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Charity work of men sentenced to imprisonment in Lower Silesia – a research report

Abstract: The article is devoted to the subject of charity work of men serving prison sentences in the District Inspectorate of Prison Service in Wrocław. The aim is to present the importance of charity work and to show how it can be used in penitentiary influences on the basis of collaboration between prisons and local communities, highlighting its comprehensive impact on convicted persons. The main research problem is the impact of charity work on the attitudes of men serving prison sentences and its influence on satisfying their needs, changing moral values, increasing self-esteem, motivation and commitment.

Key words: charity work, penitentiary social rehabilitation, social participation

Introduction

Charity is mercy, goodwill and supporting the poor. Strictly speaking, it is a trend of Christian religious philanthropy. The name comes from the Latin word *charitas* meaning “mercy” or Christian love towards the poor (Kopaliński 1989, p. 90). In common use, “charity” and “philanthropy” are often treated interchangeably, but they differ significantly. The source of charity is a religious order, while philanthropy draws inspiration from the secular ideas of humanitarianism. In both cases, it is about direct support in individual cases. For several years now, Poland has developed an institution of charity work, called voluntary service, as a conscious, unpaid and freewill work for the needy, going beyond neighborly, familial and friendly assistance. The status of voluntary service is regulated by the act of

24 April 2003 on activities for the benefit of the public and volunteer work (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 873 as amended). In executive criminal law, charity work is included in art. 123a § 2 of the Executive Penal Code. Prisoners are referred to work under an agreement for unpaid employment of convicted persons in full-time, i.e. 8 hours a day from Monday to Friday. Work is undertaken by prisoners of open and semi-open penitentiary institutions, who are carrying out their sentence in the programme interaction system, usually before its completion, having appropriate personality traits and professional qualifications, required by employers and showing progress in social rehabilitation. It happens by way of exception that persons from therapeutic wards are referred to charity work. This work is performed for the sick, the disabled, children, adults, the poor, as well as for animals in direct contact with them. It is nursing and care in nature or aims to raise their comfort and quality of life, through the performance of cleaning works, renovations, maintenance works, gardening, cooking, office, cultural and educational, and even hairdressing. It is a “full-time” job outside the institution, providing the possibility to satisfy the basic needs of convicts and change their self-esteem and moral values. Other charitable activities are “occasional”, consisting in, among others, sewing balls for children, preparing holiday packages, help in organizing events, all kinds of collections and producing own artistic goods for sale in order to support people in need. The most valuable experience for convicts is working with former prisoners, charges of homeless shelters, hospices, and associations.

Methodological assumptions

Aim of the research

The literature on the subject lacks a current and comprehensive study on the charity work of men incarcerated in prisons in Lower Silesia, taking into account its comprehensive impact on all participants.

The article is devoted to the role of charity work of men serving prison sentences in the field of penitentiary influences in the District Inspectorate of Prison Service in Wrocław. The aim was to present the importance of charity work and to show how it can be used in penitentiary influences on the basis of collaboration between prisons and local communities, highlighting its comprehensive impact on convicted persons.

The presented research results pertain to:

- the use of charity works by penal institutions in the process of carrying out prison sentences, including the types of work, the possibilities and specific nature of employing prisoners for charity work, cooperation with the local community and its course, as well as the impact of work on the implementation of objectives and selected functions of imprisonment;

- the internal and external motivation of men serving a prison sentence to undertake charity work and their age, the types of crimes they committed, the length of their punishment at the time of starting work or previous experience in volunteering;
- the impact of charity work on the attitudes of men serving a prison sentence towards work and its impact on satisfying the needs of prisoners, changing their moral values and increasing self-esteem; an attempt was also made to show charity work as a factor of social destigmatization of people serving a prison sentence;
- the participation of local communities of the penitentiary institutions under investigation in the influence of penitentiary institutions, e.g. the demand for charitable work of convicted persons, their employment, initiation of cooperation with penal institutions and its course, or changing social knowledge on the needs and the situation of the convicted persons.

Research methods, techniques and tools

In order to answer the research questions, qualitative research methods in the form of an open in-depth interview, as well as quantitative methods in the form of a psychological test and questionnaires were used. In the section pertaining to interviews aimed at penitentiaries and social institutions that employ convicts for charity work, the methodology contains the elements of a monograph. On the other hand, the part devoted to convicted persons concerning the interview, questionnaire and psychological test contains elements of a diagnostic survey.

The following research techniques were used in the research:

- 1) interview with the manager of the penal institution;
- 2) interview with the manager of the collaborating institution;
- 3) interview with the convict;
- 4) psychological test for the convicted person;
- 5) questionnaire for the convicted person;
- 6) questionnaire for the educator of the convict.

