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Time of prison isolation and vulnerability of prisoners for manipulations focused on the depreciation of others and referring to conformity

Abstract: This work concerns susceptibility of convicted “non – flashing” men to manipulation concentrated on depreciation of others and connected with conformity. I’ve conducted a research to answer a question: “Is there connection between the time of prison isolation and susceptibility of imprisoned to manipulation?” To test susceptibility to manipulation I used author’s questionnaire (N = 203) imprisoned have been tested, both convicted for the first time and more. According to assumptions susceptibility to manipulation connected with conformity of imprisoned for the first time was rising with the amount of time spent in prison isolation (N = 116). Along with the time spent in prison by those put there for the second time and more susceptibility to manipulation connected with conformity was falling (N = 87). Key words: susceptibility to manipulation, prison isolation, depreciation of others, conformity.

Manipulation

The word “manipulation” has quite a wide range of meanings. In this paper, recognition of manipulation refers to the widest semantic area of the term, i.e. to interactions with the behaviour of people. Universally, behaviours constituting designata of the set of behaviours referred to within this concept, are given
a pejorative nature. The term manipulation was used for the first time in 1864, to identify dishonest behaviours aimed at influencing voters\(^1\). While the human came across the category of behaviours aimed at dishonest influencing of others much earlier. A lot also points to the fact, that we encounter manipulation more often than we expect. An example in support of the above, can be the use of information, in which we use only part of the possessed knowledge. As a consequence, we can influence behaviour (as well as thinking, feelings, attitudes) of the recipient of information. A separate issue is whether this was our aim. We can, in fact, knowingly formulate a persuasive message in order to obtain the desired effect, for example, a particular behaviour. Also, something completely different can be true – selective information is a completely unintended result. Attention should also be drawn to the potential effects of perception of the sender of such a message by the recipient. It may happen, that the recipient of the message will assign the sender despicable intentions, for example, that he wanted to fool him. Selective use of information may be received as an attempt at manipulation. Giving such a connotation to the behaviour disrupts relationships, contributing at the same time to the weakening of trust. Study results in different cultures prove the fact that people do not have very much trust in each other. Polish society is characterized by exceptionally high rates of social distrust\(^2\). Another matter is the question of actual intents. After all, not every behaviour which uses a certain piece of the possessed knowledge is manipulation. The vague character of this term is noted here.

It is worth becoming familiar with the ways of defining the key term of this paper. For example, according to Andrzej Zwoliński: “Manipulation is the activity of one person or group (or institution) addressed to others, as a result of which the others unwittingly pursue objectives envisioned and intended by the manipulators”\(^3\). Whereas Michał Szulczewski writes about such behaviours as follows: “Manipulation is secret, behind the scenes, sneaky actions, shiftiness, using someone else’s ignorance or naivety, sly playing of the merits of the case hidden behind the screen of appearances with the intention of obtaining maximum benefits for oneself at the expense of others”\(^4\). On the other hand, Wiesław Łukaszewski thinks that: “Manipulation is causing another person’s actions. The person who is the subject of manipulation is usually unaware of his instrumentality. The fact is that manipulation generally aims at the discrete objectification of others”\(^5\). It is also worth considering Adam Podgórecki’s way of perceiving manipulation: “Manipulation is [...] such influence on the perpetrator, in which he mistakenly believes

that he is the culprit, not realizing that he is a means in the hands of the real perpetrator". Anna Grzywa writes directly: “Manipulation is one of the ways or techniques of influence, which tends to be used by some persons or social groups to achieve favourable aims for themselves”.

