

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Personality of correction officers and their attitudes towards resocialization tasks

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The main aim of the study is to identify factors that promote or hinder the fulfilment of tasks by people working in Polish prisons in positions of educators. Correction officers plan, organize and implement corrective actions towards persons deprived of their freedom. The question whether they have the relevant skills and abilities to use existing resources is important from the point of view of the prison rehabilitation tasks. The results of a survey conducted on 97 officers have shown that they have personality and professional competence, but they do not fully apply its

potential in working with persons deprived of their freedom. The correction officers do not accept regulations for the treatment of convicts and evaluate these regulations as too mild. On the other hand, they perceive many external factors as reducing the motivation to engage in the process of resocialization.

KEY WORDS

personality educators of prisons; hindering factors of the realization of the objectives of rehabilitation

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of a prison sentence is, among others, to develop in persons violating the law an ability to function in society in accordance with rules in force and, what matters most, to refrain from committing crimes. The contents of Article 67 of the Criminal Executive Code give rise to the conclusion that remedial influences organized in penitentiary facilities are intended, first and foremost, to form in prisoners readiness to undertake activity aiming to change their style of behaviour and personality traits (Criminal Code, 2004).

The active participation of prisoners in the process of resocialization is possible if they have first acknowledged the reprehensibility of their conduct, and if they accept the necessity of changing it. From the point of view of the social adjustment of persons violating the law, the important thing is not only to achieve change in the external forms of their behaviour, but, first and foremost, to make them internalize social values and norms, and also to make them learn to control their own behaviours using those very values and norms.

A prerequisite for achieving these anticipated results is to develop in prisoners a susceptibility to corrective influences. It is not viable to hope for the success of resocialization influences aiming for the correction and formation of personality traits if a person subjected to these actions is neither susceptible to influences, nor actively pursues change.

The activity of many persons serving a prison sentence does not result from their striving to meet pro-social objectives. Quite the opposite, in fact, as a result of socialization experiences, they have acquired anti-social patterns of behaviour, and they follow them by means of criminal acts. Also the convicted do not accept a criminal lifestyle, and an act committed by them, forbidden in the light of the law, is a result of particular circumstances in their life, or conflicts which they were unable to solve in a rational manner; they frequently find it difficult to understand the actual reasons for having received a prison sentence. They do not have the feeling of agency, they fail to notice the connection between their lifestyle and a conflict with the law, and they seek the causes of the problem which is their stay in a penitentiary facility elsewhere than in themselves.

The function of prison personnel, first and foremost that of correction officers, is to provide assistance in understanding the context of conflicts with the law and social conflicts, in understanding difficulties with satisfying own needs in a manner compatible with social standards. An important condition of the effectiveness of the resocialization work of correction officers is an ability to communicate with prisoners in such a manner that will make them

accept the proposed remedial activities, and also accept persons implementing the resocialization function of a prison sentence. Factors dependent on both parties determine the establishment of a corrective relationship; however, the function of resocialization personnel is more important. For that very reason, personnel working in direct and personal contact with prisoners must meet certain special personality and professional criteria (Machel, 2003).

Machel (2003) indicates the conditions which ought to be met to make it possible for resocialization personnel to act effectively. These are:

- acknowledging the corrective objectives as having the principal importance, while, simultaneously, maintaining respect for the security of a penitentiary facility, personnel and prisoners,
- the recognition of the rights of prisoners in terms of human rights, which means treating them humanely, and refraining from violating their personal dignity,
- acknowledging the fact that power over prisoners based on force and compulsion is becoming restricted and replaced with power based on authority resulting from competences and positive personality traits,
- the recognition of a professional attitude as the condition of improvement in the effectiveness of penitentiary influence, and also a broad and multi-faceted collaboration with society.

The requirements to be met by prison staff are described in the rules contained in Recommendation No. R (97) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the staff responsible for the application of sanctions and other measures (European Prison Rules). The recommendation emphasizes that the objectives of insulation and other penalties can be effectively achieved only if they are implemented by highly professional, qualified and dedicated staff. Staff should have personal qualities, professional skills and the ethical basis necessary for the exercise of their functions. At the same time, the regulations emphasize that the ability to continuously acquire the knowledge and develop the skills to achieve goals in a professional and creative way should be provided to the prison staff. Staff working conditions should not allow human resources to be wasted (Szymanowska, 2011).

