Anna SZELIGA-DUCHNOWSKA
WSB University, Wrocław
anna.szeliga-duchnowska@wsb.wroclaw.pl

GENDER AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIORS AMONG POLICE OFFICERS

Abstract. At the foundation of this research lies the belief that the sex can directly differentiate the perception of counterproductive behavior at work and also can be a moderator of the influence of different variables on the perception of counterproductive behaviors. The survey research was carried out in June 2017, with the use of Internet-based survey questionnaire (CAWI). There were altogether 198 police officers examined. The hypothesis of the occurrence of the dependence between the sex and the perception of counterproductive behaviors was subjected to verification. The chi-square test of independence and test of significance of differences between means were applied. The conclusions following from the research offer significant implications for elaboration of relevant procedures in the sphere of managing human resources in the police force, among others, with the aim to have the principle of equality of chances and that of equal treatment of women and men respected.

Keywords: Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB), sex, police force, Poland

Introduction

Since the mid-1990s the literature on management and organizational behaviors has seen more and more publications brought out, dealing with employees' conducts which are harmful to the organization they work for. Such behaviors are responsible for a decrease in productivity, violate social norms, harm colleagues and – as a result – negatively influence the realization of organization's targets. This is the basic reason why the interest in the problem area of unproductive (counterproductive) behaviors encountered at work has been on the rise (e.g. Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997; Spector & Fox, 2001; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Bugdol, 2007; Turek, 2011; Wachowiak, 2011; Turek, 2012; Białas & Litwin, 2013: Szostek, 2014; Macko & Grudzinski, 2014; Glińska-Neweś & Lis, 2016). Consequently, researchers are attempting to explain – first of all – the causes behind the occurrence of counterproductive

workers' behaviors, since only identification of the causes can effectively implement preventing and fighting this kind of workers' conduct. Moreover, they identify economic[1], social and psychological consequences of the problem with the aim to make every interested party aware of the level of danger which counterproductive behavior at work (CWB) entails. Despite the rich literature devoted to both organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) and CWB (e.g., Dalal, 2005), it is necessary to point to the scarcity of literature dealing with comparison between females and males in this respect, especially in such a specific work environment as the police force is.

Taking the above into consideration, this article aims to: identify the dependence between the sex and the level of observed types of counterproductive behaviors, frequency and initiators of such conducts and their characteristics, as well as to identify the respondents' assessment of the degree of negativity of individual kinds of behaviors, those responsible for the occurrence of counterproductive behaviors in the place of work, the influence of harmful behaviors on co-workers, on the organization they work for and the respondents themselves (lowering of productivity), assessment of the level of financial losses suffered by the employer and ways to prevent counterproductive behaviors.

The research was conducted in June 2017, with the use of the computer-assisted Web interview (CAWI). There were 198 police officers examined in total (including 78 women and 120 men). The respondents were not asked directly about manifestations of counterproductive behaviors, but were requested to recognize this type of conduct among their colleagues at work.

The basis of the research was the conviction that the sex can vary – in a direct manner – the perception of counterproductive behaviors and can also be a moderator of the impact of different variables on the perception of counterproductive behaviors. The hypothesis of the appearance of a dependence between the sex and the perception of counterproductive behaviors was made subject to verification.

1. Conceptualization of counterproductive behaviors in the light of literature – types of conduct and the sex within the organization

It is most problematic for researchers who conduct analyses of counterproductive behaviors to establish a common definition of types of such behaviors. The majority of conceptualizations which are put forward define counterproductive conducts as intended/intentional, ones that are harmful or – by intention – are meant to harm the

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[1] For instance, L. Parks and M.K.: Mount assess that in the USA alone the loss relating to the occurrence of counterproductive behaviors amounts to between 15 and 25 billion US Dollars every year (see: L. Parks, M.K. Mount, *The Dark Side of Self-monitoring: Engaging in Counterproductive Behavior at Work*, "Academy Management Best Conference Paper" 2005, p. 11-16).

organization and its stakeholders. Customarily, such behaviors are of the volitional character and are justified by the employee (e.g., Marcus & Schuler, 2004). It follows from the definition that behaviors which arise out of contexts, situations or are an effect of unintentional acts, are not counterproductive behaviors. From the point of view of practice, the above definition does not seem fully accurate, since conducts resulting from a lack of necessary competences can also be regarded as counterproductive. To illustrate, let us consider the case of a newly-employed worker who holds suitable qualifications to do the job required by the given post, but does not possess right personal predispositions (e.g., the position demands an energetic person, but it is occupied by a rather sluggish worker). A similar case offers when the culture of the organization, its structures, processes or the management make the workers be prone to corruption, falsify financial reports or inflate (police) statistics.