The implementation of penitentiary interactions takes place in the social and physical space of prison. It is generally assumed that social influence exerted within the population of prisoners is not favourable to penitentiary interactions. It can even be said that in many cases they are competitive to those interactions. Disorientation of the newly adopted prisoner, implicated by the necessity of functioning in a totally alien environment, may be a temptation to cause another man’s actions. Secret actions, initiated already in the transitional cell, can be disclosed as guidelines for the prisoner’s behaviour. Conditions of prison isolation cause, that it is hard for a detained person to defend himself against the manipulating actions of the inmates. What are these circumstances? Firstly, a person can find himself in a situation, where the existing ways of dealing don’t work and there appears someone who suggests effective, simple solutions. Isn’t living in prison isolation an example of such a position? Imprisonment (especially for the first time) means transferring a person into very different living conditions. A detained person must extensively seek guidance as to his behaviour. It is obtained primarily from inmates, although the source of the information may also be the Prison Service officer. However, already during stay in the transitional cell, the convict learns that the “screw” is, to put it lightly, a representative of a foreign group. At an early stage of isolation in prison, the convict may observe implications of the informal division of the prison population. If in the presented circumstances, the convict becomes a partner of interactions of the “friendly” manipulator, it might unleash in him a tendency for superficial processing of information about the surrounding social reality. According to Wiesław Łukaszewski, achieving shallow data processing is one of the objectives of the manipulators – then the victim does not notice the used strategy.

**Manipulations concentrated on self-esteem**

Manipulation, as a category of social impact, was the topic of numerous studies, in which classification of manipulation strategies was referred to and manipulative behaviours were analysed. Even a cursory presentation of all manipulation procedures goes beyond this article. Therefore, emphasis was put on selected methods

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8 W. Łukaszewski et al., op. cit., p. 136.
9 Ibidem, p. 137.
of manipulating focused on self-esteem, i.e.: based on conformity and depreciation of others, that is those strategies which the research problems of this paper refer to. As Tomasz Witkowski says, we are deeply motivated to seek out information concerning our self-esteem. For many people, extremely important is information supporting private self-esteem – hidden from others – an internal “mirror”. It is the same with inflowing signals that can improve self-esteem. The significance of self-esteem can also be attested by taking – in certain situations – actions leading directly to setbacks (auto handicap mechanism). And all this in order to allow such deformation of information (which is a negative testimony of our capabilities), which consequently will allow to maintain positive self-esteem. A strong desire of people to keep and raise self-esteem is the starting point and favourable conditions for manipulative behaviour. It seems, therefore, that human nature can contribute to realizing manipulation procedures. Researchers who study the issue of evaluation of oneself, emphasize the presence of public and private self-esteem. Public self-esteem relates to the aspects of behaviour observed by other people and assessed by them. While private, which remains unavailable for others, constitutes a structure exposed to numerous distortions, revealing hidden hopes and illusions. In a normally functioning person the distinguished self-esteems should not remain independent from each other. A threat for any of them usually implicates a similar state of the other. It is not possible to completely ignore own defeats observed by others, which constitutes a real danger for the private part of the self-esteem. The process of comparing one’s behaviour with the expectations of others is initiated in early childhood. In order to meet the expectations of parents, we want to be good children. When we come of age, the expectations disproportionately increase, the models for comparison change. A reflection on own behaviour appears. The need to assess one’s own capabilities is shaped. In normal people, the need of self-assessment and the strive to increase self-esteem is not depreciated until the last days of life. And because these needs are difficult to meet, we are constantly motivated to monitor the environment, in order to seek signals supporting the private self-esteem. We are also sensitive to information threatening our image.

**Manipulations focused on the depreciation of others**

One of the deceitful strategies to influence the thinking and behaviour of people is depreciation of others. It turns out that it is also a method of shaping one’s own self-esteem. In a situation when we cause lowering of the value of another person (thereby eliminating a competitor), it may even result in raising our