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRISON STAFF IN THE LIGHT OF THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH

Research on problems related to the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom are mainly focus on the perpetrators of criminal law, the circumstances of their criminal activity and functioning in conditions of isolation in prison. Prison staff is much less frequently the subject of scientific analysis. A review

of existing research shows that the authors focus on the working conditions of staff, factors that impede the efficient execution of tasks related to the organization of the prison institutions, total character of the institution, threat of violence, behaviour and personality traits of prisoners. At the core of this approach lies the view that work in prison may contribute to the experience of the staff of occupational stress and its consequences, especially burnout. Most research only deals with selected aspects of the functioning and personality of prison staff.

Nawój (2000) conducted a study of locus of control and level of burnout among educators and prison officers working in a security department in direct contact with prisoners. Studies have shown that people with an internal locus of control are more resistant to burnout than those with an external locus of control. They were also less likely to suffer from symptoms of psychosomatic and neurotic disorders. All respondents have felt loneliness, lack of understanding from colleagues and superiors, but especially those with an external locus of control. In the conclusion, the author draws attention to the importance of taking personality traits related to coping with job stress into account in the recruitment of the prison officers.

Ciosek (1993) postulated that the selection of candidates to work in the prison service should take into account their self-esteem, because people with positive self-esteem and a high degree of self-acceptance are generally better adapted, more resistant to stress and more prosocial. Research on the real and ideal self-image of 128 officers working in four similar types of prisons revealed that the self description of respondents includes responsibility, self-control, reliability, consistency, and focusing on truth and justice, but also self-centred, aggressive and anxious about their role and position in the society.

Samonek-Miazga (2004), on the basis of research on the perception of work in the prison service as difficult and aggravating, found that educators and officers of the security department do not perceive as particularly difficult situations related to the specificity of their work in the prison, for example situations of threat to the principle of humane treatment of prisoners. They rather perceive as difficult situations related to the organization of work, the rules governing the work, salaries, relationships with colleagues and superiors, situations that may occur in every workplace, not only in a prison.

Personality of the candidates for prison officers was investigated by Surma and Basińska (1998). The results showed that the average candidate to work in the prison is persistent, responsible, diligent, efficient, realistically assessing reality, rather well adapted socially, trust in their own abilities and have a sense of security. Candidates were also characterized by a tendency to submit, acceptance of authority, conventionality in operation and control of their

behaviour. In addition, the respondents revealed a tendency to present themselves in a better light and to show themselves as conforming to the social and moral norms, confident and decisive in action. According to the authors, the survey revealed a tendency to dissimulation among candidates.

In Polish prisons, multifaceted studies on the characteristics of the prison staff and the conditions that enable the execution of tasks of rehabilitation of prisoners were conducted by Machel (2001, 2003). Using self-report measures, the author tested 221 correctional officers employed at six prison in leadership positions, serving as teachers and officers of the security department. The research was conducted in the second half of the 1990s. There is no place to present detailed results obtained by the author, as they relate to many aspects of the functioning of institutions of prison and prison staff. However, on the basis of the analysis of the results, the author formulated the following important conclusions:

1. The positions of educators are often occupied by persons who do not possess the necessary professional preparation, who are not educated in resocialization.
2. Prison service cannot get rid of the bureaucratic conformism which is the most apparent indicator of the level of diligence rather than an indicator of rehabilitative work.
3. The model of organization and management of the prison requires modernization. There is hypertrophy of the bureaucratic apparatus of the management staff and at the same time under-investment in prisons.
4. In the prison service there are the same elements of institutional pathology as in other organizations, which hinders the implementation of penitentiary tasks.
5. Prison staff have a very weak belief in the importance of law as a regulatory force of Polish socio-economic life. This weak belief probably reduces the effectiveness of the corrective work.

In light of the presented results, it is still important to identify the factors determining the effective fulfilment of the resocialization tasks.

THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH METHOD

In order to determine what properties of correction officers employed in penitentiary facilities are conducive to establishing a corrective relationship, and what disturb it, the correction officers working in the penitentiary facilities reporting to the District Inspectorate of Prison Service in Warsaw were subjected to research.

