostics and Statistics of Mental Disorders Manual (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual..., 2013) and in the International Statistical Classification of Diseases ICD-11, developed by the World Health Organization which is applied in Poland (ICD-11 for Mortality and Morbidity Statistics). It is worth noting that the usage of the term "disorder" emphasizes the area of difficulties experienced by autistic people. This is supported by the diagnostic criteria for both classifications, which include persistent deficits in the ability to initiate and maintain reciprocal social interactions and communication and a range of restricted, repetitive and inflexible patterns of behaviour, interests or activities that are clearly atypical or excessive for the individual given his or her age and context sociocultural.

In contrast with this approach, the concept of neurodiversity draws attention to the strengths of people on the autism spectrum, treating it as "naturally occurring types of cognitive mechanisms with specific advantages that have contributed to the development of technology and culture" (Silberman, 2017, p. 23). It should therefore be emphasized that the concept of neurodiversity applies to high-functioning people with autism, i.e. those with the ability to communicate verbally (Jaarsma, Welin, 2012).

The current research problem in management and quality sciences is the perspective of neurodiversity. However, it is important to note that the state of research is still at an early stage, as evidenced by the limited number of scientific publications on this issue (Wiater, 2022). Additionally, most of the empirical research conducted on this topic is based on qualitative methods (Walkowiak, 2021; Whelpley et al., 2021; Richards et al., 2019; Carrero, Krzeminska, Härtel, 2019; Richards, Sang, 2016; Mellifont, 2020; Austin, Pisano, 2017; Mpofu et al., 2019). This may be due to the specificity of the phenomenon under study. The autism spectrum

encompasses a range of differently manifested behaviours (Silberman, 2017), which limits the generalisation and comparisons characteristic of quantitative methods. Qualitative research may be a more appropriate approach in this case. Additionally, it should be noted that the adoption of a qualitative research perspective may be related to the strategy used to gain access to the sample. Current publications include a framework for future research and recommendations for wider mainstreaming in organisational management (Doyle, McDowall, 2021; Whelpley, Perrault, 2021; Szulc et al., 2021; Roberson et al., 2021).

3. Research methodology

Considering the preliminary stage of research on neurodiversity, the authors of this article sought the opinions of experts in Poland who deal with the issue of neurodiversity. During the XV International Scientific Conference 'Knowledge - Economy - Society' CMQ2023, held on 25th May 2023 at the Cracow University of Economics, an expert panel was consulted on the topic of 'Neurodiversity in Management'. The study was conducted with the involvement of three experts and last about 1,5 hours. The discussion focused on the four issues introduced in the beginning, concerning the integration of a neurodiversity approach in modern organisations.

The study was conducted using a qualitative approach (Flick, 2010; Jemielniak, 2012; Kostera, 2015; Lune, Berg, 2017; Silverman, 2008). This approach is appropriate for exploring the research field of neurodiversity from a management and quality science perspective.

The method of obtaining empirical material is in the form of a focus group interview (Gillham, 2000; Kvale, 2023) conducted with a sample of experts. The role of the authors of the article during the interview, in addition to designing the interview in advance, amounted to moderating the discussion in which the invited experts participated, taking care to maintain an appropriate group dynamic (Gudkova, 2012) by directing the conversation in such a way as to organise the statements and give all experts the opportunity to speak on the issues raised.

Conducting the study in the form of a group interview allowed the researchers to benefit from its advantages (Fontana, Frey, 2009), i.e.: low cost of implementation; the possibility of obtaining cumulative data with a high degree of complexity; the possibility of stimulating panel participants by the researchers; and the flexibility of the formula used, which is extremely important for the course of the study. This is directly linked to the digital form of the expert panel used. As far as the advantages of the chosen strategy for obtaining empirical data are concerned, it is worth mentioning the possibility of direct confrontation between the participants of the survey and the possibility of including valuable comments from experts among the audience, which provides an opportunity to obtain additional information. On the other hand, weaknesses include the limited opportunities for deepening the topic for the duration of the panel and the negative effects of the presence of the audience, e.g. related

pressure or tendency to over-presentation. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the use of digital techniques limits the experts' contact with the audience.

The selection of experts for the sample also requires comment. It was done in a purposive way, based on the knowledge of organisations working on neurodiversity in Poland. This approach overcomes problems related to access to the research sample, mainly due to the limited number of available experts. At the same time, the influence of the evaluative nature of the panel (due to the participation of the audience) on the selection of the sample should be emphasised. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the selection of experts was guided by the criterion of familiarity with the issue of autism and the diversity of experience in working with neurodiverse people invited to the study.

