

Abstract

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the flexibility of the labor market in the context of advancing robotization

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In recent years, the robotics market has been developing very dynamically, with the increasing number of industrial robots and cobots being implemented. This is an element of the phenomenon of developing technology in the form of the Fourth Industrial Revolution - Industry 4.0. Each industrial revolution brings positive progress, but also negative effects, such as increased unemployment and environmental impact.

Such changes may create concerns among employees. The appearance of machines in workplaces may raise doubts about maintaining employment. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that, according to the available literature, diversification of skills and continuing the education of employees are common solutions to unemployment resulting from robotization.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused changes in everyday life and work, prompting employees to develop their skills. The aim of this doctoral dissertation was to examine how experiences related to the pandemic influenced employee flexibility in the context of employment change related to the development of robotization.

The survey showed that most respondents are not afraid of losing their job due to robotization. However, most of them develop new skills and recognize the need for lifelong learning. Moreover, most respondents show readiness to change their profession.

Most respondents undertook self-development activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, but only a small number of them started a new business. Despite this, most respondents feel stable in their skills and are ready for career changes.

This research constitutes an important contribution to the literature, especially in the context of the Polish labor market and the unusual phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic. The author plans to continue her research to track changes in public opinion years after the pandemic has ended.

Keywords: robotization, job market, COVID-19 pandemic, Industry 4.0