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self-esteem (we achieve success). A simple method, within capabilities of many people, without requiring too much trouble and sometimes very effective. “Go ahead, bad-mouth, something will always stick”\(^{11}\) (Bacon). The philosopher nicely showed the effectiveness of deceitful behaviour. Referring to the very procedure, a primitiveness and universality of the form is perceived. Depreciation of others may take place, for example, through the expressed opinion. Agreeing with someone who expresses depreciating beliefs may also contribute to lowering a person’s value. The behaviour can take on a more active character – distribution of negative, untruthful information about a person. Conditions of prison isolation provide examples of the mentioned activities. Excluding the convict from the prison elite is a meaningful example of degradation of a group member. Stating that there has been a reduction in the value of the former participant of the prison elite subculture is an understatement. It really was a dehumanisation (he’s not “Human” anymore), and deprivation of the value of an opponent (his point of view does not count) – he is a “mark”, in the opinion of the prison elite. Self-division of the convicts into “People” and “Marks” (participating and non-participating in the prison elite subculture) can significantly contribute to manipulative behaviours of the prisoners.

People (in the situation of a conflict) depreciate others according to a certain order. According to Tomasz Witkowski, “depreciation begins with questioning intellectual abilities. At this stage, the following expressions are used: «idiot», «stupid» [...]. Then we question the mental health and ability to normally function among people. If that’s not enough, we exclude this person from the world of people. The following expressions serve this: «ass»”, «swine» and many others. The next step in lowering the value of a human being is moving him from the world of living beings to «inanimate nature». The following expressions are assigned to that symbolic shift: «fruitcake», «tool». To humiliate someone even more, one questions the morality of his mother and uses vulgarities. The highest stage is pouncing on the opponent or struggles in the courtroom\(^{12}\). Indication of the consecutive steps of depreciation prepares the ground for reflection about the methods of manipulation. I shall start from the method of ridiculing, however, it is important to add, ideas, not people. It is effective to combat not too firmly fixed beliefs, while ineffective to fight religious views\(^{13}\). This group of manipulating strategies should include the renaming method, which involves replacing a name with a different name, i.e. one that is negatively associated, and therefore evokes strong emotions. For example, being adverse to communists, you can use the term reds. This method is effective on rather unsophisticated people, currently less popular than it once was\(^{14}\).

\(^{12}\) T. Witkowski, op. cit., p. 72.
\(^{13}\) See M. Choukas, Propaganda Comes of Age, Washington 1965, p. 257.
\(^{14}\) See T. Pszczółkowski, Umiejętność przekonywania i dyskusji, Warsaw 1964.
However, the essence of the method of negative reference groups comes down to influencing others, seeking to incite and perpetuate a negative attitude towards the group or people with other views\(^{15}\). This group of strategies can also include the method of stereotypes, the sense of which comes down to producing a negative stereotype, for example of a community (which is the target of aggression), and then using such a stereotype very often\(^{16}\). Probably the above list is not complete, especially that we don’t usually come across “pure methods” but strategies using elements of various methods. It is interesting what else could be the cause of the widespread willingness to present depreciating views. Probably, in part, the desire to agree with the interlocutor can cause us to “be caught” in the depreciation of others. To some extent, fear of presenting a different view might also lead to such behaviour. Very often we can be unaware that getting us to the depreciate others or to agree with demeaning judgments is the hidden action of a manipulator, aimed at testing our readiness for unjustified criticism of other people.

### Manipulations that refer to conformity

The methods focused on self-esteem also include procedures using implications of conformity. There is no doubt that we are conformists. Results of psychologists’ research and personal experience of most people prove that. We value belonging to our own group, and we treat rejection as a threat to our self-esteem. We are not indifferent to recognition from others. We are gladly surrounded by people similar to us, and we give in to them more. Resemblance is a good predicator of correct interpersonal relationships. To gain recognition of a group of reference, we are inclined to sacrifice a lot. Especially if joining the group required a lot of effort. In the initial stage of belonging to the group we even agree to a greater control of our behaviour. These attributes can often cause conformist tendencies to be used to restrict freedom of thought, and further, evoking the expected behaviour. However, appealing to conformity is not always effective. Presenting conformist attitudes by persons of higher status, that is by those that can afford to take an independent standpoint, arousing suspicion, does not guarantee success. It is different when a clever manipulator has a similar status – not arousing suspicion that he is carrying out a hidden purpose, he can effectively disrupt the ability of independent thinking and unfettered choice\(^{17}\). For example, a manipulator, whose purpose would be to gain the liking of someone of similar status, can falsify the relation. How will he do this? By agreeing on important issues, while in second-