The study was conducted using a pre-designed interview scenario. It included open questions on the areas outlined in the introduction. The survey also provided an opportunity to explore the issues raised by the experts by formulating additional questions.

During the panel, the experts presented their opinions one after the other and listened to each other's answers. During the panel, the experts were able to engage in discussion with each other and ask their own questions. The panel was videotaped and the resulting material was then subjected to a process of transcription, coding and analysis. The coding was open-ended. Subsequent codes were created on a snowball basis as new information became available. In order to increase the reliability of the study, triangulation was used at the researcher level. This means that two researchers were involved in both the interview process and the coding of the empirical material. Furthermore, in accordance with the art of qualitative research, a process of validation of the results obtained was carried out.

4. Results

A number of difficulties related to the implementation of the concept of neurodiversity are observed in management practice. The problem of employing neurodiverse people should be considered one of the key ones. It is reflected in the extremely low employment rate of people on the autism spectrum, which in Poland is only 2%, while in European Union countries it is five times higher (Polish Economic Institute, JIM Foundation, 2022). The search for the reasons for the low professional activity of autistic people in our country has been the subject of analyses by the Supreme Audit Office, which found, among other things, a lack of adequate preparation for work and independent living, an insufficient number of vocational activity centers and insufficient support by occupational therapy workshops (Supreme Audit Office, 2020). In contrast, a report by the JIM Foundation and the Polish Economic Institute sees opportunities to use the potential of neurodiverse people for the benefit of the Polish economy

by raising awareness and introducing appropriate public policy tools (Polish Economic Institute, JIM Foundation, 2022).

In Poland, the number of people on the autism spectrum is estimated at 45,000, but these figures may not reflect the scale of the phenomenon because autism spectrum disorders were not taken into account in the disability adjudication system until 2010 (Supreme Audit Office, 2020). The scale of the phenomenon is certainly growing, as indicated by data from the Educational Information System, according to which the number of special educational needs statement issued for autism is increasing annually by about 20% (from 16,098 in the 2017/2018 school year to 36,189 in the 2021/2022 school year) (Domagała-Szymonek, 2022). Due to the lack of accurate information on the total number of people with autism in our country, it is considered crucial for the professional activation of this group to create and unify the base of neurodiverse people, systematically collect information on their needs and establish facilities that provide adequate support for them (Polish Economic Institute, JIM Foundation, 2022).

Experts on the panel unanimously emphasized the great opportunities for the professional activation of neurodiverse people. In this regard, they pointed to the special abilities, skills and predispositions of neurodiverse people, which correspond to those identified in the literature. These include:

- the ability to perceive details in an isolated way and to focus attention on them more (Lorenz, Heinitz, 2014, after Roberson et al., 2021),
- the ability to remember and analyze large amounts of data, and above-average mathematical aptitude (Austin, Pisano, 2017),
- associative thinking, creativity, predisposition for routinized work (Grandin, Panek, 2021),
- strict adherence to rules (Baron-Cohen et al., 2009).

At the same time, however, the experts participating in the panel recognized that their potential is not sufficiently exploited. Opinions in the described area are contained in the following Table 1.

Table 1.

Experts opinions about abilities, skills and predispositions of neurodiverse people

Experts	Opinion
Expert 1	‘Adults on the autism spectrum possess competencies that can be effectively integrated into various industries and activities. These competencies may be challenging for neurotypical individuals to manage or incorporate due to the annoyance associated with repetitive tasks. However, for individuals on the spectrum, these tasks can be a fantastic opportunity to showcase their skills, and we can have confidence in their ability to perform them perfectly’.
Expert 3	‘It is a well-known fact that individuals on the autism spectrum often work below their qualifications, despite possessing a high level of knowledge and expertise. This is due to challenges with pro-social skills. It is important to note that this is not unique to individuals on the spectrum, as many highly qualified individuals may face similar challenges’.

