

RESEARCH OF EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND JOB BURNOUT OF PRISON STAFF

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ABSTRACT

Insufficiency of empirical data as regarding staff in Croatian penal system resulted in conducting the scientific project involving wide spectrum of its characteristics, ranging from emotional well-being connected to job to consequences of caused stress like job burnout. This project will take into account emotional, contemplative, and behavioral components related to work, as well as some objective facts resulting from socio-demographic status. Varied aspects of human actualization on working posts will be investigated, with highlight on autonomy, personal development, skills, and positive relationships. As for subjective well-being related to work, the project will focus on satisfaction with work, as well as positive and negative uncontrolled emotions.

The goals of this project will be to scrutinize correlation between aspects of human actualization and subjective well-being, as well as differences in assessment of well-being of prison staff given the socio-demographic variables, organizational units where they work and job positions they hold. The instruments used in this study were: Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988), Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985), Factual Autonomy Scale (Spector, and Fox, 2003), Organizational Constraints Scale (Spector and Jex, 1998), Physical Symptoms Inventory (Spector, Jex, 1998), Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, and Kelloway, 2000), Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, and Jackson, 1981), Counterproductive Work Behavior (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, and Kessler, 2003), Police Stress Questionnaire (McCreary, et al. 2006), Lifestyle Stress Test (Walters, 1998), Fear Checklist (Walters 1998), Values Inventory (Walters, 1998) and Questionnaire on Socio-Demographic Features and Dome Characteristics of Work (Novak, Mikšaj-Todorović, and Josipović, 2007).

As a pre-test of the project, a pilot study was conducted on employees of Croatian academic institutions in 2007. The total number of subjects was 149. The pilot study confirmed applicability of all the instruments scheduled to be used in the main project.

Key words: emotional well-being, staff, job, stress, burnout.

INTRODUCTION

The development of criminology commenced at the end of 19th and at the beginning of 20th century by fundamental question "why does man commit criminal offences?" As a reaction to postulates of classic criminal jurisprudence, the analyses and studies were primarily oriented to criminal offenders in sense of researching the etiology of criminal behavior, and consequently, of criminal prosecution of perpetrators including the stage of enforcing criminal sanctions. The penological literature comprehensively exhausts ideological, theoretical, and practical aspects of enforcing criminal sanctions, and in most cases, this process has a starting point in role of criminal offender himself. Only in the last twenty years some more serious observa-

tions about position of staff having duty to enforce those sanctions have been made, with emphasize on prison staff. Given the general opinion that working in penal institutions is very stressful, this attitude does not surprise. Contemporary literature is trying to find empirical confirmation of this assumption/thesis.

The general term prison staff involves few major categories, dependent on organizational structure in various countries; administrative staff on level of prison system itself or in specific penal institutions; security staff; treatment staff; health-care staff; staff involved in vocational training, occupational activities and work of inmates; administrative and other staff in a wider sense. Therefore, the definition provided by Whitehead, Pollock and Braswell (1993) is