In the research, a survey prepared for this particular purpose, and the Polish adaptation of the NEO-FFI

Personality Inventory of Costa and McCrae, were used (Zawadzki, Strelau, Szczepaniak & Śliwińska, 1998).

The NEO-FFI Personality Inventory, used in the research, is a test which serves for diagnosing personality traits in accordance with the Big Five Theory of McCrae and Costa (2005). It includes five scales, which measure the following personality traits:

- neuroticism – the dimension characterizing emotional adjustment versus the loss of emotional balance,
- extraversion – the dimension describing the quality and quantity of social interactions, the level of activity, energy and ability to experience positive emotions,
- openness to experiences – which means a tendency to search and positively assess (evaluate) the experiences of life, tolerance towards the new, and cognitive curiosity,
- amicability – the dimension describing an attitude (positive or negative) to fellow human beings, an interpersonal orientation and ability to make compromises,
- conscientiousness – meaning the level of organizing, perseverance and motivation for undertaking objective-oriented actions, the attitude of a person to their work, and the will to achieve.

The survey used in the research includes question concerning the following problems: the attitude of the correction officers to legal regulations, perceiving prisoners, convictions concerning their own work and the assessment of the working conditions.

PARTICIPANTS

The research included 97 correction officers: 43 women and 54 men. The average age of the women was 32 years, and that of men 36 years. The average time of having been employed in the penitentiary system for female correction officers is 5.9 years, and for males 8.5 years. Twenty-nine of the researched women (67.4%) have received a pedagogical education, 9 (20.9%) a psychological education, and 5 (11.6%) an education of a different kind. For the male correction officers, these

proportions, respectively, are as follows: 42 (77.8%), 1 (1.9%) and 11 (20.4%). Therefore, 83.5% of the researched persons possess professional competences conducive to conducting resocialization tasks effectively.

RESULTS

THE PERSONALITY OF THE CORRECTION OFFICERS

The analysis of the results of the research using the NEO-FFI Personality Inventory was conducted on the basis of answers obtained from 87 of the correction officers (36 women and 51 men), whereas it was not possible to process the remaining answer sheets because they had been filled in inaccurately by the researched persons.

The test for differences between 2 average Student's *t* values showed that the average values in the groups of the male and female correction officers are significantly different in the aspects of extraversion and conscientiousness. The one-tailed test for the significance level of 0.05 was conducted (Table 1).

The obtained results show that the correction officers are characterized by personality traits conducive to undertaking resocialization tasks and completing them. Another of their traits is being emotionally balanced, resilience to the difficulties of life and to stress. In difficult situations at their workplace, they can handle negative emotions successfully. They possess an ability to experience positive emotions and find it easy to establish interpersonal contacts; they are active and open. They can work well in a team and like to dominate. They display intellectual cognitive curiosity, are willing to learn new ways of doing things and are independent in their judgements. Simultaneously, they are able to reach compromises, are sensitive to the needs of other people, and appreciate friendly interpersonal relationships. They are able to set objectives in life and persevere on their road to success, are dutiful and well-organized.

Moreover, statistically significant differences between the groups of the researched women and men

Table 1

Results of the research using the NEO-FFI Personality Inventory

Group	Men (N = 51)		Women (N = 36)		T-test statistics	T one-tailed criterion
	M	SD	M	SD		
Neuroticism	16.71	7.69	15.31	7.08	0.85	1.66
Extraversion	29.24	4.66	31.64	4.92	-2.29	1.66
Openness	26.90	5.44	28.64	6.65	-1.32	1.66
Amicability	29.25	4.97	30.92	5.10	-1.50	1.66
Conscientiousness	33.57	7.97	38.17	5.53	-2.95	1.66

in terms of the intensity of extrovert traits and conscientiousness were recorded. It was revealed that the female correction officers are more active and optimistic, and that they find it easier to establish contacts, and, moreover, that they are better organized, pay more attention to details and are more reliable in comparison with the male correction officers.