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

Neurodiverse people, despite having high qualifications, may experience difficulties that may prevent them from presenting them to a potential employer. For this reason, experts agreed, it is important to take into account the needs of neurodiverse people in the recruitment and selection process. Experts opinions is presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Experts opinions about difficulties in the recruitment and selection process experience by neurodiverse people

Experts	Opinion
Expert 1	'In the area of autism spectrum disorders, communication skills are typically impaired. Therefore, individuals on the spectrum may not be able to effectively demonstrate their competence, soft skills, or empathy during a job interview'.
Expert 2	'Individuals on the autism spectrum may have a different perspective on job interviews and may hold different expectations regarding the process. For instance, a neurotypical interviewer may pose abstract and incomprehensible questions such as 'Where do you see yourself in 10 years within our company?' Job interviews are often viewed as an opportunity to present oneself in a positive light. However, individuals on the autism spectrum may find this task challenging and incomprehensible'.
Expert 3	'From our experience, we recommend that job applicants are asked their preferred method of contact, such as telephone, email, or another form. Additionally, it may be beneficial to conduct initial interviews online to provide a sense of security before coming to the company headquarters'.

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

The employment of neurodiverse people requires the provision of appropriate working conditions. Adjustments in the aforementioned area should especially take into account difficulties with sensory integration or unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment, which affect more than 90% of people with autism (Chang et al., 2014). In addition, it is necessary to provide a choice of how to perform the work and reduce the number of social interactions (Prizant, Fields-Meyer, 2017), Confirming these conclusions from the literature, the opinion of an expert participating in the discussion is presented below in Table 3.

Table 3.

Expert opinion about appropriate working conditions for neurodiverse people

Experts	Opinion
Expert 2	'The workplace environment is a crucial consideration, particularly for neurodiverse individuals. Visual, auditory, and olfactory stimuli can negatively impact their work performance and even prevent them from carrying out their duties. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that our company is accommodating and welcoming to all employees, regardless of their neurodiversity. (...) The workplace can be reimagined, beginning with the desk, to reduce visual, olfactory, and auditory stimuli. This can be achieved through the implementation of open-plan workspaces. (...) For managers and employers, it may be challenging to adjust to new methods of communicating responsibilities and managing employees' work. For instance, providing more written information. (...) Some individuals on the autism spectrum may find hybrid or remote work more suitable due to the flexibility it offers in terms of breaks and scheduling. It is important to consider the needs of all employees when determining the form of work that is most appropriate for a given situation'.

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

In the context of the discussion on the possibility of professional activation of neurodivergent people, the issue of support from state institutions was raised.

The experts unanimously agreed that there is an urgent need to provide systemic support in employment, which in particular should cover the areas of career counseling and an appropriate system of public subsidies.

According to the experts, offering career counseling to neurodiverse people should include comprehensive preparation for professional roles, support of tutors and job coaches in the process of employee adaptation, and use of good practices of other countries in the field of vocational activation of neurodiverse people. Experts opinions is presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Experts opinions about the career counseling

Experts	Opinion
Expert 3	'I suggest beginning with career counselling. This involves discussing the nature of work, how to work, and identifying personal talents and needs. This approach will also draw job coaches and tutors into our system. It is important to provide families with information that diverse individuals can work'.
Expert 2	'It is worthwhile to conduct research and transfer proven practices, such as the sensible programs in Germany. These programs involve activating professionals with autism to create guides that can be sent to various companies. The guides provide information on the autism spectrum, how to work with individuals on the spectrum, and how to prepare the work environment. In the UK, there is an intriguing project for individuals aged between eighteen and twenty-five with autism. The project focuses on knowledge, including training, apprenticeships, traineeships, and support in maintaining employment'.

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

The issue of government subsidies can be applied to various aspects raised by experts related to supporting the vocational activation of neurodiverse people. Areas of special state activity are mainly seen in subsidizing the system of collecting information on the number of neurodiverse people, regulations on the employment of tutors and assistants, the operation of vocational activation centers, as well as training and courses for employers. Table 5 contains the abovementioned opinions.

Table 5.
Experts opinions about the system of public subsidies

Experts	Opinion
Expert 2	'It would be beneficial to establish a database that accurately records the number of neurodiverse individuals in need of more comprehensive support, beyond just job placement assistance, but also job retention. Currently, such a system does not exist in Poland and funding is necessary for its development. Professional activation centers, such as occupational therapy, should receive stronger subsidies. Without these measures, progress may be hindered. New job opportunities for tutors and assistants who can support individuals in need should be created. Companies should also receive subsidies for training new recruits and management'.

Cont. table 5.

Expert 1	‘Certainly, there should be a clear definition of the role, form of employment, and possibilities of job coaches, tutors, and mentors. It is important to establish a systemic support system in this area, as well as a system of necessary and subsidized courses for supporting neurodiverse individuals’.
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Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

Apart from the topic of institutional support, the discussion was also devoted to the preparation of organizational participants to employ a neurodiverse person.

