MANAGEMENT IN ACTION IN THE EDUCATIONAL MODEL OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TO SUPPORT DYNAMIC SECURITY IN PENITENTIARY UNITS: A CASE STUDY

Witold Kołodziejczyk

Higher School of Criminology and Penitentiary Science in Warsaw, st. Wiśniowa 50, 02-520 Warsaw, Poland

E-mail: witold.kolodziejczyk@wskip.edu.pl

Abstract. The article presents one of the aspects of the implementation of a pilot postgraduate study program for the management of penitentiary units. It discusses the assumptions made when designing a model of management in action based on reflective practice. The presented approach to education and professional development results from the necessity to apply dynamic security in penitentiary units. The aspects mentioned in the article are a consequence of adjusting the work organization in penitentiary units to international law. The role of reflective practice for the effective transformation of the prison system in Poland is emphasized. The results are obtained in qualitative research investigating students esteems for the first edition of the management program expressed in a discussion forum. Based on gathering and assessing more than 500 records, it can be emphasized appreciation of the role of reflection in professional practice of officers involved to provide security in penitentiary system. The function of the podcast is presented as a tool supporting the development of reflective practice in remote learning.

1. Introduction

Professional development of students, which are prepared for security organizations is a double challenge: it has to embarce management theory and practice (Alajmi, 2019; Gerasimov et al., 2019; Mullakhmetov et al., 2019)mand to take into account issues caused by specifics of organization (Suray et al, 2019). The paper is devoted to analysis of a case study of the implementation of a pilot postgraduate study program for the management of penitentiary units.

"Organizations are managed, while people are guided". This is how the first podcast in a series of *Psychology in Management*, prepared for postgraduate students in management at the University of Criminology and Penitentiary Studies, begins. For only few, the assumption presented today in numerous management concepts will sound like a truism. For others, this distinction is an important and essential observation for understanding management and leadership styles. The 30-minute podcast triggered a unique and interesting discussion among its listeners about the functioning of the modern Prison Service. It reveals several conclusions, important for the authors of the study program. Firstly, adopting a psychological perspective in the education and develop-

ment of Prison Service officers may turn out to be extremely important and necessary for the changes in the Polish prison system. Secondly, it proves that there is a deep need among employees to talk about what in every organization is hidden in the attitudes of individual people and extremely difficult to change, and at the same time has a significant impact on the organizational culture. This includes beliefs, values, norms, personal goals, motivations, moral attitudes, and feelings.

Students of the pilot study program - Prison Service officers, are staff performing managerial functions in Polish penitentiary units. Many of them immediately noticed the new approach to training. First of all, it assumes the inclusion of the model of reflective practice in everyday work in penitentiary institutions, understood as the conceptualization of practical knowledge used by practitioners. The new theoretical-practical attitude gives an opportunity to include personal reflection - as an important model of management in action, but also as a catalyst for changes taking place in the Polish prison system. This kind of attitude is the result of the development of human consciousness. On the other hand, this is the dissemination of knowledge about human rights and the impact on the development of legislation. This is also confirmed in developing principles that govern the operation of penitentiary institutions, confirmed in the acts and regulations of international law. Additionally, there are detailed provisions of European law, that influence legal solutions in the system of national policies. The "European prison rules" adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe are important. All of this has a huge impact on the transformation of the penitentiary system in the EU Member States. It serves to build new solutions that change the functioning of the prison system, but also enforces a completely new paradigm of education and professional development of prison service employees. European prison rules refer to: conditions of detention, admission procedures, allocation and accommodation, hygiene, clothing and bedding, food, legal advice, contact with the outside world, prison regime, work, exercise and recreation, education, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, prisoners' possessions, transfers of prisoners, release of prisoners, women, detained minors, children, foreigners, ethnic and linguistic minorities, health and healthcare, safety and security measures. In addition, this activity is strengthened by the control of national prison systems by European institutions. In order to monitor them, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) was established on the basis of the 1987 Council of Europe Convention. The Convention itself does not contain a new set of rights or freedoms. However, it establishes a control mechanism aimed at monitoring the Member States' implementation of Section 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which introduces the prohibition of torture.