The research used tools in the form of: an interview questionnaire, a survey questionnaire and the Moriss Rosenberg Self-assessment Scale.

Characteristics of the researched groups

The first group covered by the research were all penal institutions within the District Inspectorate of Prison Service in Wrocław, employing prisoners for unpaid charity work. They were:

- 1) ZK Wołów for re-offenders (semi-open type);
- 2) ZK Głogów for re-offenders (semi-open type);

- 3) ZK no. 1 in Wrocław for first-time convicts (semi-open type);
- 4) ZK no. 2 in Wrocław for re-offenders (semi-open type);
- 5) ZK Strzelin for first-time convicts (semi-open type);
- 6) ZK Kłodzko for re-offenders (semi-open type);

The second group covered by the survey were all institutions cooperating with the aforementioned penal institutions within the framework of charity work in 2009–2014. These were: one hospice, six foundations, four associations, one shelter, one nursing care institution, one care-educational institution, one school-educational institution, one youth sociotherapy center, two orphanages, one care center, one research center, nine Roman Catholic parishes, one Pentecostal church and three orders.

The third group covered by the study are men serving imprisonment in a system of programmed influence, undertaking charity work – a total of 45 convicts:

- 1) for first-time convicts (25 persons): 2 convicts from ZK no. 1 in Wrocław, 23 convicts from the ZK in Strzelin;
- 2) re-offenders (20 persons): 7 convicts from the ZK in Wołów, 6 convicts from the ZK in Głogów, 4 convicts from ZK no. 2 in Wrocław, 3 convicts from the ZK in Kłodzko.

The men surveyed were between 26 and 56 years old – including first time convicts aged 26 to 56 (55.56% of the total number of research subjects) and re-offenders aged 26 to 55 (44.44% of the total number of research subjects). Among the sentenced men doing charity work in Lower Silesia, and thus those covered with by the research, there are no juveniles. Among first time convicts, the greatest number of those working was aged between 31 and 50, while among re-offenders – between 31 and 40. The largest group of working persons represented men aged between 31 and 40 (46.67%), followed by men aged 41–50 (28.89%). The only criterion for selecting the convicts to the study group was their consent.

Organization of research

The research was divided into three stages. The first one was carried out in all prisons in the area of the District Prison Inspectorate in Wrocław in the scope of using unpaid charity work in penitentiary influences. The second stage of the research concerned all social institutions in Lower Silesia employing prisoners for charity work. The third stage of the research was devoted to men doing charity work and serving prison sentences in these prisons.

Research results

The results of the research were divided into three parts, corresponding to the research groups – penal institutions, social institutions and convicted persons.

In Poland and in Lower Silesia too few convicted persons undertake charitable work in relation to paid work and other types of unpaid work.

In Lower Silesia, most prisons have signed contracts for unpaid employment of convicts for charity work. Out of 8 prisons, only 2 do not have such agreements. In the local community of each prison there is a possibility to establish cooperation with local institutions. In the search for partners, it is important to select them according to their diversity (e. g. type of activity, mission) in order to diversify the work of convicted persons.

The research revealed a low initiative of prisons in establishing cooperation with local institutions in the field of charitable work. Of the 33 agreements concluded, only in 5 cases the initiative was on the prison side. Lack of knowledge about the possibilities of cooperation with the local environment results from low interest and involvement of the institutions themselves.

Among the social institutions that collaborate in charitable work, there is a lack of institutions the mission of which is to provide care and assistance to former convicts. None of the penal institutions cooperates with e.g. the St. Albert Society, the Wrocław Prisoner Care Association, with shelters, night shelters, heating rooms, almshouses, social homes, residential housing for homeless men and with emergency care centers, centers for people with HIV and AIDS and beaneries, which is the most valuable kind of work for those serving imprisonment sentences.

In Lower Silesia, charity work is undertaken by re-offenders and first time convicts, serving sentences in a system of programmed influence in semi-open establishments. The research shows that juveniles and those who are serving a sentence in the therapeutic system are not allowed to do charity work. Exceptionally, only in one establishment a person serving the punishment in the therapeutic system was selected. The lack of young people in such undertakings is justified by their low age, low life and professional experience, the possibility of escape and for the sake of them not to be used by their older colleagues to handle business of criminogenic nature. Every convict should be given the opportunity to undertake charitable work, regardless of age and the system of serving a sentence. This type of work should be directed primarily at juvenile persons serving punishment in the therapeutic system (taking into account individual conditions) and it should even be possible for people serving a sentence in closed-type facilities (by entrusting tasks to be carried out by institutions).