In turn, some researchers suggest that counterproductive behaviors can result from activation of emotional processes (the stressor-emotion model) (Spector & Fox, 2001). On the other hand, Trevino et al. treat counterproductive behaviors as a dimension of unethical conducts, breaking basic and popularly accepted moral principles in the place of work (Trevino, Weaver & Reynold, 2006).

The concept of counterproductive behaviors is a broader conceptualization of earlier proposals put forward by researchers who considered individual types of harmful behaviors at work, such as abuse of employees (Tepper, 2000), absence from work (Bakker, Demerouti, de Boeri & Schaufeli, 2003), staling (Greenberg, 1990) or rude behavior towards clients (Perlow & Latham, 1993). Then, it was attempted to group different behaviors into categories, like antisocial conduct in the organization (Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997), deviant behavior at work (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), organization-related aggression (Neuman & Baron, 1998) and organization-directed sabotage (Gestman, 2001).

Vardi and Weitz identify the following dimensions of counterproductive behaviors:[2]

- intrapersonal (e.g., workaholism, abuse of harmful substances),
- interpersonal (e.g., molesting, violence and aggression, bullying),
- property (e.g., abuse of the company's property, stealing),
- political (e.g., creation of one's own image),
- productive (e.g., withdrawal of activity, "social idleness").

In turn, Spector et al. propose also five sub-types of counterproductive behaviors, which are different from the above listed and were formulated on the basis of an analysis of a broad corpus of the literature of the subject, as well as an exploratory factor analysis (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh & Kessler, 2006):

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[2] Vardi and Weitz, upon their analysis of the literature of the subject identified 116 different references and manifestations of counterproductive behaviors, which were used by various authors. *See*: Y. Vardi, E. Weitz, *Misbehavior in Organizations*, „Lawrence Erlbaum Associates", New Jersey 2004, p. 291-298.

- abuses – dealt directly against co-workers and people connected with the organization (stakeholders); they are aimed at doing physical of psychical harm, like ignoring, verbal aggression (Richman, Rospenda, Flaherty & Freels, 2001);

- sabotage – behaviors which aim to be detrimental to the organization as a whole; they consist in destroying the property belonging to the employer, etc.; this is an active form of CWB;

- stealing – in other words, appropriation of business property; theft if categorized as a manifestation of aggressive behaviors towards the organization as a whole (Neuman & Baron, 1998);

- deviation of production – behaviors aimed at doing harm to the organization as a whole; this is the so-called passive form of CWB, such as not following recommendations or not complying with procedures, intended making mistakes, etc. (Hollinger, 1986);

- worker's withdrawal – conscious shortening of the time spent executing professional duties and also limiting the amount of energy expended on working, like intended lateness for work, leaving work early, "virtual loafing" – surfing the Internet at work.

So far no research has been conducted to prove explicitly which of the above-presented sub-types of counterproductive behaviors are more typical of men and which are characteristic of women. Nevertheless, studies on conducts characteristic of the sexes confirm males' aggression to remain on a higher level in comparison with that of females. Men also describe themselves as more aggressive than women. In turn, females' aggression manifests itself primarily in excluding others, ostracism and alienation, the so-called "relative aggression". Women's aggression is of a more indirect than direct nature (Prentice & Carranza 2002; Archer, 2004).

Hollinger and Clark concentrate on one of the sub-types of counterproductive behaviors, which is theft in the place of work. It follows from their research that men can appropriate property more often than women. They point to the fact, too, that in the conditions of severe punishments inflicted by the organization, junior employees seem not to care for the sanctions to the same degree as their elder colleagues do (Hollinger & Clark, 1983).