THE ATTITUDES OF THE CORRECTION OFFICERS TOWARDS RESOCIALIZATION TASKS

Attitude to legal regulations

Fewer than 21% of the respondents are of the opinion that the Polish state is a law-ruled state, and this opinion is less frequently expressed by the women.

Simultaneously, the respondents most frequently chose the answer 'It is hard to say' (Table 2).

The majority of the researched correction officers, nearly 60%, are of the opinion that the law in Poland does not treat citizens as equal to one another. The women express such an opinion more frequently, namely in nearly 70% of cases (Table 3).

Half of the researched correction officers are of the opinion that crime perpetrators are treated in an excessively lenient way, and that the judicature fails to complete its tasks connected with punishing them. Only as few as 15.5% of the respondents do not agree with that opinion (Table 4).

More than 60% of the correction officers are of the opinion that crime perpetrators are not treated in an excessively severe way. This is the opinion expressed unanimously by the women and the men (Table 5).

Table 2

It can be said that our country is a law-ruled state

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
I agree/I definitely agree	4	9.3	16	29.6	20	20.6
It is hard to say	20	46.5	19	35.2	39	40.2
I do not agree/ I definitely do not agree	19	44.2	19	35.2	38	39.2
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 3

In our country, all citizens are equal before the law and in terms of criminal responsibility

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
I agree/I definitely agree	3	7.0	15	27.8	18	18.6
It is hard to say	10	23.2	12	22.2	22	22.7
I do not agree/ I definitely do not agree	30	69.8	27	50.0	57	58.7
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 4

The judicature fails to complete its tasks connected with punishing crime perpetrators, and treats them in an excessively lenient way

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
I agree/I definitely agree	20	46.5	28	51.9	48	49.5
It is hard to say	16	37.2	18	33.3	34	35.0
I do not agree/ I definitely do not agree	7	16.3	8	14.8	15	15.5
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 5

The judiciary fails to complete its tasks connected with punishing crime perpetrators, and treats them with in an excessively severe way

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
I agree/I definitely agree	2	4.6	8	14.8	10	10.3
It is hard to say	14	32.6	13	24.1	27	27.8
I do not agree and I definitely do not agree	27	62.8	33	61.1	60	61.9
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

The correction officers do not perceive the legal regulations concerning penitentiary work as useful in organizing and conducting resocialization activities. They are of the opinion that these legal regulations serve prisoners to an excessive degree, and that they set too many requirements for the correction officers. What attracts attention is the difference in opinions expressed by the researched women and men. The former express the view that prisoners have too many rights and privileges significantly more frequently. In turn, nearly all the researched men claimed that the legal regulations concerning penitentiary work impose too many responsibilities on the correction officers (Table 6).

PERCEIVING PRISONERS

In the opinion of the correction officers, prisoners are, first and foremost, interested in leaving a penitentiary facility, in regaining their freedom. This opinion is more frequently expressed by the women. Besides, what matters to prisoners, is providing themselves with good conditions of life while serv-

ing their time in prison. Such a view is more frequently presented by the male correction officers. Apart from that, the correction officers (more frequently, the male ones), are of the opinion that prisoners care about the acceptance of fellow prisoners. Among the benefits which may exert an influence on changing their functioning after being released from prison, a large number of the correction officers enumerated gaining professional qualifications (this is the view more frequently expressed by the male correction officers) and improving their relationships with their family and friends (this is more frequently the opinion of the female correction officers). The correction officers see no interest in changing their lifestyle, personality traits or understanding the causes of their conflicts with the law in the case of prisoners (Table 7).

A significant percentage of the respondents experienced disregard and verbal aggression from prisoners. It is the case to an equal degree as far as the researched women and men are concerned. It is possible to assume that a large number of the correction officers do not feel that they are fully accepted by the prisoners they are in charge of (Table 8).