Charity work is characterized by great diversity. The convicts perform mainly construction, cleaning, housekeeping, transport, repair, conservation, renovation and carpentry works. It is only in fourth place that nursing and care work in direct contact with the wards is placed. This situation indicates that charitable work is underutilized by the penitentiary institutions. The reason for this is the lack of any major initiative of facilities in search of partners for co-operation in the field of nursing and care work, underestimating its value in correlation with

the needs of the convicts and signing agreements with each institution willing to cooperate. The research shows that nursing and care work has the greatest impact on the convicted persons.

Prisoners are directed to charitable work at the end of their sentence by the prisons (except for one prison). When making decisions on the employment of inmates, it is important to be able to test them in freedom conditions before the end of their sentence. The “Final Prize” in the form of work is intended to remind about the unprofitability of escapes, non-compliance with social and legal norms and the rules adopted by employers. The end of the charity work usually coincides with the end of a sentence or conditional, early parole. On the basis of the research carried out, I believe that every convicted person should have a chance to start charitable work earlier, and not only at the end of their sentence, taking into account their individual circumstances.

A very important problem is the mismatch between the type of charitable work performed and the types of crimes committed by the convicted persons. The largest group consists of offenses against property, with particular emphasis on burglary, ordinary theft, robbery and fraud. The second place is taken by crimes against traffic safety, including: driving in a state of intoxication and offenses against life and health – medium and light bodily injury, as well as fight and battery. The third place is taken by offenses against the family and guardianship, which firstly includes avoiding alimony. Convicts that have committed the so-called light crimes, mainly concerning the material aspect of life and low sentences are directed to do charity work. This group of convicted persons is of the smallest concern to the prison service when being directed to charitable work, with an additional asset, which in most cases is the impending end of the sentence or a chance of early parole. Charitable work, carrying many values, can affect any group of prisoners, especially prisoners convicted for crimes against health and life (e.g. murder, involuntary manslaughter, severe bodily injury, failure to provide assistance, direct danger of loss of life or serious harm to health, direct exposure to contracting severe illness or euthanasia), family and care (i.a. abuse, abandonment of the incapable, kidnapping of a minor or incapable or consuming alcohol with a minor), physical inviolability (including its violation) or against sexual freedom and customs (e.g. rape, coercion to prostitution). A very significant group of offenses, one that **ideally** predisposes the convicts to charitable work are offenses against animals. As a result of such offenses, the convicts should be obliged to carry out charitable work and should receive priority in direct contact with humans and animals.

There are much more people in every facility willing to do charitable work than there are jobs. Convicted persons declare their readiness to take up charity work to educators, staff of the employment department or receive such a proposal only from the penitentiary committee. It is often the case that candidates lose their chances of being employed in an open environment due to a lack of

skills and qualifications. A chance must be given to convicts without skills and qualifications if they show progress in social rehabilitation and express a desire to learn. The prison, in consultation with the institution of employment, should be more involved in preparing the sentenced person for the work they do (by providing precise information about them, by helping to train them, and by contacting a prison psychologist if necessary).

Close cooperation between prisons and local institutions should be the basis for employing convicts for charitable work. Good cooperation is based on commitment, regular and direct contact, control and mutual assistance (e. g. partial coverage of convict employment costs by prisons). In order to cover more prisoners with the influence of charitable work, it is necessary to motivate and prepare the institutions for employing convicted persons, e.g. through education, building a positive image of convicted persons in local communities and initiating and sustaining cooperation independently. The care of the prison service for their own safety and that of the convicted persons is caused by the randomness and inadequacy of decisions made concerning the employment of prisoners, especially in charitable works. This fact is a proof of the poor understanding of the prison service on the issue of charity work, the inability to use it properly in penitentiary influences and the still ongoing underestimation of its values in the field of social rehabilitation.

The second researched group is social institutions cooperating with penal institutions in charitable work.

In Lower Silesia, the demand among social institutions for the work of convicted persons is varied. It is influenced by: the number and location of institutions in the region, the type of their activity, the general standard of living of the inhabitants, cooperation with penal institutions, but above all by knowledge of the possibilities of employing convicted persons. In smaller towns and villages, in poorer areas, there is the greatest demand for the prisoners' work, which is due to a lower standard of living, fewer inhabitants, solidarity and less anonymity. In large cities, the employability of convicts in charity work is low. There are several reasons for this, including a lack of education on penal matters and lack of knowledge about the employment opportunities of convicted persons. The inmates lose out to the competition – persons without criminal records – volunteers and externally funded workers. The largest group of employers for charitable work are churches and order groups, which closely cooperate with each other. The institutions profiting from charity work should assist prisons by disseminating information on prison employment opportunities, especially among secular institutions.

