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# Sickness Absenteeism and Dignity-based Management in the Industrial Processing Industry in Poland

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To present the findings from an empirical study conducted among employees in the industrial processing industry in Poland, examining sickness absenteeism and related absence behaviours as a part of dignity-based management.

**Research Design & Methods:** The study was conducted through a survey questionnaire designed by the authors, utilising a diagnostic survey method. Data collection was facilitated by computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI) and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The analysis of survey results employed statistical methods, including chi-square tests, the Kruskal-Wallis test, and pairwise comparison through *post hoc* tests for significant correlations.

**Findings:** More than half of the survey respondents acknowledged the occurrence of sickness absenteeism, defined as the abuse of sick leave in their organisations. This issue is closely linked to an organisation's ability to inspire action among its employees, as well as to appreciate and support them. One in three respondents said they used sick leave as a retaliatory measure when

annual leave requests were denied. The analysis also revealed differences in perceptions of absence behaviours among employees in the industrial processing industry. Larger companies experienced a higher incidence of unjustified sick leave compared to smaller and micro-sized ones, and medium-sized companies reported more instances than small companies.

**Implications/Recommendations:** The findings from this study may prove useful for business owners, managers, and HR professionals who are dealing with issues of sickness absenteeism and dignity-based management. They can be used to build awareness of the determinants of employee absenteeism and the importance of dignity practices in management.

**Contribution:** This article contributes to the body of knowledge in management and quality science, particularly in human resource management. It offers insights into the ethical analysis of work environment conditions, emphasising the importance of the moral principles in professional human relationships as a means of reducing the likelihood of workplace violations.

**Article type:** original article.

**Keywords:** absenteeism, absence at work, dignity-based management, organisation, employee, industrial processing.

**JEL Classification:** M12.

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## 1. Introduction

Recent surveys of HR professionals and managers have shown that one of the primary HR risks associated with employees in organisations is the abuse of sick leave and high employee absenteeism (Winnicka-Wejs, 2023, pp. 118–120). Viewing sickness absenteeism as a risk category underscores the need for a more thorough examination of its causes and characteristics, advocating for in-depth research to uncover its underlying factors (Gilga & Jurek, 2022, p. 12). This paper focuses on selected meso-level determinants of this issue, i.e., characteristics of the work environment that, alongside micro-level determinants (individual employee traits), and macro-level determinants (broader social and institutional contexts), influence the propensity for absence abuse (Steers & Rhodes, 1978, as cited in Jurek, 2021, p. 22). Special attention was given to management practices *vis-à-vis* the quality of supervisor-subordinate relations. A review of the literature for this study revealed that the concept of dignity-based management offers crucial insights for countering various forms of abuse by employees. This approach adopts a subjective perspective on the employee, resonating with deeply held human values, and promotes the integration of these values into organisational practices. The embodiment of dignity values within the organisational culture shapes intra-organisational relationships, establishes behavioural models for managers and employees alike, and encourages the development of self-control and the related ethos among employees (Ambroziak & Kosewski, 2012).

The most recent statistics from the Social Insurance Institution of Poland (ZUS) regarding sickness absenteeism indicate that the industrial processing industry recorded the highest proportion of employees on sick leave in 2022 (ZUS, 2023). This industry saw the highest percentage of days lost to sickness absence (21.9%). It was followed by the wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repair sector (16.3%) and the education sector (7.6%). This pattern was also observed in the percentage of individuals who received a medical certificate: The industrial processing industry came in at 20.6%, while the wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repair sector had 14.8%, and education 10% (ZUS, 2023, p. 140; cf. ZUS, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022).

Accordingly, the subject matter of this study is sickness absenteeism as a form of workplace abuse in the context of selected dignity-based management practices within organisations. The subjects of the study include employees working in the industrial processing industry (see Polish Classification of Business Activities (PKD), section C, subsections 10–33, classifications; Gofin.pl, 2024). The review of the Polish and international literature covered the years 2000–2023, and the empirical study was conducted in the first quarter of 2024. Geographically, the study is limited to Poland.