Table 6

Legal regulations governing penitentiary work

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
They serve the purpose of the resocialization of prisoners	5	11.6	11	20.4	16	16.5
They allow for personal and professional development	4	9.3	5	9.3	9	9.3
They impose an excessive number of responsibilities on the personnel	17	39.5	53	98.1	70	72.2
They allow for too many rights and privileges of prisoners	31	72.1	30	55.6	61	62.9
They serve the purpose of being controlled by the principals	22	51.2	22	40.7	44	45.4

Table 7

I am of the opinion that prisoners are interested in

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Obtaining an early conditional release	39	90.7	39	72.2	78	80.4
Providing oneself with comparatively good conditions of life, while serving the time in prison	33	76.7	49	90.7	82	84.5
Gaining the acceptance of fellow prisoners	23	53.5	36	66.7	59	60.8
Gaining professional qualifications	23	53.5	31	57.4	54	55.7
Improving their relationships with their family and friends	21	48.8	22	40.7	43	44.2
Gaining the acceptance of the correction officers	7	16.3	11	20.4	18	18.6
Changing their criminal lifestyle	9	20.9	8	14.8	17	17.2
Gaining the acceptance of the functionaries, regardless of the capacities in which the latter serve	3	7.0	10	18.5	13	13.4
Understanding the causes of their own conflicts with the law	3	7.0	3	5.6	6	6.2
Changing their own personality traits	2	4.7	4	7.4	6	6.2

Table 8

It occurred that the prisoners' behaviour towards me

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Showed disregard	30	69.8	37	68.5	67	69.1
Was aggressive (in verbal terms)	25	58.1	32	59.2	57	58.8
Undermined my authority	11	25.6	17	31.5	28	28.9
Was aggressive (in an active way)	1	2.3	3	5.6	4	4.1

CONVICTIONS CONCERNING THEIR OWN WORK

Among the reasons for commencing a career in the Prison Service, the correction officers indicated, first and foremost, the perspective of stability in terms of income, and that reason is more frequently indicated by the women. As the second most frequent, compatibility between the job and the learned profession is mentioned (also, more frequently by the women). Fewer than 30% of the respondents mentioned cognitive curiosity as the reason for commencing a career in the Prison Service. What is worth emphasizing is the difference between the researched women and men in this aspect; the female correction officers definitely more frequently indicate cognitive curiosity as

the reason for commencing a career in prison. In turn, the men refer more frequently to the privileges in the uniformed services and good salaries as factors making them willing to work in prison (Table 9).

Nearly all of the researched correction officers stated that they have a positive attitude to their work (Table 10).

A substantial part of them (nearly 70% of the researched female correction officers and 63% of the male ones) experiences satisfaction while doing their job (Table 11).

A high percentage of the researched correction officers feel attached to their workplace, and this is more frequently the case as far as the researched women are concerned (Table 12).

Table 9
What made me commence my career in the Prison Service was

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prospect of stability in terms of income	33	76.7	35	54.8	68	70.1
Compatibility between the job and the learned profession	30	69.8	27	50.0	57	58.8
Privileges of the uniformed service	15	34.9	25	46.3	40	41.2
Cognitive curiosity	18	41.9	11	20.4	29	29.9
Good salary	5	7.0	8	14.8	15	15.5
Encouragement of family and/or acquaintances	2	4.7	3	5.6	5	5.2
Job availability	0	0.0	3	5.6	3	3.1

Table 10
My attitude to work at a penitentiary facility is

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Quite positive/positive	40	93.0	50	92.6	90	92.8
Quite negative/negative	3	7.0	4	7.4	7	7.2
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 11
At work, I am usually

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Satisfied	30	69.8	34	63.0	64	66.0
Full of energy	8	18.6	12	22.2	20	20.6
Tense	2	4.7	4	7.4	6	6.2
Anxious	3	6.7	2	3.7	5	5.2
Disheartened	2	4.7	2	3.7	4	4.1

Table 12
In a penitentiary facility, I feel

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Quite attached/attached	38	88.4	43	79.6	81	83.5
Rather not attached/not attached	5	11.6	11	20.4	16	16.5
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

The majority of the correction officers, more than 90% of the women and nearly 90% of the men, are of the opinion that they perform their job well. None of the respondents feels that they work badly (Table 13).

More than 80% of the researched correction officers express the opinion that the tasks with which they are entrusted are meaningful and effective. Such an opinion is more frequently expressed by the female correction officers (Table 14).

More than half of the respondents are of the opinion that they have an interesting job; moreover, such an opinion is more frequently expressed by the women. Simultaneously, it is comparatively infrequent for

the respondents to indicate that the job of correction officers in a penitentiary facility makes them inclined to improve abilities in their possession, and also that it makes it possible to develop oneself as a person and as a professional (Table 15).