\(^{17}\) T. Witkowski, op. cit., p. 45.
ary matters, allowing for different views. The procedure is likely to gain effectiveness, when elements of behaviour proving the conformist attitude are deferred (presented after some time, preferably during a “totally accidental” conversation). Success of the manipulator is then strengthened by disagreements about minor issues. This method is more sophisticated than it might originally seem – it also uses emotions. In such circumstances we can formulate the wrong opinion, that we have the influence on the manipulator – as he did not immediately change his opinion. In fact, it is quite different – he had an impact on us. We changed the attitude towards the manipulator\(^\text{18}\). However, far more often – submission caused by conformist attitudes – is submission implicated by the need for acceptance and fear of rejection. Mundane motives of human behaviour so often make us easy victims of manipulation procedures. The method of the majority opinion should be qualified to the methods referring to the consequences of conformity. Its essence boils down to the manipulator displaying the fact that everyone thinks (believes) like him. The frequently propagated point of view has little to do with the truth, and usually remains an unreasonable conviction. Recipients of the message have to be convinced by his alleged universality. This method is not very effective to influence people critically analyzing incoming information. It may, however, work for people who are characterized by mental laziness and the lack of habit of independent thinking\(^\text{19}\). Fear of rejection is often a strong motive causing submission towards interactions that refer to conformity. The risk of gaining the status of a misfit and the need to remain on the sidelines, not serving self-esteem, can generate strong submission. The effective manipulator can use the consequences of the so-called normative conformity to disrupt the freedom of thinking. Persistent presenting of a view, even false, by subsequent persons, can also make the person subjected to manipulation present such a conformist view, for fear of rejection. A classic experiment of Solomon Asch clearly shows the regularity of normative conformity. Most people do not want to make mistakes, being wrong does not serve positive perception of us by others, and therefore it will not serve private self-esteem. In addition, a mistake can cost a lot. Therefore, in a situation when we have doubts about how to proceed, we are determined to intensively search for clues in the behaviour of other people. This regularity is successfully used by the manipulators. It is enough that in the surroundings of the person that they want to influence there will be people who will somehow suggest the expected (by the manipulator) behaviour. In these and similar situations, the so-called informational conformity is revealed. A property emerging in the use of clues possible to be read from other people’s behaviour has been included in the form of the rule of social proof of validity and described by Robert Cialdini\(^\text{20}\).

\(^{18}\) Ibidem, p. 47.
\(^{19}\) J. Rudniański, op. cit., p. 122–136.
From the previous considerations it results that the word manipulation, in relation to social relationships, has a decidedly pejorative character. The negative nature of manipulative interactions and the possible effects of excessive vulnerability to manipulation, urges to learn about various aspects of manipulating a person, especially when his defence possibilities are limited. The main objective of this paper is an attempt to identify selected aspects of vulnerability to the manipulation of detained persons – and so, to such interactions of some prisoners or groups of prisoners, which can lead to restrictions on the freedom of thinking or behaviour of other prisoners. In this context, testing the vulnerability of convicts to manipulation is justified in connection with the widely recognized view that one should aim to reduce the negative influences within the community of imprisoned people. Research problems relate to the submission caused by manipulation strategies concentrated on self-esteem, namely: referring to conformism and concentrated on depreciation of others. Due to the fact that in prison the time of staying in isolation seems to play a key role for the convict (though not only for the convict, for the administration it is one of the factors determining interactions undertaken towards the convict), I was interested whether there is a relationship between the period of residence of the convict in prison isolation and vulnerability to manipulation. The examined persons were adult convicts not belonging to the prison elite subculture, i.e. prisoners, who in my opinion, may be particularly susceptible to manipulative actions.