The above-mentioned legal solutions, monitoring activities, mechanisms supporting changes aiming at building a modern penitentiary system in Poland, attest to the importance of building a new approach to education and professional development, confirmed by the students of the first edition of the postgraduate Management of Organizational Units in the Prison Service program. Further in the article, I will present the assumptions underlying the program and the first preliminary research on its assessment by the students who are practitioners in the management of penitentiary institutions throughout Poland, as well as discuss the role of reflective practice in managing the organization and the conditions conducive to the development of this attitude among officers. The conclusions presented at the end of the article may constitute recommendations for the creation of education and professional development programs for Prison Service officers. Their goal is to change the organizational culture supporting the implementation of the mission of the prison service. It is possible through the development of individual attitudes and habits of effective operation of officers and managers of the prison service, as well as clear leadership with a vision of the functioning of penitentiary units.

2. Management in action

The pilot program of postgraduate studies in management is prepared for future managers in penitentiary institutions all over Poland. Originally, it was to be carried out as six weekly sessions at five-week intervals. Only the first meeting took place in person. Due to the pandemic and related restrictions, the traditional form changed overnight to the synchronous remote model. For this purpose, the university's educational platform and advanced communication tools were used. Work was moved from campus to homes, although the students usually attend classes in their workplace. In this way, they have the opportunity to confront the content of the

classes and subsequent theories with practice and apply them in a natural professional environment. It is an opportunity to test and verify knowledge in the model of reflective practice (Schön, 1983)

The aim of the pilot management program for Prison Service officers is to provide not only current management theories, but also to present psychological concepts and scientific social theories that can significantly affect the processes of change in the prison system, using reflective practice in action as a method of working with adults.

The study program has a modular structure. The first module focuses primarily on the introduction of global trends in management and refers to the pragmatics of the Prison Service. In the second module, students focus on developing broadly understood leadership competencies – skills which are essential in working with people in present-day organizations. In this module, students concentrate on the development of personal competences and the development of management and leadership skills. Finally, the third module develops the competences for effective action and is mostly implemented by means of action learning. As an innovative formula, this method will allow developing competences of recognizing strategies for functioning of people in organizations, understanding their motivation and improving skills of triggering in them the best character traits which are essential in the prison service, as well as identifying people's behaviour in the organization and their reaction to change (Majewska-Opiełka, 2013). In designing these studies, six key assumptions were employed which fall into three key categories: the organisation and its environment, leadership with vision, and people in the organisation.

● The program focuses on maintaining a balance in the proper development of the key areas of human functioning (intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual).

● The range of content reflects the currently dominant theories and practical knowledge in organisational management and leadership and emphasises the importance of leadership for the proper functioning and development of organisations.

● Strong emphasis was placed on developing participants' habits of effective action based on character ethics and strengthening interpersonal skills.

● Strong identification with the organisation's mission, care for human resources, and the importance of building a positive image inside and outside the organisation are crucial for the proper functioning of the organisation.

It was also assumed that the content could be modified depending on the specifics of the organisation (SW officers, government employees (Table 1).

Table 1. Modular structure of the study program

The organisation and its environment Module I.	Leadership in management Module II.	People in the organisation Module III.
Modern management strategies	Development of leadership competences	Basics of effective action
Fundamentals of organisational management (including the specificity of the organisation)	Project and scenario management. *Planning*: vision and leadership, business simulation;	Behaviour in organisation, people vs. change
Elements of the staff regulations	*Organizing*: delegation of authority; *Motivating*: influencing;	Effective communication, public speaking
Crisis management	*Controlling*: monitoring and evaluation.	