5. Discussion

The expert opinions presented in the panel discussion align with the conclusions drawn from the literature, particularly with regards to the need for adjusting recruitment and selection methods (Carrero et al., 2019) and designing office spaces that consider sensory sensitivity (Szulc et al., 2021). These opinions are also consistent with findings from institutions that focus on neurodiversity. The aforementioned in the context of the analysis of the Polish Economic Institute and the JIM Foundation - the low awareness of neurodiversity, which determines the employment opportunities for these people (Polish Economic Institute, JIM Foundation, 2022, pp. 4, 5, 29), means that both management staff and those employed in organizations in our country are not prepared to work with neurodiverse individuals. In addition to low employment and difficulties in working with neurodiverse people, there are also perceived difficulties in incorporating a neurodiversity perspective into an organization's operations by adapting the way it offers products and services to the needs of these people. Practical applications i.e. sensory-friendly cinema in Cinema City or quiet hours in selected retail establishments are still exceptions and are examples of social innovation of a process nature (Wiater, 2022).

The importance of social awareness about neurodiversity and shaping an inclusive organisational culture in organisations was a topic addressed by all experts in the panel discussion on preparing for cooperation with neurodiverse people. With regard to social awareness, the issue of difficulties in processing sensory stimuli and the need to take them into account in the process of preparing for this cooperation and adapting the way of offering products and services to the needs of neurodiverse people was also raised. This is in response to the difficulties with sensory integration described in the literature, or the unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment experienced by over 90% of neurodiverse individuals (Chang et al., 2014). Ensuring sensory accessibility is crucial for the participation of neurodiverse people in market processes and to play the role of organisational stakeholders. These statements are quoted in the Table 6.

Table 6.

Experts opinions about the importance of social awareness, shaping an inclusive organisational culture and ensuring sensory accessibility

Experts	Opinion
Expert 3	<p>‘To successfully hire and accommodate a neurodiverse individual in the workplace, it is crucial for managers to have a clear understanding of what neurodiversity entails. To successfully hire and accommodate a neurodiverse individual in the workplace, it is crucial for managers to have a clear understanding of what neurodiversity entails. Additionally, co-workers should also be educated on the topic to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment. So, in my opinion, preparation for collaboration is aided by knowledge. This knowledge should come from all levels of the organization, from top management to co-workers. This approach will lead to a safer, more attentive, and accepting work environment. (...) If sensitivity and friendliness are not taken into account, clients may leave and not receive the services they need. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize these aspects. This is my perspective on the matter’.</p>
Expert 1	<p>‘It appears that public awareness is crucial in this matter. If we were more informed, we would not be as apprehensive and would approach employment of individuals on the spectrum more naturally. Currently, we do not employ such individuals due to fear and lack of knowledge on how to communicate and interact with them. Therefore, sensory accessibility is of utmost importance. In Poland, there is increasing discussion about sensory disorders and their impact on neurodiverse individuals. However, there is still limited awareness of this issue. It is important to recognise how these disorders can affect individuals with neurodiversity. Sometimes, small things like ensuring proper ventilation and reducing noise can greatly impact the success and inclusion of neurodiverse individuals in certain activities. It is important to have knowledge and social awareness to accommodate sensory sensitivities’.</p>
Expert 2	<p>‘To create a neurodiversity-friendly culture for neuroatypical employees, it is worth implementing different strategies. Although it can be challenging, there are companies in Poland that have successfully implemented such projects. Neurodiversity can bring numerous benefits, not only to the employees but also to the company itself. By introducing new assumptions, rules, and procedures, we can create a culture that values diversity and inclusivity. It is important to maintain a formal tone and use unambiguous language to ensure clarity and coherence. Additionally, we should adhere to specific language standards and use precise word choices to convey meaning accurately. Finally, we must ensure that the text is free from grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and punctuation errors, and that we strictly adhere to metrics and units. This can help us learn how to work with neurodiverse individuals and improve our overall practices. As the number of neuroatypical individuals in society increases (15-30% of the population), it is important that we know how to effectively communicate with them, both in the workplace and with clients. By understanding how to communicate with neuroatypical individuals, we can improve our overall communication skills’.</p>

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

The conclusion that emerges from the expert statements on the crucial importance of social awareness of neurodiversity is the need to provide participants with accurate and comprehensive information about it. In this respect, experts stressed the role of all kinds of training, which is presented in Table 7.