Methodological assumptions of own research

The purpose of the study was an attempt to answer the question: Is there a connection between the time of prison isolation and vulnerability of prisoners to manipulations? Analysis of vulnerability to manipulation was carried out within the scope of vulnerability to manipulation that refers to conformity, and focused on the depreciation of others. The research objective decided on the following research problems:

1. Is there a connection between the time of prison isolation of first-time convicts and vulnerability to manipulation that refer to conformity?
2. Is there a connection between the time of prison isolation of repeated convicts and vulnerability to manipulation that refer to conformity?
3. Is there a connection between the time of prison isolation of first-time convicts and vulnerability to manipulation focused on the depreciation of others?
4. Is there a connection between the time of prison isolation of repeated convicts and vulnerability to manipulation focused on the depreciation of others?

The following statistical hypotheses were formulated:

H1: The duration of the stay in prison isolation of first-time convicts will not be connected with vulnerability to manipulation that refers to conformity.
H2: The duration of the stay in prison isolation of repeated convicts will be connected with vulnerability to manipulation that refers to conformity.

H3: The duration of the stay in prison isolation of first-time convicts will be connected with vulnerability to manipulation focused on the depreciation of others.

H4: The duration of the stay in prison isolation of repeated convicts will not be connected with vulnerability to manipulation focused on the depreciation of others.

Participants of the study were 203 adult male convicts not belonging to the prison elite subculture. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents were convicts being for the first time in prison isolation, the remaining ones were repeated convicts (43%). The average age of the convicts being for the first time in prison isolation – 34 years old, while the average age of the repeated convicts – 35 years and 7 months old. The average time of stay in isolation for the first-time convicts is 16.5 months, while for the repeated convicts slightly more than 11 months. The study was carried out in the Prison in Pińczów (closed-type institution) in 2012.

Analysis of vulnerability to manipulation was carried out within the scope of vulnerability to manipulation that refers to conformity, and focused on the depreciation of others. In the study, the following variables were adopted:

Independent variable: size of personal experiences related to the stay in prison isolation. It was assumed that the first stay in prison is an indicator of a lack of personal experience, while subsequent stay in prison proves experience connected with being in prison isolation.

Dependent variable: vulnerability to manipulation was divided into two specific dimensions, i.e. vulnerability to manipulation that refer to conformity, and manipulation focused on the depreciation of others.

The indicator of vulnerability to manipulation that refer to conformity were answers to the questions concerning being subject to manipulations caused by the methods of: authoritarian statement, majority opinion, reciprocity towards own group, involvement and consistency towards own group, liking, authority. Answers to the questions relating to being subject to manipulations caused by: ridiculing, negative reference groups and stereotypes were the indicator of vulnerability for manipulation focused on the depreciation of others.

In order to answer the formulated research problems and verify the adopted research hypotheses the method of diagnostic survey and the method of statistical-comparative analysis were adopted. According to the adopted method, the following research techniques were used: survey technique, technique of analysis of documents, interview technique. The author’s Manipulation Vulnerability Survey served as a research tool, which consists of 16 questions. Answers were provided by selecting the appropriate point on the 5-degree scale located under each question. Ends of the scale mean respectively: 1 – definitely not, 5 – definitely yes. The survey contains a pool of five items.
similar to the questions of verification scales from personality inventories, mainly the “lie” scale (KŁ) from the Eyseneck’s MPI\textsuperscript{21}. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used for statistical analysis. It was anticipated that along with the duration of prison isolation of first-time convicts, their vulnerability to manipulation focused on the depreciation of others will increase. And also, that along with the duration of prison isolation of the repeated convicts, their vulnerability to manipulation that refer to conformity will decrease.