In the opinion of the employers, the number of convicts is sufficient and adequate to meet the demand. The facility, in agreement with them, shall regulate the number of workers to be sent out, which is often dependent on the changing needs and circumstances of the institution during the contract period. It should be remembered that the institutions are obliged to provide work for the convicted

persons, so they only accept a number of people that can be given jobs. According to interviews with the convicted persons, some employers are unable to manage their time and clearly define the scope of their activities. Intensive absorption of inmates with work is very important from the point of view of penitentiary influence.

The institutions often have their own financial problems and those related to the costs of employment of convicted persons, e. g. in the form of insurance, medical examinations, meals and commuting. On the basis of interviews, it appears that the institutions could employ more convicts (and for longer), subject to financial support from the prison. The scale of the sentenced prisoners' employment opportunities depends not only on the actual need for a particular type of work, but also on the financial situation of the institution. Several of them ended their co-operation with the prison on account of the unprofitability of employing convicted persons. I believe that the institutions are already incurring low costs, often with the help of the convicts' professional and good work. That is why they should also show initiative in looking for other sources of funding other than the prisons.

The employment of convicts for charitable work is an opportunity for the institutions to carry out their own plans in accordance with their mission. At the beginning of the cooperation, the motivations of people managing social institutions to employ convicted persons were in most cases unequivocal – the acquisition of cheap labor. Only 10 of them declared that the purpose of employment was also to help the convicted persons by creating jobs and participating in their social rehabilitation process. On the basis of interviews with the convicts and my own observations, I believe that convicts are being exploited and treated as cheap labor in several workplaces. With a large number of people willing to work, these duties could be shared and a chance to be employed could be given to other willing prisoners. It is the practice of the majority of institutions to make the most of the convicts, who are very much interested in the work themselves and in all the benefits they derive from it. One can notice a tendency that institutions resign from employing convicted persons in renovation and construction works after the agreed task is completed, e.g. after the completion of the renovation of a building. Undoubtedly, charity work is invaluable in every respect, but it is important to remember that prisoners should not be used for one's own statutory purposes.

One of the additional financial burdens for the institutions is the additional benefits for work, apart from the contract, i.a. in the form of coffee, tea, cigarettes, tobacco, additional meals, the purchase of food, personal hygiene products, additional baths at the workplace, clothes, footwear, underwear or small cash payments. Of the 33 institutions, as many as 29 of them have admitted providing additional benefits for work, and 4 of them only fulfill the contractual provisions. For the institutions, these are additional benefits for work, which guarantee its reliable performance and the possibility of rewarding those who work best. For the convicted persons they are the only and very important kind of "remuneration"

for work, a certificate of appreciation and acceptance. It should be remembered that the convicts often include persons who perform their duties very reliably, often on their own initiative, such that would not have been performed by a full-time employee. On the basis of interviews, it can be concluded that any form of remuneration for convicted persons is important and very much awaited, for example in the form of commendatory letters or verbal praise. According to A. Maslow's theory of needs, help in satisfying the basic needs of convicted persons restores balance of the body and influences the motivation to meet the needs of the higher level – personal and, in consequence, social.

An important element of charitable work is the attitude of employers, co-workers and wards towards the convicts, which results in the atmosphere prevailing in the workplace. Interviews with prisoners show that they attach great importance to social reception, good treatment and atmosphere at work, although they are reluctant to admit this. On the basis of interviews with both sides and own observations, I believe that the convicts are counting on a warm, homely atmosphere, good treatment and showing interest in their affairs and needs when taking up the work. Treating convicts subjectively on the basis of discipline and clearly defined requirements avoids misunderstandings, prevents claims and prevents further demoralization and stigmatization. According to T. Hirsche's theory of social control of behavior, the social role in shaping the desirable attitudes of people condemned towards the existing social norms and values cannot be overestimated. A weakened bond between an individual and society, resulting from inadequate socialization, may result in a lack of conviction about the need to abide by common norms and values. Creating bonds with the convicts prevents deviation, influences the success of the process of their social rehabilitation, influences social perception and helps to understand their situation and needs. Through building bonds, charity work in an open environment teaches norms and values, thus influencing social control in terms of observance of social and legal order. It also affects the feeling of the convicts' satisfaction with their job, their self-esteem and the fulfillment of their duties.