Source: the author's own work

Communication classes were seen as key to developing reflective practice. As the authors of this module, we assumed that many of the problems with smooth functioning on an individual and organisational level are the result of poor communication or of lack thereof. Hence, a large portion of the 35 hours were allocated to this subject and to developing effective communication skills, including five hours of lecture and five hours of public speaking classes led by a TV journalist. The second course with the largest number of hours is Crisis Management. It has 40 hours of seminars alone, which are implemented in the form of six decision-making games of building pertinent risk options. The course has a total of 30 hours of practical activities and 10 hours

of their analysis and summary. The purpose of choosing this form of classes was primarily to develop planning intelligence and to equip students with the mental tools to support simultaneous thinking, which involves almost concurrent thinking and acting/acting and thinking. A special thematic block discussed a set of key tools to support the art of agile thinking (de Bono, 1998). Their role in reflective practice is of great importance, especially when in crisis situations decisions have to be made that require simultaneous thought processes in action. Specific tools can serve this purpose, as personal instruments to focus attention in crisis situations, to concentrate on a specific problem, and to guide planning. These tools support reflective practice. Their choice determines both individual thinking styles and allows us to identify personal strategies in decision-making.

Practitioners dealing professionally with management and leadership of people in business were invited to conduct the second and third modules. The lecturers' many years of experience and their cooperation with the largest global corporations were an invaluable asset for the authors of the program and a guarantee that students will receive the most up-to-date and valuable knowledge. In order to equip officers with management competences, it was decided that the program, apart from issues strictly related to the functioning of organisational units of the Prison Service, should be 'open' to the latest management programs offered all over the world. It is assumed that officers are experts, specialists, and practitioners in the operation of penitentiary units. Hence the decision to present aspects of management and leadership that develop personal competences in communication, motivating, influencing, planning, decision-making, leading, and project management. An important element of the program was the production of 10 original podcasts dedicated exclusively for students of the program as the Psychology in Management series, related to the subject matter of the program and referring to the content of all the modules. The author of the podcast is a psychologist with experience in managing people and an expert in psychology, management, and leadership.

The work on the program adopted the action research method. The choice of the methodology was motivated primarily by the pilot character of the studies, the author's approach to the scope of individual content areas and as the response to the comments, suggestions and proposals of the students as participants of the study in action. The special character of the pilot program requires that its creators point out to the officers their important role and at the same time their responsibility in changing the current model of education and training of Prison Service officers. A reflective yet proactive approach to the study program is extremely important in creating new quality and bringing about organisational and social change (Levin, 2010). The value of research in action is no less than scientific experimentation. Kwiecińska Zdenka shows it in her work, justifying the thesis of equal treatment of this method in scientific research (Kwiecińska-Zdenka, 2000). Della Fish explicitly states that the gap between theory and practice is illusive. The treatment of inquiry in action as an equal method of scientific research was achieved in Poland thanks to the work of Polish researchers (Gołębniak, 2013).

3. Participants in the reflective practice model

The records of the discussion forum of the students of the study program on the management of penitentiary units presented in this chapter, on the one hand, indicate attempts at a reflective approach to the content of the study program. On the other hand, it is the desire and need to develop the skills of reflective practice. This is just the beginning of building a systemic approach to the use of the reflective practitioner model in the education and professional development of the Prison Service employees.

"I miss such trainings or workshops in the service. Unfortunately, in the service we are rather obedient executors of regulations, guidelines and instructions. There is not much room for flexibility. Especially in the work of the so-called "first line" workers in the Prison Service, the knowledge of the basics of psychology, mechanisms of human activity, psychological methods of influencing others is an essential knowledge to effectively influence the convicts".

"From the point of view of the Prison Service, the psychological knowledge may not only be applied to employees, but also in the contact with inmates. It helps to understand the variety of human thoughts, behaviours and actions. Psychology is also helpful for me in maintaining a balance between professional and private life,

thus touching on the areas of taking care of myself, my health, relationships with loved ones, comfort of rest and regeneration of strength".