Table 7.*Experts opinions about the role of training*

Experts	Opinion
Expert 2	‘Trainings, webinars, and e-meetings can effectively educate employees on neurodiversity and the functioning of the brain of individuals with autism or Asperger's syndrome. It is important to provide such training not only to employees but also to recruiters. Job advertisements should accurately reflect the requirements of the position, avoiding generic phrases such as 'ability to work in a team' when seeking a programmer who may not have extensive social interaction as part of their role. (...) It may be beneficial to consider training self-advocates. The self-advocacy movement in Poland is currently strong. In fact, an audit conducted with the participation of self-advocates would be ideal. They can identify areas that require improvement and provide valuable feedback. (...) People often struggle to comprehend the implicit meaning behind words (...). Providing training in soft skills for individuals on the autism spectrum, along with education on neurodiversity for neurotypical individuals, could potentially enhance communication between the two groups’.
Expert 3	‘At every location where a trained person was present, I had to wait for an hour before the person who could guide me arrived. What surprised me was that both the organizers and the person present at each stage asked similar questions: what should I do and when? What does it mean...? Should I be concerned about anything...?’

Note. To ensure the anonymity of the experts, they were marked as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3.

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative content analysis of the expert panel entitled: "Neurodiversity in management".

These aspects related to the formation of social awareness seem to be crucial for taking into account the perspective of neurodiversity in the area of functioning of organisations operating in Poland. This aspect should be seen as the basis for solutions both for the internal policies of individual companies and for broadly defined social and economic policies geared to harnessing the potential of neurodiversity.

6. Conclusions

The article is devoted to identifying areas of influence of the concept of neurodiversity on the management of organisations in Poland. To achieve this objective, a qualitative analysis of the content of the expert panel entitled: “Neurodiversity in Management”, which took place at the Cracow University of Economics. The mentioned areas of influence were seen in relation to the issues of employment, institutional support for professional activation, preparation for cooperation with neurodiverse people and taking into account their needs in the activities of the organisation. Based on the analysis of experts’ opinions, the following areas of impact of the concept of neurodiversity on the management of Polish organisations have been identified:

1. Talent management – it is a process that is supposed to enable the use of the potential of employees with special abilities (Kopeć, 2012). During the panel, experts drew attention to the special, distinctive skills, abilities and predispositions of neurodiverse people. According to experts, those skills can be successfully used in different organizations and constitute a complement to the competences of neurotypical people.

For this reason, talent management in an organisation should take into account the perspective of neurodiversity.

2. Recruitment and selection – a process related to talent management (Skuzza, 2018) and requiring appropriate matching of talent (Ingram, 2011). According to experts, the neurodiversity of job candidates should prompt employers to rethink their recruitment and selection methods. In particular, this concerns the precise formulation of requirements in job advertisements and the form and process of the interview.
3. Sensory accessibility - the need to create appropriate working environment conditions, as well as to adapt the way of offering products and services results from the difficulty of processing sensory stimuli experienced by neurodiverse people and determines their participation in market processes.
4. Inclusive organizational culture – based on awareness of neurodiversity and openness to distinctiveness. Training policy can play a key role in this area.
5. Supporting professional activation – firstly, experts see the role of public organisations in providing support in preparing neurodiverse people for work and creating appropriate legal regulations in this area. In addition, it should be noted that this area will have an impact on organisations providing career guidance, which, according to experts, currently do not sufficiently take into account the perspective of neurodiversity.

Identifying areas of influence of the concept of neurodiversity on the management of organizations can contribute to the increase of social awareness and for specific organizations can be a starting point for building competitive advantage based on shaping an inclusive culture of the organization.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the survey conducted. A fundamental limitation is the number of experts who participated in the discussion. Increasing their number could lead to more examples of good practice as well as new themes. In addition, the survey does not directly take into account the opinions of neurodiverse people. Their inclusion should also add depth to the findings. In planning the study, the authors took into account the postulate "nothing about us without us", but the aim set criteria for the selection of the sample (an expert with experience in neurodiversity practice, objectivity, not acting as a stakeholder). Due to the time constraints of the panel and the multifaceted nature of the issue, it was not possible to address the industry context. Therefore, future research should take into account that the suitability of the skills of neurodiversity practitioners, the adaptability of the work environment, etc. may vary depending on the specifics of the organisation and the industry in which it operates.

Acknowledgements

The publication was financed from the subsidy granted to the Cracow University of Economics – program Potencjał no. 062/ZJP/2023/POT and also Project Prolog no. 70/ZJP/2023/PRO.

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