The final conclusion, which combines the first and second group examined, is to maintain co-operation. The institutions should also take care of this by informing authorized officers of all problems concerning the convicts and contractual obligations. Many institutions were unable to implement the provisions of the agreement over time, which has led to its termination in several cases. It is advisable to look for other solutions in consultation with prisons or in an open environment. Problems caused by convicts are often concealed and solved by the institutions themselves. Close cooperation between the institutions and the prisons and mutual openness could solve many problems and influence the length and quality of this cooperation.

Penitentiary policy is inconsistent if it teaches the prisoners proper behavior, impossible to implement and continue in conditions of freedom. It is only on the

basis of appropriate cooperation between prisons and local communities that it is possible to employ convicts in charity work while serving a custodial sentence. In the whole research work, the most important group under investigation are the convicts, who are affected by charitable work. Its broad range of influence includes motivation and commitment, attitudes, needs, values and self-esteem of the convicts.

On the basis of the qualitative and quantitative methodology used, it can be concluded that the convicts have internal motivations for undertaking charitable work. The interviews show that prisoners are guided primarily by the management of their time, the joy of freedom, external contact and having a job, something to do. Questions about the convicted people's motivation and involvement in the survey included: getting involved in the job, searching for information about the possibility of taking up a job, gaining knowledge about the job, wanting to do it, trying to fulfill their duties and taking additional actions on their own initiative. The analysis showed that internal motivation increases over time when doing charity work (a significant result was obtained ($F_{(1, 44)} = 83.61$; $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.65$).

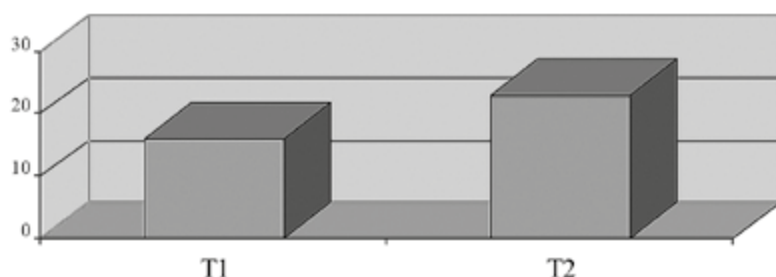


Fig. 1. A change in the level of internal motivation over time, where T1 is the level of internal motivation at the beginning of the research and T2 is the level of internal motivation after three months of charity work.

Another influence of charity work concerns the attitude and its knowledge component. For the convicted persons who take up work, it is very important to know about it because it means information about the workplace, the type of work they are doing, the requirements of their superiors and the possible “gratuities” for their work. Out of the 45 convicted persons, only 29 persons had full knowledge of the work performed before taking up the job, and 21 of them were informed by the educator/employment officer. A large number of convicts are not well informed about the work they do, even though they are all expressing the need. The lack of information affects the decision of the prisoners to undertake charitable work.

In retrospect, the skills of the convicts in their opinion turned out to be insufficient (15 prisoners). They concerned specialist work: nursing and care, general construction and carpentry for people without appropriate qualifications and professional experience. After starting work, only 32 research subjects stated that they had the opportunity to prepare themselves at the beginning through talking, training and practical activities. In the case of the 13 research subjects, there was no initial talk with the employer, nor any possibility of any preparation. The convicts expect help in preparing for work, training and introduction to the activities, both from the prison and the institution.

Charitable work teaches us habits and skills useful in personal and professional life, both in a closed and open environment. According to the prisoners, the habits acquired through work include: diligence, duty and responsibility, which cannot be learned in isolation. The habit of patience and calmness, and in dealing with the wards, with whom contact is difficult – openness and communicativeness, are very important from the point of view of mental health. The research subjects also have a chance to acquire new skills. The most important of them are: nursing and care, renovation and construction. Of the 45 convicts – 33 acquired new skills through charitable work.

In the course of their work, the respondents gain knowledge about their wards. They assess their needs and life situation. In the whole group of respondents, as many as 36 convicts were interested in and familiar with the needs of their wards and knew their life situation. It is a testimony to the observation of their wards and the interest, which influence thinking about their own life situation. This experience has in many cases proved very difficult for the convicts. However, they help in planning and making life decisions for the future.

The convicts perform their duties very reliably and are mostly convinced of improving the comfort of their wards' lives. They are aware of the greater or lesser help and purpose and sense of their work. By improving the comfort and living conditions of the wards, the convicts feel wanted, appreciated, satisfied with their work and their feeling of stigmatization decreases, resulting in the integration of prisoners with the outside environment.