A series of studies confirm a certain regularity, that is counterproductive behaviors at work more frequently manifest themselves in men (Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Jones, 1991; Kisamore, Jawahar, Liguori, Mharapara & Stone, 2010; Hershcovis & Barling, 2008; Ocel & Aydin, 2010; Vardi & Weitz, 2004; Spector & Zhou, 2014; Bowling & Burns, 2015).

2. Realization of the studies and characteristics of the study sample

In June 2017, studies were carried out among functionaries of the police force, concerning counterproductive behaviors as observed by the examined in their places of work. The studies used the Internet-based survey questionnaire (computer-assisted Web interview /CAWI/ examination). The required sample size amounts to 97 respondents (margin of error 10%). The author included results of as many as 198 questionnaires due to the valuable conclusions from the open questions.

The questionnaire was composed of 61 items. Measures used in the questionnaire were adapted from questionnaires used in the literature (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh & Kessler, 2006). Reliability was checked with the help of Cronbach's Alpha scores. The Cronbach's Alpha for the whole scale was 0.814 while its values ranged from 0.776 to 0.841. Hence, the questionnaire is reliable.

Instead of the term "counterproductive behaviors", the expressions "behaviors/conducts detrimental to the organization" or "behaviors/conducts harmful to co-workers" were applied interchangeably. The obtained results made it possible to verify the hypothesis which treats about the occurrence of the dependence between the sex and the perception of counterproductive behaviors at work. In order to do so the chi-square test of independence and test of significance of differences between means were made use of. For the analysis, the division of the examined group into sexes was accepted.

A more appropriate measurement to execute seemed to check the level of recognition of counterproductive behaviors among colleagues by both of the examined groups (females and males) rather than asking the respondents directly about manifestations of this type of conducts. This conviction results from the not admitting by the persons taking part in the survey studies (in the majority of cases) to displaying negative behaviors or from the intention on the part of the researchers to avoid the Rosenberg effect[3].

The profession of a police officer is highly specific (service to society, securing safety to citizens, hermetic structures, work within a highly hierarchical organization, etc.). The share of women-police officers in the police force is decisively lower than that of the male counterparts. The present CAWI examination comprised 198 police officers, including 78 females and 120 males of three age-groups: 27-35 years of age, 36-50 years and 51 years and over). The structure of the respondents only partially reflected the differences appearing in the general population (Table1). The majority of the examined were males (61%). The female respondents, more than the male counterparts, hold higher education ($\chi2 = 19.195$; df = 1,

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[3] The Rosenberg effect manifests itself in that the evaluation of one's own behaviors can be inadequate, non-objective and falsified, since the questions asked as part of the examination are too intimate and sensitive ("sore") – in such a situation, the examined person tries to present himself/herself in a good light, wants to satisfy the researcher, interprets the tool or behaves in compliance with the expectations of the examining person.

p = 0.000) and there are more of them representing the younger age groups ($\chi2$ = 15.319; df = 2, p = 0.000).

Table 1

Structure of the respondents due to the sex, age and level of education (n = 198)

Education	Sex	Age			Total
		27-35 years	36-50 years	51 years and more	
Secondary	Females	6	0	0	6
	Males	18	24	0	42
Higher	Females	48	24	0	72
	Males	36	30	12	78
Total		108	78	12	198

Source: Own calculations on the basis of the research results.

Women are characterized by a shorter length of service at work than men (Table 2). Out of the 78 women-respondents: 8% hold very short work experience (up to one year), 38% declare the length of service between 1 and 5 years, 23% – from 6 to 10 years, and 31% – over 10 years. Out of the 120 men-respondents: 25% have been in service from 1 to 5 years, 30% – from 6 to 10 years, and 45% - hold the work experience of over 10 years.

Table 2

Structure of the respondents due to the sex and length of service at work

Sex	Length of service				Total
	Up to 1 year	from 1 to 5 years	from 6 to 10 years	over 10 years	
Females	6	30	18	24	78
Males	0	30	36	54	120
Total	6	60	54	78	120

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

The above-presented structures of the respondents with reference to their sex, age, education and length of service can result from the changes in the policy of admission to service in the police force. Recent years have seen a rise in the number of women employed in the police, which – at least partially – results from the necessity to comply with the requirements of the European Union (the principle of equality of chances and equal treatment of women and men in the sphere of employment and work).