An analysis of the literature on the subject has revealed that the current study fills a research gap. To date, no research has been conducted within a specific industry (industrial processing) that combines the issues of sickness absenteeism and dignity-based management. The following research questions were formulated for the study:

1. Do the selected dignity-based management practices exist within the industrial processing industry?
2. How prevalent are sickness absenteeism and other absence behaviours among employees in the industrial processing industry?
3. What is the relationship between absence behaviours (including sickness absenteeism) and selected dignity-based management practices?
4. What are the primary reasons for the abuse of sick leave by employees in the industrial processing industry?
5. How do perceptions of absence behaviours among employees in the industrial processing industry vary by gender, age, position, and company size?

In addition to the article's theoretical/exploratory objectives of exploring sickness absenteeism and selected aspects of dignity-based management in the industrial processing industry, there is also a methodological objective – to devise a research tool and analyse specific correlations, and a practical application – to generate findings useful to both theoreticians and practitioners engaged in human resource management.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Sickness Absenteeism

The issue of sickness absenteeism is infrequently addressed in the literature and academic research (Nauka Polska, 2024). A search within Polish databases (for the years 2000–2023) using the keyword “sickness absenteeism” yielded the following results: 25 publications in the National Library database (Biblioteka Narodowa, 2024) and 14 publications in the BazEkon database (2024). In the literature on management and quality sciences, the subject of absence management and identifying potential dysfunctions in this area is also seldom addressed (see Striker, 2016). Furthermore, empirical research on the abuse of sick leave is particularly scarce; in Poland, the sole data source on this matter comes from the findings of inspections conducted by the Social Insurance Institution (Gilga & Jurek, 2022, p. 8). This suggests that the phenomenon of sickness absenteeism is not well understood (Jurek, 2021, p. 20).

Sickness absenteeism, involving the abuse and misuse of sick leave, currently poses a significant challenge to the social security system and is recognised as a major problem (Jurek, 2021, p. 21; Gilga & Jurek, 2022, pp. 7–8; cf. Kujawska, 2015; Kasprowski, 2018). For instance, in 2022, a total of 27 million sick leave certificates were issued nationwide, accounting for 288.8 million days of absence. Evidence suggests that Polish workers are increasingly resorting to sick leave, and not always due to genuine sickness (Domagała-Szymonek, 2023; PulsHR, 2023).

Sickness absenteeism, a form of employee absence behaviour (see Bierla, Huver & Richard, 2013; Striker, 2016, p. 17), is a source of personnel risk for organisations (Winnicka-Wejs, 2023), a key risk factor for business operations (Aon, 2017, 2019) which diminishes their efficiency (Striker, 2021; see Aarstad & Kvitastein, 2024; Fiorini, 2024).

### 2.2. Dignity-based Management

Dignity-based management is a relatively recent concept in the Polish literature (Kosewski, 2007, 2008, 2012; Ambroziak, 2012; Ambroziak & Kosewski, 2012; Blikle, 2014, 2018), emerging as a response to the problem of abuse by employees. In recent years (Blikle, 2017), proponents and practitioners have aligned it with “turquoise management” (Lalloux, 2015), adapting it to the Polish context. Within the discourse on employee anomie, a limited number of Polish publications have explored “ethical, subjective management” (Sypniewska, 2016, 2019; Sypniewska & Baran, 2018; Maciejewska *et al.*, 2020). There are, however, a few documented instances of organisations in Poland implementing dignity-based practices in management, either fully or partially (for selected examples, see [mozna-inaczej.com.pl](http://mozna-inaczej.com.pl), accessed: 19.12.2023).

Dignity-based management combines the ability to motivate employees through respect for their dignity with organising and structuring work processes to enable employees to preserve their personal values, thereby cultivating employee self-control rooted in dignity (Kosewski, 2012). This approach encompasses both subjective and value-based management, drawing upon so-called dignity values that are intrinsic to human nature, including honesty, fairness, integrity, solidarity, loyalty, responsibility, and professionalism. Adhering to these values not only helps one cultivate a sense of dignity and pride but also promotes the development of a friendly and supportive workplace environment characterised by mutual respect, trust, and partnership (Blikle, 2018). Acknowledging and honouring dignity within the organisation enhances the perception that the work being done is meaningful. It bolsters employees' sense of agency, strengthens their identification with the company, and improves the quality of work. It also boosts staff efficiency, thereby making the organisation more effective (Kosewski, 2012; Blikle, 2014; Sypniewska, 2016; Haarjärvi & Laari-Salmela, 2022; Ahmed *et al.*, 2023; Pirson *et al.*, 2023). The separation of labour issues from personal dignity, treating employees as objects, and uncertainty in the organisation's axio-normative system contributes to various forms of employee anomie (Ambroziak & Kosewski, 2012; Maciejewska *et al.*, 2020).