At the end of a working day, a little more than one-third of the respondents have a feeling that the shortage of time has prevented them from completing the planned tasks, and nearly 60% of them sometimes have such a feeling; this is more frequently the case among women (Table 16).

The majority of the respondents feel tired after the end of a working day in a penitentiary facility;

Table 13

I perform my job

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Well or very well	41	95.3	46	85.2	87	89.7
Mediocrely	0	0.0	6	11.1	6	6.2
Badly	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I have no opinion	2	4.7	2	3.7	4	4.1
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	97	100.0

Table 14

The tasks with which I am entrusted

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Are very meaningful and very effective	1	2.3	2	3.7	3	3.1
Are meaningful and effective	37	86.1	41	75.9	78	80.4
Are not very meaningful or effective	5	11.6	11	20.4	16	16.5
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 15

I consider my job to be

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Interesting	28	65.1	25	46.3	53	54.6
Inspiring for improving qualifications and competences	14	32.6	13	24.1	27	27.8
Making it possible to develop myself as a person and as a professional	11	25.6	18	33.3	29	30.0
Not very interesting and rather monotonous	3	7.0	7	13.0	10	10.3
Similar to any other job	4	9.3	5	9.3	9	9.3

simultaneously, this is not tiredness that would prevent them from engaging in a different kind of activity. Of note, the researched men feel tired much more frequently (Table 17).

THE WORKING CONDITIONS

None of the researched correction officers assessed their salary as high or very high. It may be said that the correction officers are not satisfied with the remuneration which they receive for the job they do. Nearly 70% of the women and more than 60% of the men are of the opinion that their salaries are low (Table 18).

The respondents most frequently assessed the interpersonal relationships in the penitentiary facility as quite good or good. However, such answers were

given by less than half of the respondents – among both women and men (Table 19).

A little more than half of the respondents are of the opinion that the assessments of their performance are not fair; this feeling is much more frequent among the female correction officers (Table 20).

In difficult situations, the respondents can most frequently count on the help of their colleagues. A comparatively large number (in terms of percent) is that of those who receive help from their direct principal (Table 21).

A decisive majority of the correction officers feel safe and stable at their workplace (Table 22).

The correction officers most frequently replied that the conducted inspections of their performance are not objective, and that they do not stimulate them to make more effort. Such an opinion is presented by nearly half of the researched women and men (Table 23).

Table 16

At the end of a working day, I feel that the shortage of time prevented me from completing the planned tasks

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very frequently	8	18.6	8	14.8	16	16.5
Frequently	8	18.6	10	18.5	18	18.6
Sometimes	23	53.5	34	63.0	57	58.7
Never	4	9.3	2	3.7	6	6.2
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 17

After the end of a working day, I am usually

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very tired, and unwilling to make any efforts	11	25.6	5	9.3	16	16.5
Tired, but still able to do quite a lot	29	67.4	47	87.0	76	78.3
Not at all tired, and feeling very well	3	7.0	2	3.7	5	5.2
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 18

In relation to my job, my salary

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Is too low/rather low	30	69.7	33	61.1	63	64.9
Average	11	25.6	20	37.0	31	32.0
Quite high	2	4.7	1	1.9	3	3.1
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 19

I consider the interpersonal relationships in a penitentiary facility

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bad/rather bad	6	14.0	11	20.4	17	17.5
Average	16	37.2	20	37.0	36	37.1
Quite good/good	21	48.8	23	42.6	44	45.4
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 20

At my workplace

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Employees who do not stand out at all are favoured	26	60.5	24	44.4	50	51.5
Employees of outstanding professionalism, knowledge and industriousness are favoured	9	20.9	9	16.7	18	18.6
Everybody is treated equally	8	18.6	21	38.9	29	29.9
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Table 21

In difficult situations, I can count on the help of

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
My direct principal	30	69.7	34	63.0	64	66.0
Higher-level principal	11	25.6	18	33.3	29	29.9
Colleagues	32	74.4	41	75.9	73	75.3
No one	2	4.7	3	5.6	5	5.2

Table 22

In my working environment, I feel

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not confident/not very confident	3	7.0	6	11.1	9	9.3
Quite confident and safe/confident and safe; I have a feeling of stability	40	93.0	48	88.9	88	90.7
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

Among the causes making it difficult to complete their professional tasks, the correction officers enumerate, first and foremost, external factors beyond their control, namely financial constraints, work organization and the shortages of working space.