3. Results and discussion

It is a popular opinion that work can be a source of different experience to females and males. The results of this research, which are presented below, confirm the validity of it at least partially.

In the first part of the questionnaire, the respondents (women and men) were asked to point to those counterproductive behaviors proposed by Spector et al, that is abuses,

production deviation, sabotage, stealing and withdrawal (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh & Kessler, 2006), which they were able to observe in their places of work. In view of the received responses, it turns out that the questioned observed conducts belonging to all the five above-mentioned categories of counterproductive behaviors.

It follows from the research conducted among the functionaries of the police force that males – who by nature apply direct aggression themselves (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Archer, 2004) – notice verbal aggression and instigation, the so-called direct aggression (the category of "abuse of co-workers") in their places of work far more often than their female counterparts. This includes also damage to the equipment and creating a negative image of the organization (the category of "sabotage"). In turn, females – who by nature apply indirect aggression themselves, which is hard to spot (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Archer, 2004) – are far more frequently able to realize manifestations of appropriation of property belonging to the organization than their male colleagues. Additionally, (beside the categories contained in the classification proposed by Spector et al.) the respondents pointed to the fact that counter-productivity with reference to service in the police force is greatly affected by the "couldn't-care-less" attitude, "let George do it" attitude, as well as smoking cigarettes while on duty.

In the next part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked about the following: the frequency and initiators of counterproductive behaviors and their characteristics, assessment by the examined of the degree of negativism of individual types of conduct, those responsible for counterproductive conducts appearing in the place of work, the influence of detrimental behaviors on co-workers and the very respondents themselves (diminishing productivity), evaluation of the level of financial loss suffered by the organization and the ways to prevent counterproductive behaviors.

It follows from the research that if the respondents do observe conducts of their colleagues at work, which are harmful for the organization or co-workers, women notice them more often than men. As many as 39% of women and 25% of men notice such behaviors every day or several times in a week (Table 3).

Table 3

Distribution of the answers to the question: "How often does workers' conduct which is harmful to the organization or other workers occur in your place of work?"

	Females		Males		Total	
Daily	24	31%	12	10%	36	18%
Several times a week	6	8%	18	15%	24	12%
Once a week on average	6	8%	6	5%	12	6%
Several times a month	12	15%	30	25%	42	21%
Once a month on average	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Several times a year	0	0%	12	10%	12	6%
Hard to say	12	15%	36	30%	48	24%
I haven't noticed such behaviors	18	23%	6	5%	24	12%

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

It is clear that 46% of the women and 20% of the men observed that workers' conducts which are detrimental to the organization or colleagues occur to most of the workers, independent of the sex (Table 4). 15% of the policewomen and 20% of the policemen observe such a conduct in their superiors (males).

Table 4

Distribution of the answers to the question: "Who, for the most part, allows themselves to act like that?"

	Females		Males		Total	
Colleague (woman)	0	0%	18	15%	18	9%
Colleague (man)	6	8%	18	15%	24	12%
Superior (woman)	0	0%	6	5%	6	3%
Superior (man)	12	15%	24	20%	36	18%
The majority of workers happen to behave like that, irrespective of their sex	36	46%	24	20%	60	30%
I don't know	24	31%	30	25%	54	27%

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

The following are mentioned among the personality traits which characterize the workers remaining in the respondents' environment, who are capable of displaying behaviors detrimental to the organization or their co-workers: egoism, rudeness, arrogance, indolence, lack of empathy, lack of personal culture, enviousness, laziness, exaltation, lack of self-confidence.

The decisive majority of respondents (92% of the females and 85% of the males) hold both their co-workers and the organization responsible for the occurrence of workers' conducts which are detrimental to the organization and their colleagues (Table 5).

Table 5

Distribution of the answers to the question: "Who, in your opinion, is guilty of the occurrence of workers' behaviors which are harmful to the organization and co-workers?"