Dignity-based management forms the cornerstone of an effective organisational culture and plays a crucial role in fostering a work environment where intrinsic motivation drives employee engagement (Młokosiewicz, 2023). A higher level of work motivation leads to less absenteeism (Allebeck & Mastekaasa, 2004; see Jurek, 2021, p. 22). A sense of meaningful work, which increases employee engagement, likewise reduces absenteeism rates (Striker, 2016, p. 46), while the quality of the work environment also has a significant impact on absence behaviours (Jurek, 2021).

### 3. Overview of the Study Methodology

For this study, the authors designed a survey questionnaire, drawing on prior research in the field:

- question 1, pertaining to dignity-based management statements (Striker, 2016; Baran & Sypniewska, 2018; Blikle, 2018; Haarjärvi & Laari-Salmela, 2022),
- question 2, pertaining to employee absence behaviours (Striker, 2013, 2016; Jurek, 2021),
- question 3, pertaining to the primary reasons for taking sick leave (Gilga & Jurek, 2022),
- demographics questions: gender (Väänänen *et al.*, 2003; Melsom & Mastekaasa, 2018), age (Slowey & Zubrzycki, 2018), position within the company (Striker, 2016), company size (Ahn & Yelowitz, 2016).

The survey was conducted over two weeks, from 19 January 2024 to 2 February 2024. Execution of the survey was outsourced to the Department of Research, Expertise, and Consulting of the Research and Development Center at the University of Economics in Katowice, which has relevant industry databases and experience in conducting this type of market research.

The survey methodology was non-random and utilised the following techniques: telephone survey, online survey, and telephone-assisted online survey. Of the 184 questionnaires collected, 24 were rejected due to their discontinuation during the process. Finally, 160 fully completed questionnaires were provided for statistical analysis.

4. Analysis of the Survey Results

4.1. Structure of Respondents

The survey encompassed 160 participants, predominantly male and employed in managerial positions. The largest group was those aged 35–44. Respondents came from a wide variety of companies, covering all size categories (see Table 1).

Table 1. Structure of Respondents by Selected Characteristics (*n* = 160)

Characteristic		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	female	33	20.6
	male	127	79.4
Age	18–24	0	0
	25–34	11	6.9
	35–44	74	46.3
	45–54	60	37.5
	55–64	15	9.4
Position in the company	management	98	61.3
	administration	48	30.0
	manufacturing	14	8.8
Company size	micro (0–9 employees)	11	6.9
	small (10–49 employees)	76	47.5
	medium (50–249 employees)	54	33.8
	large (250 employees and more)	19	11.9

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

## 4.2. Absence Behaviours among Employees in the Industrial Processing Industry in the Context of Dignity-based Management Practices

At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked to respond to specific statements concerning the companies they work for. The purpose of this question was to evaluate the prevalence of selected dignity-based management practices (see Table 2).

Table 2. Selected Practices of Dignity-based Management among Industrial Processing Companies

Statements Regarding the Company's Dignity-based Management Practices	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Employees are treated with respect, regardless of their role and position	39 24.4%	118 73.8%	2 1.3%	1 0.6%	0 0%
Employees are enabled to perform their duties without compromising their personal values (such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, etc.)	35 21.9%	123 76.9%	2 1.3%	0 0%	0 0%
Managers value the opinion of employees (treat them as partners) in addressing work-related problems, difficulties and challenges	18 11.3%	39 24.4%	13 8.1%	26 16.3%	64 40%
The company inspires action among its employees, appreciates and supports them	33 20.6%	105 65.6%	4 2.5%	0 0%	18 11.3%

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

The data presented in Table 2 reveal that respondents were least likely to agree with the statement about managers treating employees as partners and valuing their opinions. 40% of respondents were unable to provide a definitive response to this question. The chi-square test results suggested that perceptions of dignity-based management practices depended significantly on the position held and the size of the company. In both instances, however, the correlation was weak. Individuals in manufacturing positions most frequently reported feeling that their opinions were disregarded by managers. Unlike employees from larger companies, those from micro-sized companies strongly agreed that their opinions impacted company management.