It is particularly the female correction officers that pay attention to the shortages of working space and the excessively large groups of prisoners with whom they are entrusted. Moreover, the correction officers enumerate the excessive degree of conforming to the

Table 23
Inspections conducted in my workplace most frequently

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Are objective in terms of assessment, concentrating on essential issues, and having a stimulating effect	8	18.6	13	24.1	21	21.6
Are objective in terms of assessment, but excessively concentrating on details, and having a stimulating effect	9	21.0	8	14.8	17	17.5
Are not objective, irrelevant to the actual level of performance and effort, and having a de-motivating effect	21	48.8	23	42.6	44	45.4
Schematic, by-the-manual, formal, quite unfriendly and de-motivating	5	11.6	10	18.5	15	15.5
Total	43	100.0	54	100.0	97	100.0

wishes of prisoners and the lack of interest in a remedial process for the part of the latter group as factors making it difficult to complete their professional tasks (Table 24).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of the conducted research indicate that the correction officers are emotionally stable persons, who are also resilient to stressful and difficult situations, who find it easy to establish contacts with other people, are active, displaying intellectual cognitive curiosity, independent in terms of their judgements, able to reach compromises, possessing the ability to make plans and persevere on the road to success; that they are dutiful and able to organize their own activities. The results showed, too, that the female correction officers in comparison with the male ones are more active, optimistic and that they find it easier to establish contact, and, moreover, that they can organize their activities better, that they are more fastidious and reliable.

The correction officers, both women and men, in the majority of cases have a pedagogical education, and, therefore, they have the professional knowledge and abilities demanded in resocialization work. Hence, it may be said that they are a professional group possessing resources conducive to establishing corrective relationships with prisoners, and completing resocialization tasks effectively.

Simultaneously, the results show that the respondents express views, convictions and attitudes which contribute to their failure to utilize the resources in

their possession in full. As it is revealed, apart from conditions conducive to undertaking and exerting resocialization influences, the correction officers also display properties which are adverse from the point of view of their professional tasks.

The analysis of the results of the survey shows that the correction officers are not confident about the law currently in force, and that they question the legal regulations concerning the steps taken in the case of persons committing crimes. The respondents, which is surprising from the point of view of their education and professional responsibilities, are of the opinion that legal regulations contain provisions demanding excessively lenient treatment of crime perpetrators. The view that the regulations concerning penitentiary work provide prisoners with an excessive number of privileges are more frequently expressed by the female correction officers.

In the opinion of the correction officers, prisoners are interested in obtaining an early conditional release, good conditions while serving the time in prison, acceptance by fellow prisoners, gaining professional qualifications and improvement in the relationship with their family and friends, whereas what does not matter for them are such values (important from the point of view of social adjustment) as understanding the causes of conflicts with the law, changing their lifestyle and changing their personality traits. Such a conviction may exert a restricting influence on the resocialization activity of the correction officers because it is conducive to forming the view that they are unable to contribute to changing the way in which prisoners function, and making them undertake activities aiming for improvement in

Table 24
Completing tasks at work is made difficult by

Sample	Women		Men		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
An obligation to unconditionally obey principals	3	7.0	8	14.8	11	11.3
Lack of the possibility of making independent choices and decisions	7	16.3	15	27.8	22	22.7
Diversity and non-cohesiveness of data	21	48.8	26	48.1	47	48.5
Defective work organization	14	32.6	11	20.4	25	25.8
A bad situation in terms of interpersonal relationships	11	25.6	16	29.6	27	27.8
Not appreciating the effort of the correction officers	22	51.2	19	35.2	41	42.3
An excessively obsequious attitude to the prisoners	15	34.9	23	42.6	38	39.2
Behavioural disorders among the prisoners	8	18.6	11	20.4	19	19.6
Insufficient possibilities of exerting resocialization influences resulting from:						
– financial constraints	30	69.8	30	64.8	60	61.9
– work organization	15	34.9	7	13.0	22	22.7
– lack of acceptance by the principals	2	4.7	4	7.4	6	6.2
– shortages of working space	23	53.5	16	29.6	39	40.2
– the insufficient competences of the correction officers	3	7.0	4	7.4	7	7.2
Norms and principles of the prison subculture	1	2.3	6	11.1	7	7.2
Absence of interest and involvement on the part of the prisoners	15	34.9	21	38.9	36	37.1
Excessively large groups of prisoners entrusted to the care of a single correction officer	25	58.1	24	44.4	49	50.5
Instability of correction groups	17	40.0	12	22.2	29	29.9