	Females		Males		Total	
The organization alone	6	8%	6	5%	12	6%
Solely the worker who applies negative behaviors	0	0%	12	10%	12	6%
Both the worker and the organization	72	92%	102	85%	174	88%

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

Among the main causes for workers to undertake to behave in a way which is harmful to the organization or co-workers, the respondents listed the sense of a lack of justice among the workers (76% of the indications), low salaries (64% of the indications) and the lack of satisfaction with the work (55% of the indications). The distribution of the responses for the three main causes was similar in the both of the examined groups (females and males): 38% of the women and 25% of the men pointed to the "workers' character" as the cause of counterproductive behaviors and it is this answer that differentiates the both examined groups the most (Table 6).

Table 6

Distribution of the answers to the question: "What, in your opinion, are the chief reasons why workers undertake to act in the way which is detrimental to the organization and other co-workers? (You may indicate maximum three main reasons)"

	Females		Males		Total	
Low salary in the organization	54	69%	72	60%	126	64%
The sense of a lack of fairness among the workers	60	77%	90	75%	150	76%
Lack of satisfaction with work	42	54%	66	55%	108	55%
Poorly functioning system of supervision/control over workers	12	15%	24	20%	36	18%
Lack of clearly formulated punishments for negative conducts	6	8%	12	10%	18	9%
Complete lack of preventative measures taken by the organization against negative workers' behaviors	12	15%	6	5%	18	9%
Workers' characters	30	38%	30	25%	60	30%
The sense, dominating among the workers, that since they undertook to behave in the ways that are positive for the organization, in the consequence of which the organization acquired benefits, they are entitled to behave negatively (e.g., using items of the property belonging to the organization for their private needs)	6	8%	18	15%	24	12%
Other	0	0%	12	10%	12	6%

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

Women are far more critical than men in perceiving behavior of those who apply elements of abuse (e.g., insults, isolation, humiliation, offensive gestures), do not comply with the regulations and procedures in the organization, damage the property of the organization or appropriate the employer's property (Table 7). The conduct of a worker who purposefully comes to work late was – by the both groups – assessed in a similar way. Still, in the declarations of both of the examined groups, appropriation of property belonging to the organization was the most negative instance of counterproductive behavior.

Table 7

Analysis of the results (mean ± standard deviation) of the answers to the question: "How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who … (Please indicate using the scale, where: 0 – the conduct is not negative, 10 – the conduct is acknowledged to be very negative)"

	Females	Males	Total	Significance
How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who applies abuse towards a colleague/colleagues, such as insults, isolation, humiliation, offensive gestures?	9.4±1.3	6.8±2.9	7.8±2.7	$p = 0.000***$
How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who does not comply with the regulations and procedures binding in the organization?	7.7±1.9	5.6±2.1	6.4±2.3	$p = 0.000***$
How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who destroys property belonging to the employer?	9.1±1.3	7.4±3.5	8.1±3.0	$p = 0.000***$
How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who appropriates items of property belonging to the employer?	9.4±1.2	7.9±3.4	8.5±2.8	$p = 0.000***$
How negative do you find the behavior of a worker who purposefully comes late to work?	7.4±2.5	7.8±3.1	7.6±2.9	$p = 0.387$

Difference between groups is statistically significant: * – at $p < 0.10$, ** – $p < 0.05$, *** – $p < 0.01$.

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

It was found (Table 8) that 39% of the respondents pondered over the impact of counterproductive behaviors exerted on themselves, on their colleagues (female and male) and on the organization. Women turn out to think the issue over much more often than male respondents (54% of the women and 30% of the men taking part in the survey).

Table 8

Distribution of the answers to the question: "Have you ever spared a thought on how the workers' conducts mentioned in the survey affect you personally, your colleagues (female and male co-workers) and the organization?"

	Females	Males	Total
Yes	42	36	78
No	36	84	120

$\chi2 = 11.259$; df = 1, p = 0.001***
Statistically significant: * – at p < 0.10, ** – p < 0.05, *** – p < 0.01.

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

Every other respondent admitted that negative conducts were directly dealt against themselves (Table 9). The distribution of the answers in the group of females comes close to that in the group of males (46% of the women and 50% of the men). At the same time, the respondents admitted that the negative behaviors did have an influence on their productivity at work and generated financial losses suffered by the organization (Table 10).