**Procedure**

At the beginning, each convict was presented with the motive of the study: “Understanding beliefs of convicts on social relations in prison.” Due to the negative reception of the term manipulation, the instruction masked the real objective of the study – testing vulnerability of convicts to manipulation. To obtain a sample representative of the population of convicts from the Prison in Pińczów, a random selection of convicts was used. Participation of the prisoners in the study was voluntary. After obtaining the consent of the convict for conducting the study, instructions were given on the way of answering the survey questions. The need to reflect before answering was highlighted. The prisoners were informed, that at any stage they can resign from the participation in the study. The study was carried out in the recreation room in the residential part, in which during the study there was only one convict present. The appropriate quality of contact between the researcher and the surveyed was attempted. In case of doubts, the convicts’ questions were answered. The study lasted about 30 minutes. The author personally received surveys from the convicts. After completion of the survey, a short conversation was carried out with the convict, during which it was checked, among others, if the surveyed person answered all the questions. Then the personal-recognition documentation was examined to obtain information necessary for statistical analysis (due to the distrust of prisoners, personal questions about the convict were not included in the survey). All this was complemented with an interview with competent officers who were assigned to the appropriate residential part. Research material obtained from 20 convicts was rejected due to the disclosed tendency to presenting oneself in an overly positive manner (high score in the KŁ scale).

**Results of own studies**

Results of own studies indicate no correlation between the duration of stay and vulnerability for manipulations referring to conformity. This means that the two

\begin{footnotesize}
\end{footnotesize}
variables are independent of each other. First stay in isolation may generate significant reliance on assessments of others. Information deficit, lack of experience with regard to the development of relations in a foreign environment and sense of threat can make a person vulnerable for opinions of others.

Table 1. Time of prison isolation of first-time convicts and vulnerability to manipulations referring to conformity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used test</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-72</td>
<td>no correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>no correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations.

Self-esteem may be reduced due to the necessity of being in a simple environment and sense of rejection. In striving to stabilise the private self-esteem, the public way of evaluation of achievements cannot be overlooked. Expecting positive feedback, in a relatively stable way, may make the offender dependent on evaluations of the inmates.

Table 2. Time of prison isolation of repeated convicts and vulnerability to manipulations referring to conformity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used test</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-268</td>
<td>correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations.

Results of own studies indicate the existence of correlation between the duration of stay of convicts a repeated time and vulnerability to manipulations referring to conformity. This means that the examined variables, the duration of stay in prison isolation and vulnerability to manipulations referring to conformity, are not independent of each other. The result of the research seems to indicate that the longer the duration of the stay of repeated convicts in isolation, the lower the submission of these convicts to manipulations referring to conformity. Prolonged stay in prison isolation enriches the experience of convicts. It eliminates the illusions of group solidarity, unselfish help. The convict learns how to function in prison. Maximization of self-interest, avoiding situations that can cause conflict with the prison community, are basic principles. Their observance enables maintaining the private self-esteem to a considerable extent.
Table 3. Time of prison isolation of first-time convicts and vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used test</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>D 261</td>
<td>correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations.

Results of own studies indicate the existence of correlation between the duration of isolation of first-time convicts and vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others. This means that both variables, the duration of stay in prison isolation and vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others, are not independent of each other. It can therefore be assumed that there is a connection between these variables. Longer time of stay of convicts for the first time is associated with greater vulnerability of these convicts to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others. Could it be that the revealed connection was a proof of shifting the attention towards negativity? Sense of threat, revealing itself especially during the first stay in isolation, can shift the convict’s attention from positive to negative aspects – potentially dangerous. Focusing on negative (threatening) aspects may be used by the manipulators. The depreciation of others is an activity of the manipulator, which is focused on something negative. So it is an activity located in the area in which the attention of human with the sense of insecurity focuses.

Table 4. Time of prison isolation of repeated convicts and vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used test</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>D 147</td>
<td>no correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>no correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations.