"The management and leadership are two interrelated and intertwined processes. This shows the correlation of these two processes, thoroughly illustrating the dependencies that guide the leaders "Working on yourself is a fundamental process". It applies primarily to people, so it should be based on such values as: honesty and respect for the employees, and above all, it must be associated with a sense of responsibility for the decisions taken and their consequences in the future. In my opinion, it is important that management in practice is based on skilful balancing and the harmonisation of often contradictory pursuits, interests, needs and expectations of individual stakeholder groups".

"Paul, what you have written coincides with what I think about it and, with your permission, will make part of my statement. Following your line of reasoning, I believe that an important role of a leader as a model/interpretation is also faith in your employees, i.e. broadly understood trust, limited not only to entrusting tasks and participating in their implementation, but also taking responsibility for all effects of the staff's work. This is because there are often situations where, despite clearly defined tasks, the effect does not satisfy the superiors, which in turn resulst in the so-called "nitpicking". It is at such moments that one can very quickly verify the value of the leader and his involvement in the manufacturing process. In these situations, strengthening the values of the staff, their experience, knowledge and professionalism may become crucial in making further strategic decisions, shaping feelings, strengthening the authority of a leader and finally the employee's sense of importance in the implementation of the "company's mission".

"After listening to the podcast, a question arose in me as to what extent such problems of the service as: overloading officers with duties, serving under constant time pressure, conflicts and ambiguities of roles, lack of a clear and fair incentive system, lack of freedom to make decisions, and finally assigning tasks that exceed the current possibilities could be avoided simply by greater care of those in charge of organisational culture in their subordinate units (defined as social norms and value systems stimulating the employees, an appropriate organisational atmosphere or behavioural requirements). In other words, if people holding managerial positions in our units were able to lead better (i.e. inspire and release energy both in themselves and in their subordinate officers, and could create conditions that would encourage members of their subordinate teams to engage in achieving goals together), rather than just managing them (setting goals and giving orders), and in turn their subordinates were ready and able to use their personal internal compass of values (control, internal management)".

"The first podcast in the "Psychology in Management" series made me realise that there are some differences between the management and leadership. Companies are managed. The management concerns the entire company. The manager performs more functions than the leader, bearing greater responsibility. It should have a vision of running the company as a whole. People are directed and a leader/manager is needed for this. The separate part of the company is guided. The leader is a buffer between what comes to him from above and how he thinks/feels he should lead his team. A leader should know what role the section he is managing plays in the company as a whole for its effective operation. The management focuses primarily on activating employees, motivating them to act, to work. The leadership and management are two intertwined processes, parallel to each other".

"My attention was drawn by the statement of the podcast author in the context of activity and development at work, who emphasised that "an employee starts at home…". I think that this is a very important aspect which must not be forgotten, especially in the service, where the officer is required, in the first place, to be ready, available and disciplined. The most important for man is himself and the people with whom he is associated, and the professional work is a part of this reality. I am glad that it is treated as the basis in thinking about the employee, motivating him and directing him. The balance in these areas is a kind of foundation in managing a company/institution".

"I would agree that in everyday language we often use the terms leadership and management interchangeably. I think that it has to do with the last part of the statement of the author of the podcast that these processes often

occur concurrently. Management is a broader process concerning the entire company/institution, its vision and goals. Leadership as a concept includes a more individual aspect related to the person/human being. As a result, the leadership is often included in the management, i.e. is a part of it. Thanks to listening to this podcast, the difference between the leadership and management, although "subtle", as its author pointed out, is more clear to me. My thinking about these processes (in the conceptual context) has also been updated in a more contemporary dimension".