In the next question, respondents were asked to report on the prevalence of specific absence behaviours among employees at their companies (see Table 3).

Table 3. Respondent-reported Prevalence of Absence Behaviours among Employees of Industrial Processing Companies

Employee Absence Behaviour	Very Frequently	Frequently	Rarely	Very Rarely	Never
Absence (normal sickness absence)	9 5.6%	76 47.5%	59 36.9%	16 10%	0 0%
Absenteeism (abuse of sick leave)	3 1.9%	83 51.9%	12 7.5%	62 38.8%	0 0%
Presenteeism (attending work despite feeling unwell)	0 0%	0 0%	16 10%	92 57.5%	52 32.5%
Leaveism (using annual leave instead of sick leave)	0 0%	0 0%	11 6.9%	84 52.5%	65 40.6%

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

More than half of the respondents confirmed the occurrence of sickness absenteeism within their organisations in the form of employees abusing sick leave. Table 4 presents an analysis of the relationship between the questions discussed above.

Table 4. Relationship Analysis – Kruskal-Wallis Test (Absence Behaviours and Dignity-based Management)

Employee Absence Behaviour	Probability Value ( <i>p</i> -value) <sup>a</sup>			
	Employees are treated with respect, regardless of their role and position	Employees are enabled to perform their duties without compromising their personal values	Managers value the opinion of employees in addressing problems	The company inspires action among its employees, appreciates and supports them
Absence (normal sickness absence)	0.046	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.008</b>	<b>0.004</b>
Absenteeism (abuse of sick leave)	0.055	0.035	0.047	<b>0.012</b>
Presenteeism (attending work despite feeling unwell)	0.564	0.514	0.806	0.831
Leaveism (using annual leave instead of sick leave)	0.330	0.231	0.148	0.416

<sup>a</sup> In certain instances, the probability is less than 0.05 (see values in bold), suggesting that additional factors, not solely the ones highlighted in the table, may significantly affect perceptions of standard sickness absence and sickness absenteeism. However, additional *post hoc* tests ruled out these relationships.

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.



The data in Table 4 show that perceptions of normal sickness absence are significantly influenced by factors such as the ability to work in alignment with personal values, employees' belief that their opinions are valued by managers, and that the company inspires action among employees, appreciates and supports them. However, the perception of sick leave abuse significantly depended only on whether the company inspired action among employees, appreciated and supported them.

Table 5. Pairwise Comparisons – *post hoc* Tests for Significant Correlations (Abuse of Sick Leave (Q2\_2) and “The Company Inspires Action among Employees, Appreciates and Supports Them” (Q1\_4))

The company inspires action among employees, appreciates and supports them – pairwise comparisons Group 1 – Group 2	Test Statistics	Standardised Test Statistic	Adjusted <i>p</i> -value
Strongly agree – Neither agree nor disagree	–20.919	–1.721	0.512
Strongly agree – Somewhat agree	–23.087	–2.788	<b>0.032</b>
Strongly agree – Somewhat disagree	–54.364	–2.475	0.080
Neither agree nor disagree – Somewhat agree	2.168	0.205	1.000
Neither agree nor disagree – Somewhat disagree	–33.444	–1.458	0.868
Somewhat agree – Somewhat disagree	–31.276	–1.480	0.834

Notes: Number in bold denotes *p*-value lower than 0.05. Such a number indicates a relevance level of 0.05 or lower, the zero hypothesis has been rejected for the benefit of an alternative indicating a relevant dependence.

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

Pairwise comparisons through *post hoc* tests for significant correlations demonstrated that, regarding the perception of sick leave abuse, significant differences were only observed between two groups – those who responded “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree” to questions about whether the company inspires action among employees, and appreciates them. Those who answered “strongly agree” were less likely to report sick leave abuse compared to respondents who chose “somewhat agree” (see Table 5).

#### 4.3. Reasons Employees in the Industrial Processing Industry Abuse Sick Leave

The most frequently cited reasons for the abuse of sick leave by employees in the industrial processing industry included: absolute necessity, additional time off, and taking care of significant others or pets. One in three respondents identified sick leave as a retaliatory measure (see Table 6).