Very important conclusions relate to the emotions experienced by the convicted persons before and during their charity work. One of them is being satisfied with work. Based on the interview, the convicts are most satisfied with: time management, well done work, the atmosphere, appreciation, contact with nature and the "gratuities" for work. Out of 45 research subjects, 34 are happy with their work. Others – those dissatisfied – complain about the lack of remuneration, short working hours and long commutes. The level of job satisfaction of the research subjects is also presented in the survey results. The satisfaction concerns: overall satisfaction, satisfaction with benefits, improved comfort of life and satisfaction of needs. The analysis showed that satisfaction increases over time when doing charity work (a significant result was obtained ($F_{(1, 44)} = 26.62; p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.38$)).

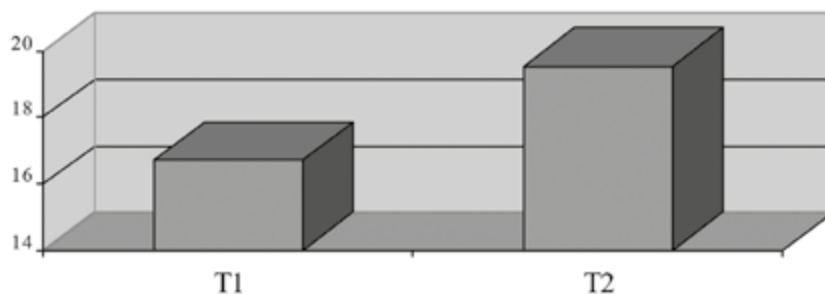


Fig. 2. A change in the level of satisfaction over time, where T1 is the level of satisfaction at the beginning of the research and T2 is the level of satisfaction after three months of charity work.

During the interviews, the prisoners rarely confessed the emotions they had experienced before they started working. Out of the entire study group, only 12 prisoners admitted to be very worried about performing nursing care work on humans and animals, due to a lack of experience and fear of contracting a disease. The prisoners experienced a lot of emotions in through contacts with the wards during their work. The 31 subjects experienced “difficult emotions” and these were: compassion, grief, respect, sadness, fear, disgust, surprise. This change is very clear and testifies to the strong influence of charity work on the emotions of the convicts and, consequently, their attitudes. According to L. Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance, convicted people, confronted with the phenomenon of illness, pain and suffering, experience various emotions, creating inconsistency between their own beliefs and the reality surrounding them. Attempts to reduce dissonance may be made by attempting to change behavior or the knowledge held. Voluntary experience of unpleasant and difficult experiences and a real involvement in actions that are in dissonance with private beliefs can lead to a change of attitude.

Another important conclusion concerns the external stigmatization of convicted people in an open environment. The fears regarding social reception before taking up employment turned out to be low – as many as 38 prisoners were not fearing social reception in the working environment. After employment, the situation changed – 27 convicts declared positive public perception at the beginning of their work and after 3 months, 16 convicts indicated prejudices only at the beginning and 2 of them were received badly all the time. At the beginning, co-operation was based on the principle of limited trust and this situation changed later on.

One of the research problems is the implementation of the aims and functions of imprisonment through charitable work. The most important influences from the point of view of rehabilitation are: the function of satisfaction and expiation. According to the interviews conducted with the prisoners, out of 45 respondents

– 29 of them want the charity work to fulfill these two functions. Unfortunately, however, it fulfills them for only 24 of them. The research subjects have a poor understanding of the meaning of the above mentioned functions, rarely declare guilt and a need for compensation. On the one hand, they would like to see their work fulfilling these two functions, and on the other hand they feel themselves the victims of, among other things, forced isolation and previous negative experiences of life. This is a sufficient signal for the prisoners to co-operate with a prison psychologist. In the opinion of the convicted persons, charity work does not fulfill the entirety of these two essential functions.

Changing the behavior of the convicts is one of the key and expected outcomes of penitentiary influences. As a result of the work undertaken, the behavior changed in 31 of them. The convicts try to behave properly in the workplace so that they can work for as long as possible, even if the change is faked. Charitable work, through contact with other people in an open environment, forces a change of behavior, even if it is to last only during working hours. On the basis of interviews with the convicts, it can be concluded that work significantly reduces their aggression, calms them, gives peace and balance, optimism and teaches them openness and respect towards others, and this is a good basis for changing their behavior permanently.

All convicts take their duties very seriously and responsibly. All the research tools show that as many as 38 research subjects fulfill all the obligations imposed on them and even undertake additional ones at their own initiative. Prisoners are very serious about their work, which is a reward, a source of many benefits and a way of serving the rest of the sentence.

Another conclusion pertains to establishing relations with the wards. In the opinion of the 45 research subjects, relations with them were only very good and good. Thanks to their motivation and commitment, the convicts tried in various ways to adapt to the needs of the wards and establish not only correct relations with them, but also friendships.