Table 9

Distribution of the answers to the question:
"Has any negative conduct been aimed at you in a direct way?"

	Females	Males	Total
Yes	36	60	96
No	42	60	102

$\chi2 = 0.280$; df = 1, p = 0.597.
Statistically significant: * – at p < 0.10, ** – p < 0.05, *** – p < 0.01.

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

Women, to a greater extent than men, are critical in their perception of changes in productivity and financial losses for the organization, which come in consequence of negative experience related to counterproductive behaviors (Table 10).

Table 10

Analysis of the results (mean ± standard deviation) obtained in connection with the answers to the request: "Indicate on the scale to what degree, as a result of this experience …, where: 0 – did not have an impact, 10 – had a very strong impact"

	Females	Males	Total	Significance
To what degree, as a result of this experience, your productivity at work worsened?	7.5±2.2	3.7±2.6	5.1±3.1	p=0.000***
How severe, in your opinion, are the financial losses suffered by the organization in consequence of the behaviors listed in the questionnaire?	7.6±1.7	5.7±2.2	6.5±2.2	p=0.000***

Difference between groups is statistically significant: * – at p < 0.10, ** – p < 0.05, *** – p < 0.01.

Source: Own calculations on the basis of research results.

Merely 12% of the respondents knew that in their organizations actions had been undertaken with the aim to prevent conducts which were detrimental to the organization or co-workers. They included schemes directed against alcoholism, corruption, mobbing (Szeliga-Kowalczyk, 2015), lateness for work, damage to the equipment, offending, insulting, breach of discipline and failure to execute official duties. Half of the respondents declared the above-mentioned actions as effective; the other half were not able to assess the effectiveness of the undertaken schemes.

Among preventative measures which could raise the effectiveness of stopping workers' behaviors which are harmful to the organization, the respondents most often listed a reliable incentive scheme (it should be noted here that the examined listed not only incentives, but also coercive measures and persuasion). Their answers featured, among others, "a higher salary", "reliable and fair rewarding", "application of a conscious policy against detrimental conducts", "greater control over employees", "fair and honest treatment of workers by the employer/superiors", "adequate trainings, workshops", "penalization of such behaviors", "setting a personal example by the superior", "competent employees".

4. Conclusions

The review of the literature of the subject and the results of the research carried out within the environment of the police force officers prove that counterproductive work behaviors are highly unwelcome. An effect of eliminating such conducts should be improvement in the quality of work environment understood in sensu stricto as a set of interpersonal relations occurring between individual members of the organization and those in sensu largo, i.e., in the context of both internal (economic) conditions and external ones (relations with the clients of the organization). It seems significant inasmuch as the standard of the work environment is expected to entail the quality of products/services offered to external clients. Without a doubt, the quality of work environment is conditioned by individual situational factors, whose exemplification, in turn, is the culture of the organization that constitutes its inherent attribute. Summing up the above-presented considerations, it seemed purposeful to examine the dependence between the gender and the level of observation of counterproductive behaviors in a case study of such specific professional environment as the police force is. The results of the research have confirmed the occurrence of counterproductive behaviors in this organization, that is:

1. Both men and women recognize counterproductive behaviors existing in their professional environments, which belong to all the categories isolated by Spector et al., that is abuses, deviation of production, sabotage, stealing and withdrawal (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh & Kessler, 2006). Moreover, men notice verbal

aggression and instigation (the so-called direct aggression: the category of "abuse in relation to co-workers") among their colleagues much more often than women do. They also perceive such misconducts as damaging equipment and creating a negative image of the organization (the category of "sabotage"). In turn, women, far more frequently than men, notice theft. Additionally, (outside Spector's et al. classification) the respondents pointed to such attitudes as "couldn't-care-less" and "let-George-do-it" as well as smoking cigarettes during work as factors exerting a considerable negative influence on productivity.