Table 6. Reasons Employees in the Industrial Processing Industry Abuse Sick Leave

Reasons for the Abuse of Sick Leave	Frequency	Percentage
Absolute necessity (such as attending an important family event)	97	60.63
Additional time off, for instance, during holiday periods or long weekends	65	40.63
Taking care of a significant other or a pet	64	40.00
Rejection of an annual leave request (sick leave as a form of retaliation)	57	35.63
The need to attend to important official matters	48	30.00
Exhaustion and/or overwork (sick leave used for additional rest)	14	8.75
Recreational trip (e.g., for fishing, mushroom picking, visiting an allotment or attending a sporting event)	14	8.75
Performing other paid work (e.g., urgent assignment)	13	8.13
Avoiding challenging tasks at work and/or interactions with colleagues I dislike	5	3.13
Manifesting dissatisfaction with workplace conditions (sick leave as a form of protest)	3	1.88
Renovation or other important household tasks	3	1.88

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

The findings of this study diverge from recent survey research that suggested the prevalent motivation for the misuse of sick leave is the desire to extend time off work (Gilga & Jurek, 2022; cf. Glonek & Zająć, 2021), rather than situations of absolute necessity. Furthermore, international research has identified various circumstances leading to sickness absenteeism, including good weather (Shi & Skuterud, 2015), important sporting events (Thoursie, 2004), birthdays (Thoursie, 2007), long weekends (Ben Halima, Koubi & Regaert, 2018), and the notion that Wednesday can be treated as a “little Saturday” (Vahtera, Kivimäki & Pentti, 2001, as cited in Gilga & Jurek, 2022, p. 8).

#### 4.4. Differences in Perceptions of Absence Behaviours among Employees in the Industrial Processing Industry

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test (cf. test probability values – *p*-value) indicate that company size significantly affects perceptions of normal sickness absence (similarly to Ahn and Yelowitz’s finding that absenteeism rates are nearly twice higher in large companies than in small ones) (Ahn & Yelowitz, 2016; cf. Jurek, 2021, p. 23). Similarly, perceptions of sick leave abuse were influenced solely by the company’s size. However, no correlation was found between absence behaviour perceptions and the respondents’ position or age. Further analysis revealed that

perceptions of sickness presenteeism depended exclusively on gender (cf. Table 7). While this was a rare occurrence, it was more frequently reported among women.

Table 7. Relationship Analysis – Kruskal-Wallis Test (Employee Absence Behaviours and Respondents' Demographics)

Specification	Probability Value ( <i>p</i> -value)			
	Gender	Age	Position in the company	Company size
Absence (normal sickness absence)	0.268	0.232	0.422	< <b>0.001</b>
Absenteeism (abuse of sick leave)	0.743	0.171	0.862	< <b>0.001</b>
Presenteeism (attending work despite feeling unwell)	<b>0.047</b>	0.938	0.538	0.107
Leaveism (using annual leave instead of sick leave)	0.507	0.202	0.296	0.945

Notes: Numbers in bold denote *p*-values lower than 0.05. Such a number indicates a relevance level of 0.05 or lower, the zero hypothesis has been rejected for the benefit of an alternative indicating a relevant dependence.

Source: the authors, based on the survey results.

Pairwise comparisons through *post hoc* tests for significant correlations revealed that sick leave abuse was significantly more prevalent in large companies than in small and micro ones, and significantly more prevalent in medium-sized companies than in small ones (notable differences in the perception of sick leave abuse were observed between these categories of companies). Conversely, employees of micro and small companies perceived sick leave abuse to occur with similar frequency (in both types of organisations), indicating no significant differences in the prevalence of sick leave abuse between the two types of companies. Likewise, no differences were found between large and medium-sized companies in this regard.

## 5. Discussion of Results

The study has validated certain relationships reported on in the literature. Respondents' views on normal sickness absence were significantly influenced by the following factors: the ability to perform work in alignment with personal values, managers' consideration of employees' opinions when solving problems (treating them as partners), and the supervisors' ability to inspire action among employees, appreciate and support them. These correlations between sickness absenteeism and perceived support from colleagues and supervisors resonate with the findings of Rugulies *et al.* (2007), among others. Steers and Rhodes, on the other hand, identified employees' attitudes, understood as their values and objectives, as one of three

crucial components of the motivation for workplace attendance (Steers & Rhodes, 1978, as cited in Evans & Wallers, 2002, p. 35).