According to T. Hirsche's theory of social control of behavior, the intense absorption of convicted people with work results in the lack of time and strength for nonconformist behaviors. Involvement in work, on the other hand, is a reminder of too high a cost of not respecting social and normative order. Very often the convicts become attached to their wards and co-workers, and these ties oblige them to adopt conformist attitudes (Konopczyński 2008, p. 207).

The convicts undertake charitable work primarily in order to satisfy their own needs. The interviews with prisoners suggest that the most important of them are: going out to freedom, people-to-people contacts, contact with animals, contact with nature, basic needs (shopping, eating, bathing), time management and mental needs (calmness, tranquility, a change of place, of people). Work also brings many benefits to the convicted persons, such as: learning through work, changing behavior, increasing responsibility for oneself, for others, preparing one

for release into the outside world and changing values. The survey shows that there has been a significant change in the level of perceived benefits of work by the convicts. The analysis showed that the assessment of the benefits associated with charity work increases over time when doing charity work (a significant result was obtained ($F_{(1, 44)} = 198.81$; $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.82$)).

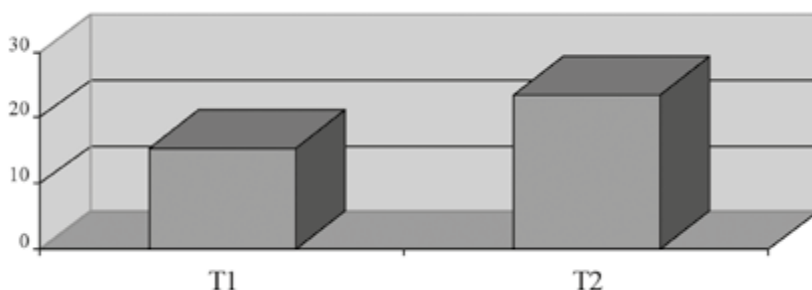


Fig. 3. A change in the level of benefits from work over time, where T1 is the level of benefits from work at the beginning of the research and T2 is the level of benefits from work after three months of charity work.

Charitable work can change the system of value of the sentenced persons. Unfortunately, in the case of the research subjects, the most important values remain unchanged during the entire term of imprisonment. These invariably include: freedom, family and work. As a result of taking up charitable work, a few new values appeared in the research subjects: respect for people and animals, health, dignity, responsibility, honesty, caring, joy and tranquility. These values are very valuable in terms of social adjustment and penitentiary influence.

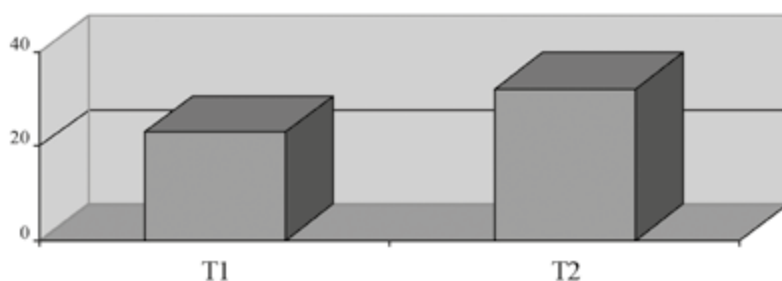


Fig. 4. A change in the level of self-esteem over time, where T1 is the level of self-esteem at the beginning of the research and T2 is the level of self-esteem after three months of charity work.

Self-esteem is another important factor regulating the sentenced persons' behavior, influencing decision-making. According to the interviews conducted, out of 45 prisoners, 31 stated that their self-esteem was greatly increased thanks to

their charitable work. The self-esteem of the sentenced persons was also examined using the SES self-esteem scale created by Morris Rosenberg. The analysis showed that self-esteem increases over time when doing charity work (a significant result was obtained ($F_{(1, 44)} = 80.52$; $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.65$)).

Conclusions

Charitable work gives prisons the opportunity to establish and develop co-operation with the local community, social education in terms of penitentiary social rehabilitation and the use of a valuable form of penitentiary influence on convicted persons by employing them in an open environment.