Results of own studies indicate no correlation between the duration of isolation of repeated convicts and vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others. This means that the considered variables are independent of each other. For many convicts the prolonged time of prison isolation means better adaptation to the prevailing conditions. The belief that it is better not to interfere with someone else’s business, so also not be against the depreciation of others, may be the result of early observations. The passage of time seems to change little in this respect, confirming that it is a safe strategy. Avoiding the risks for oneself, and at the same time for the private self-esteem, can express concern
about its important component—social evaluation. Agreeing with the depreciation of others, realized in various forms, in some cases pays off, in others it may be the only reasonable solution.

In the final part of the presentation of the results of the study, we will attempt to answer the question: Are the convicts vulnerable for manipulations focused on the depreciation of others and referring to conformity? Posing such a question remains in connection with the main objective of this paper. To verify whether the convicts are vulnerable to manipulations, it was referred to raw results confirming vulnerability to manipulations. In view of the fact that there were 11 questions referring to vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others and referring to conformity, the maximum result is 55 (11 x 5), while the minimum 11 (11 x 1). High raw results seem to indicate vulnerability to manipulations. It was assumed that the raw results above the middle point can already prove that the convict shows moderate vulnerability to manipulative interactions. The obtained results were collected in Table 5.

Table 5. Vulnerability of men not belonging to the prison elite subculture to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others and referring to conformity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveyed persons</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Middle point</th>
<th>Number of results above the middle point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-time convicts</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>93 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated convicts</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>71 (82%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations.

The results of the studies indicate that not less than 80% of the male convicts not belonging to the prison elite subculture showed at least moderate vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others and referring to conformity.

The results of the studies show that along with the duration of prison isolation of first-time convicts their vulnerability to manipulations focused on the depreciation of others increases, and also, that along with the duration of prison isolation of repeated convicts their vulnerability to the manipulations referring to conformity decreases. The results of the studies refer to the examined research sample, i.e., representative for the population of prisoners of the Prison in Pińczów. However, taking into account the size (N = 203), random selection of the sample and control of the phenomenon of dissimulation can be a starting point for further research. Limitation of the conducted study is undoubtedly the research sample coming from one prison. A way to overcome this limitation would be to carry out a survey in several closed-type prisons and extension of the research sample to the size allowing for a generalization of results on the population of convicts residing in Polish prisons. The presented study is an initial
announcement, however, due to the importance of manipulation – as a form of influencing another person – worth thorough exploration.

Why is it worth recognizing the question of connection between the isolation time and vulnerability of the convicts to manipulations? Time seems to play a key role for convicts. The court uses isolation time by specifying the degree of penalty. The administration of prison conditions educational interactions, among others, on the length of imprisonment and the time remaining to its end. Time is sometimes a “tool”, the main determinant of the undertaken interactions. It can be in connection with the behaviour of the convict. As Douglas Kenrick et al. say, human behaviour results from continuous interaction between the person and the situation. Therefore, it should be assumed that the time of prison isolation, as an important element of situational context, can be in connection with the behaviour. It is worth recognizing the vulnerability of imprisoned people to manipulative interactions, and it should be done. Prison existence takes place in a certain structure. An important element of this structure are the convicts themselves. Furthermore, considering that the convict cannot avoid contact with prisoners, and widely understood social influences can interfere with the educational interactions, searching for connections between the isolation time and being subject to manipulations seems to be logically justified. Exploring deterministic regularities can give an impulse for educational interaction and direct interference in the social world of prison. An example of educational interaction can be making the convict aware that he can become the object of manipulation. The next stage, indicating the means of defence against manipulation and convincing him that to avoid manipulation remains within the range of its capabilities. The culmination of the interactions would be equipping the convict with competences allowing for an effective defence against manipulation.

Findings of psychologists prove that during educational interactions one should take into account the multidimensionality of social influences. Anna Brzezińska places among basic assumptions for educational activity the following: “Accepting multiplicity, diversity, complexity and cross-influences, which a person is subject to in the course of his life, therefore, taking into account the fact that he is a part of an extensive social network and is subject to different, often contradictory educational influences, coming from environments accepting different systems of values.”

Time of prison isolation...

Literature