However, the statistical analysis conducted in this study did not confirm a significant relationship between feeling respected regardless of one's position and the perceptions of absence behaviours. On the other hand, Head *et al.* (2007, as cited in Striker, 2016, p. 53) identified a strong correlation between sickness absence and interactional fairness, which entails treating employees respectfully and considering their perspectives. Our study shows that dividing the concept of interactional fairness into two questions – one about respect and the other about consideration of employees' opinions – yielded divergent results for each question.

According to the survey, the perception of sick leave abuse significantly depended only on whether the company inspired action among employees, appreciated and supported them. This finding aligns with the research of Melchior *et al.* (2003) and Väänänen *et al.* (2003), who observed an increased likelihood of absenteeism in environments lacking in support from colleagues and supervisors. Other research done in Poland has also found that the absence of perceived support from supervisors can lead employees to rationalise abuse of sick leave through subjective feelings of being wronged (Sypniewska & Baran, 2018).

However, our study does not corroborate the assertion, from the literature, that the propensity for absenteeism increases with diminished employee participation (participation of employees in decision-making) (Melchior *et al.*, 2003). Furthermore, no significant relationship was found between perceptions of absenteeism and employees' belief that they can perform their duties without compromising their personal values. The literature also suggests that findings regarding the relationship between “value systems, work ethos, and absenteeism” remain inconclusive (Jurek, 2021, p. 23).

This study has certain limitations: Due to its nature as a pilot study (and thus its use of a small sample size), and its focus on a specific industry – industrial processing, the results should not be generalised to represent the entire population. The methodology adopted, which involved a survey questionnaire, allowed for an assessment of respondents' perceptions of the phenomena under study, rather than their objective occurrence, which may also be a limitation of the research conducted. Nonetheless, considering the significance of intrinsic employee motivation discussed in this paper, it is essential to recognise that individuals' perceptions of their work environment determines the various manifestations of their organisational commitment. Monitoring these perceptions is therefore crucial.

## 6. Conclusions

This study contributes to the ethical analysis of work environment conditions, emphasising the importance of the moral principles in professional human

relationships as a means of reducing the likelihood of employee anomie. Thus, it aligns with the principles of humanistic management theory which advocates for the adoption of a normative stance, prioritising the dignity and well-being of employees over the pursuit of productivity and wealth creation (Pirson, 2019, pp. 53–54). Sickness absenteeism, as a form of abuse by employees, is exacerbated by various factors (personal characteristics of employees, of work environment, of the social environment – such as the habitus effect, which implies that social norms and values implicitly sanction social abuse, and characteristics of the institutional environment) (Jurek, 2021). From an organisational standpoint, creating a work environment that incorporates suitable behavioural norms and value systems, which employees internalise, is crucial (cf. Striker, 2016, pp. 39–66; Jurek, 2021, p. 24). Bearing this in mind, human dignity may be the basis for building an ethos in organisational practice (Huijser & Nullens, 2024) and managers play a pivotal role in this process (Sookdawoor & Grobler, 2022, pp. 20–22; Młokosiewicz & Piasecka, 2024, p. 230).

Our findings here underscore the role of dignity-based management practices in reducing the incidence of absence behaviours (including sickness absenteeism) in organisations, offering insights for further exploration of these issues by human resource management theoreticians. To broaden the applicability of these findings, conducting a study on a representative nationwide sample would be beneficial. Expanding the study to encompass additional aspects of dignity-based management could yield a more comprehensive understanding of its effect on reducing absence behaviours. Investigating sector-specific differences in the perceived significance of dignity-based management practices in influencing sickness absence behaviour could also provide insightful data.

Furthermore, the study offers tangible practical implications for managers: The adoption of dignity-based management components within organisations is undoubtedly a critical factor in mitigating undesirable absence behaviours, including the abuse of sick leave by employees. Particularly noteworthy is the role line managers play (especially in large companies, where the supervisor-subordinate relationships might not be as close as in smaller companies) in fostering a value-based relational work environment that values and supports employees, thereby inspiring action and advocating for employee involvement in decision-making processes.

### **Authors' Contribution**

The authors' individual contribution is as follows: Each contributed 50%.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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