2. As many as 39% of the women and 25% of the men (out of the respondents who recognize detrimental conducts) notice instances of counterproductive behaviors every day or several times a week. Most of the examined (46% of the women and 20% of the men) observe such misbehavior in the majority of colleagues (irrespective of their sex). The decisive majority of respondents put a blame for the occurrence of harmful conducts on both the organization and the workers.

3. Among the main causes of workers' acting in ways which are harmful to the organization and their colleagues, the respondents listed the following: the sense of a lack of justice among employees, low salaries and a lack of satisfaction with their work. On the other hand, "the worker's character" offers the cause which differs both of the examined groups to the greatest extent.

4. Persons "behaving counterproductively" make themselves distinct with such personality traits as: egoism, rudeness, arrogance, idleness, lacking in empathy, low level of personal culture, enviousness, putting on airs and lacking in self-confidence.

5. Every second respondent admits that negative conducts she/he experienced, were directly aimed at her/him, and the negative behavior affected her/his productivity at work in a negative way and also led to financial losses suffered by the organization.

6. The respondents claim that as regards their units there were actions taken against individual cases of counterproductive behavior, like: alcoholism, corruption, mobbing, lateness for work, damaging equipment, offending, insulting.

It is also interesting to note that females, much more often than males, are more critical in their noticing behavior of people who abuse others (insults, isolation, humiliation, offensive gestures), do not comply with the regulations and procedures in force in the organization, intentionally damage property that belongs to the employer or appropriate items of the property. It could be assumed that individuals who offer very critical opinions on the above-mentioned conducts, will themselves keep away from such misbehavior, the critical evaluation of which, as found in women, correlates with the results of the research presented earlier, proving that counterproductive behaviors occurring at work more frequently manifest themselves in males (who are less critical in their assessment of harmful conducts) (Jones, 1991; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Vardi & Weitz, 2004; Kisamore, Jawahar, Hershcovis & Barling, 2008; Liguori, Mharapara & Stone, 2010; Ocel & Aydin, 2010). For the both groups,

the most negative behavior is appropriation of the employer's property. Similarly, stealing is regarded as one of the more serious problems which organizations encounter (Greenberg, 1990).

The obtained research results reveal a complex picture of counterproductive behaviors in the police force, which confirms – at least partially – the hypothesis of the occurrence of a dependence between the sex and the perception of counterproductive conducts. It is important to recognize the limitations that exist. The required sample size amounts to 97 respondents (considering 10% error margin). The authors included results of as many as 198 questionnaires due to the valuable conclusions from the open questions. Limitations of the survey include an improper representation – certain types of participants dominate the research process. Individuals who responded to the online questionnaire invitations were generally of younger ages. Consequently, there is an overrpresentation of the class of younger police officers, whereas that of older ones is represented to a lesser degree in the sample.

The conclusions following from the research yield substantial implications that can be useful in elaboration of appropriate procedures in the sphere of managing human resources in the police force, among others, with the aim to respect the principle of equality of chances as well as that of equal treatment of women and men in this service. In the opinions of the respondents themselves, among the actions which could raise the efficiency of prevention of workers' counterproductive conducts in the police force, one should mainly point to working out by the superiors of a suitable incentive scheme (means of coercion, encouragement and persuasion), that is "higher salaries", "good and fair rewarding", "application of a conscious policy against harmful behaviors", "closer supervision of workers", "fair and honest treatment of workers by the employer/superiors", "relevant training and workshops", "penalization of such behaviors", "good example from the top" and "competent workers".

The above-presented indications offered by functionaries of the police force make a vital clue to those in charge to prevent and fight counterproductive behaviors in this specific professional environment, where the quality of work (service to society/securing safety to citizens) should be on the highest possible level. Moreover, research conducted within the above-discussed range (or in a broader one – including organizations of different types) should be done cyclically, which will also contribute to the elimination of conducts that lower the productivity and – in consequence – make it harder to realize the vision, implement the mission and achieve the goals which the police force has.

The considerations presented in the article reveal the complexity of the highly individualized human nature in work environment, including also the context of gender. It is characterized by multidimensionality, often differing perception of behaviors which have a negative influence on the organization's productivity. This is indeed significant and finds its reflection in the product/service, which – in turn – directly translates into effectiveness and efficiency of the whole organization.

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