"The materials provided to the classes made me think more deeply about the issue of a transparent incentive system which would be understandable and transparent for the officers and, most importantly, accepted by them. In my opinion, despite the high commitment of the prison staff in fulfilling their official duties, it is a constant practice for superiors to use distinction on the basis of unclear criteria and only towards a narrow group of officers. Such marginalization of other officers in this area causes great dissatisfaction, anxiety, frustration, disappointment, and anger among them, which in turn contributes to a drop of their motivation. I believe that the creation of a transparent incentive system (who was awarded?, for what?) would exclude the feeling of unequal treatment among officers and contribute to their efforts to increase the effectiveness of their work, and contribute to their higher satisfaction".

The entire discussion forum contains more than 500 records of students from postgraduate management studies made between February 1 and 28, 2021. Each statement is a personal comment on the theories, concepts and practical solutions presented in class. It is an excellent contribution for making their detailed analysis to see how individual proposals resonate with particular students.

4. Conclusions

For years, in the training of officers and managers of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), conducted by the Scottish Prison Service College, the approach to the reflective practice model and the use of many models of learning through actions in the workplace have played an important role (Morrison, 2017). The University of Criminology and Penitentiary Science in Poland is beginning to create programs based on this particular model. The assumptions adopted by the university regarding its concept, the selection of teaching models, the use of digital technology, are the beginning of the process of developing students' personal reflection aimed at effective practice. Arguments about the appropriateness of this approach in creating study programs are provided by the students themselves - practitioners who through their comments at the discussion forum emphasize the importance of reflection for their professional practice. This indicates not only a spontaneous reflective attitude to the content they learn, but also expresses the need to reach for formalized reflection that organizes their own thoughts.

Management in action in the model of reflective practice supports one of the three elements of ensuring security in penitentiary institutions. In addition to the physical one in the form of walls, bars, IT systems, etc. and the procedural model included in numerous regulations, control and regular inspections of control systems, there is also a third pillar - dynamic safety. Its crucial aspects are the cooperation between a group of employees who know a lot about inmates. Staff who are aware of what is happening in the prison and who have the knowledge and skills necessary to make qualified risk assessments. This is the result of professional and positive relations between employees and inmates. It ensures fair treatment and a sense of "well-being" among inmates. A dynamic approach to security creates an environment in which they are engaged in constructive and deliberate activities that contribute to their future reintegration into society. Therefore, the basic safety conditions for dynamic safety are professional and positive relations, communication and interactions between staff and inmates. It is primarily about building trust and effective communication, and thus "the knowledge of what is happening". In order to assess the risk, to notice unobvious signals of potential danger, what becomes the key is the attitude of a reflective practitioner, who creates new ways of "framing" the analyzed situations. Therefore, it is necessary to start building trust on a personal level, then in interpersonal relationships, ultimately creating your own organizational culture that expresses professional ethics and shared values. Its condition is self-awareness, which is strengthened through consultation procedures with elements of reflective practice (Covey, 2017).

Until now:

1. Established in 2018, The Higher School of Criminology and Penitentiary Science in Poland (WSKiP) educates and trains Prison Service officers, significantly supporting its transformation.

2. The university is searching for the best solutions, programs and methods of education and professional development of the supporters of the reflective practice.

3. A pilot study program in management of organizational units prepares students to implement dynamic safety through reflective practice.

4. Full-time and postgraduate study programs being developed are based on the methodology of action research.

5. Students of WSKiP are prepared to fulfill the mission of the Prison Service in three important pillars: physical, procedural and dynamic security by minimizing competency gaps.

6. Students are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience in a model of reflective practice.

7. The university, in cooperation with the University College of Norwegian Correctional Service, is carrying out a project of preparing education and professional development programs for the Prison Service staff based on the competence models developed to date.

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Witold KOŁODZIEJCZYK is Assistant Professor at the Higher School of Criminology and Penitentiary Science in Warsaw, doctor of social sciences in the discipline of education, graduate of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, author of articles on Digital learning: e-Learning and e-Tutoring, Mobile learning Applications and Technologies.
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7282-3677