The results of the research described above allowed us to formulate important practical recommendations. On the basis of these, prison facilities in Lower Silesia should:

1. Seek agreements for the free employment of convicts for charitable purposes.
2. Send a greater number of convicts to charitable work.
3. Increase their own initiative in establishing co-operation with local institutions.
4. Engage in cooperation with institutions caring for former prisoners.
5. Enable juveniles and those who are serving a sentence in the therapeutic system to take up charity work (considering individual conditions).
6. Direct the convicts first and foremost to charity work involving nursing and care.
7. Allow the convicts to take part in charity work throughout their entire sentence.
8. Adjust the type of the charity work performed to the types of crimes committed by the convicts.
9. Properly inform and prepare the convicted persons for the performed work.
10. Prepare local institutions for hiring convicts.
11. Take care of close co-operation with social institutions in the field of charity work.
12. Participate in the costs of employing convicted persons for charitable work with social institutions.

Charitable work gives the local community the opportunity to build bonds with a sentenced person on the basis of mutual trust and to shape social responsibility for the success of the process of social rehabilitation during the imprisonment. Inclusion in penitentiary influence leads to the acquisition of knowledge about the needs and the situation of convicted persons and, consequently, to a break away from prejudice and social stereotypes about them. The employment of convicted persons in the local community leads, on the one hand, to the establishment and development of co-operation with prisons and, on the other hand, to the transfer of social norms and values to the convicted persons.

Based on the results of the research, several final remarks were formulated for social institutions, concerning:

1. The dissemination of information on the employability of convicted persons in charity work among other institutions.
2. The actual management of the time spent by the employed convicts and a clear definition of their responsibilities.
3. Take the initiative to look for sources of funding in order to employ sentenced people for charitable work.
4. Not to take advantage of the convicts employed in charity work for their own aims.
5. Reward the convicts for work.
6. Create bonds with the convicts through subjective treatment and caring for the atmosphere at work.
7. Maintain co-operation with penal institutions.

On the basis of the research, it can be concluded that the most privileged group in this type of work are the convicted persons.

Charity work:

1. Increases the convicts' motivation and involvement.
2. Shapes habits (diligence, sense of duty, regularity, responsibility for oneself, for others, patience, selflessness).
3. Teaches new skills (such as nursing and care, general construction, carpentry, gardening, cooking, hairdressing, hippotherapy).
4. Satisfies needs: basic (additional meals, drinks, extra bath, cigarettes, personal hygiene products; regulation rewards: reward applications, passes), security, social (interpersonal contacts, social acceptance and recognition), respect, self-realization, in accordance with A Maslow's theory of needs.
5. Ensures mental hygiene (through peace, preventing aggression, eliminating fear, shame, loneliness, abandonment by loved ones).
6. Neutralizes the negative effects of prison isolation (stigmatization, standardization, degradation, depersonalization).
7. Gives the possibility to change attitudes towards oneself and others (through empathy, imitation, modeling, identification), and through reduction of cognitive dissonance in accordance with L. Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory).
8. It allows acquiring knowledge about the situation of the wards and sensitizes to their needs.
9. It teaches communication and building relationships.
10. It teaches respecting work, wards and colleagues.
11. It allows for improvement of the comfort and the conditions of life of the wards.
12. It provides the opportunity to spend time in a valuable manner.
13. It destigmatizes the convicts in the general public view.

14. It allows for building a new identity in an open environment (the concept of creative social rehabilitation created by prof. M. Konopczyński).
15. It boosts the convicts' self-esteem.
16. It increases the level of their satisfaction with work.
17. It affects the adoption of new moral values.
18. It prepares for release through the inclusion of the convicts in social life (T. Hirshe's theory of social control of behaviors).
19. It influences the change of thinking concerning the analysis of one's own life situation, building new goals and plans for the future.
20. It enables the realization of the expiatory function and compensation for imprisonment.

Final Thoughts

The aim of the article was to present the importance of charity work and to show how it can be used in penitentiary influences on the basis of collaboration between prisons and local communities, highlighting its comprehensive impact on convicted persons. The basis for charitable work in the penitentiary influences is the co-operation of prisons with the local community. Its success depends on the commitment and preparation of both parties and the willingness to carry out a joint mission – to help convicted persons through active and responsible participation in penitentiary influences. Unfortunately, the findings of the research have revealed problems and shortcomings in mutual co-operation, on which the work of the convicted persons depends. Proper preparation of charitable work and a conscious and responsible approach to the sentenced persons give them a chance for social rehabilitation in an open environment. The charity work of men serving imprisonment is an important element of penitentiary influence, since each of the surveyed groups benefits from its comprehensive impact, despite the marginalization of its values by penal facilities and social institutions. With an insufficient range of penitentiary influences, their low effectiveness and the search for new solutions, charity work must not only be a complement to these influences, but also their essential element. The convicts' future in charity work is the responsibility of prisons and their local community. The specific nature of this type of employment requires them to complement each other and to share the responsibility for the process of social rehabilitation of the convicted persons.

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