the quality of their lives. Such a view is not conducive to becoming involved in meeting the objectives of a prison sentence described in Article 67 of the Criminal Executive Code.

The main motives for the correction officers to choose a job in a penitentiary facility are the prospect of a stable income, compatibility between the work and the learned profession, and privileges in the uniformed services. A smaller importance is that of cognitive curiosity. Simultaneously, the respondents do not perceive much opportunity of profession-

al development. This may restrict the activity of the correction officers, and, as a result, lead to being tired and disheartened.

The correction officers have a positive attitude to their job, and are satisfied with it. They feel attached to their penitentiary facility, and they assess their job as interesting; they have a feeling that they perform well, and that their activities are meaningful and effective.

In the context of these results, it is surprising that a significant percentage of the correction officers have experienced disregard and aggression from

prisoners. Therefore, it may be suspected that when formulating their assessments concerning their own work, they do not take into consideration the expectations of prisoners with whom they work.

The correction officers assess the conditions in which they work as not very stimulating, which is proved by the fact that the majority of them are not satisfied with their salaries, and that they are of the opinion that mediocre employees are favoured; they assess inspections as not objective, discouraging them from undertaking effort, and they believe that the legal regulations governing penitentiary work do not serve the purpose of resocialization (they impose an excessive number of responsibilities, serve the purposes of inspecting and favour prisoners). The lack of cohesion between these assessments and the simultaneous conviction that their work is meaningful, and experienced job satisfaction, is intriguing.

The correction officers notice, first and foremost, the external factors, independent of themselves, as disturbing them in working effectively, such as: a significant diversity and non-cohesiveness of tasks, the lack of reward, financial constraints, the shortages of working space, excessively large groups of prisoners, and, moreover, an excessively obsequious attitude to prisoners and the lack of involvement on the part of prisoners in the process of resocialization.

The analysis of the results of the research shows that correction officers working in penitentiary facilities have at their disposal good skills of effective organizing and exerting corrective influences in relation to the persons sentenced to prison, in the form of professional and personal competences. Simultaneously, they fail to utilize the potential which they possess in full, and they do not shape in the case of prisoners a conviction that it is possible to provide them with assistance in achieving a change to their lifestyle and personality traits, and, as a result, in shaping the feeling that life has a meaning and experiencing satisfaction in the various facets of social and psychological functioning. Two reasons for this state of affairs can be suggested. First, the lack of acceptance by the correction officers of the legal regulations concerning the treatment of prisoners, and perceiving that those legal regulations are excessively mild and lenient certainly discourages them from adopting accepting and altruistic attitudes towards prisoners. Second, perceiving many external factors concerning the organization and conditions of work, treatment by the principals as restricting the possibility of performing their professional duties, is not conducive to becoming involved in the process of resocialization.

Ciosek (2008), similarly to many specialist in the field of the penitentiary system, would like prisons to serve the correction of prisoners, or, at least, would like them not to exacerbate the feeling of harm, injustice and hostility towards those who decide about

the punishment and who who make sure it is served. Prison should be a place of meeting between prisoners with persons able to make them feel a need of change to themselves and their lifestyle, and should, in the opinion of this author, among others, have carefully selected, well-trained and well-paid personnel, including numerous specialist personnel, and also create conditions conducive to mutual acceptance and kindness of resocialization personnel and prisoners. The results of the present study confirm this view. They also suggest that it is worthwhile to undertake actions aiming to make it possible for correction officers to make a better use of the professional and personality potential which they possess.

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