ALEKSANDRA BELINA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW
THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
E-MAIL: OLABELINA@GMAIL.COM

_____

Crisis of Volunteerism? The Analysis of the Causes of Volunteers Resigning from Volunteering

ABSTRACT

Voluntary work is mainly described as a vital contribution to more active civil society, community engagement – broadly defined – democracy. However, the abundant literature on non-governmental organizations has paid limited attention to inconsistency of volunteerism' leadership and management provided by non-profit sector. This paper reviews recent studies on volunteerism in non-governmental organizations, as well as provides commentary on them, based on the author's research. The main research question was: What are the causes of volunteers' resigning from working in the Third Sector? The method involving semi-structured interviewing covered the total of eighteen respondents. The research aimed at showing both the perspective of volunteers and coordinators managing voluntary work in non-profit organizations, describing the environment of ten non-governmental organizations. Conducted research proved that appropriate communication between non-governmental leaders and volunteers, based on mutual understanding of needs and incentives is the key postulate for efficient management in Third Sector. Even though the research did not provide evidence of a crisis of non-governmental leadership, the analysis showed significant changes in a way of thinking about voluntary work, the inconsistence of expectations and motivations as well as conflict situations on individual and institutional level. It led to concrete conclusions and a set of recommendations for NGO coordinators and leaders.

KEYWORDS

voluntary work, management, Third Sector, non-governmental leadership

Introduction

The conducted research examined the Third Sector as a field of youth and adult activism, empowerment and leadership, where coordinators play the role of intercultural, political, and educational leaders.[1] The study shows how they use their position in contact with volunteers. Struggle, confusion or a wide range of very different attitudes and expectations of volunteers and coordinators indicates that philanthropy represents an incoherent continuum that encompasses a natural, centuries-old expression of emotion and solidarity, as well as the system overflowing with bureaucracy, immersed in business logic and a result-oriented approach. The outcomes of eighteen semi-structured interviews showed that most of the selected non-profit organizations in Warsaw struggle with a plethora of issues and obstacles related to proper leadership, especially in terms of volunteers' management. The research exposes a common belief in an increasing importance and nearly unequivocally positive impact of volunteerism on the society, which is willingly accepted and disseminated by both theoreticians and practitioners of the Third Sector. Results show potential signs of crisis of non-governmental leaderships related in particular to the mutual understanding of needs, communication skills, conflict resolution and motivation.

Methodology

The methodological approach used in this research is based on qualitative research, with the intention to analyse individual stories of people involved in the Third Sector activity. In order to provide a comprehensive assessment, institutional framework of volunteering was also taken into consideration. Therefore, the conducted research included an evaluation of voluntary work made by representatives of non-profit organizations – coordinators. Combining individual and institutional perspectives lead to more adequate conclusions on the present condition of voluntary work. The causes of the volunteers' resignations were analysed in terms of their expectations,

---

[1] Cf. L. Salamon, *America's Nonprofit Sector: A Primer*, New York 1992; W. Toczyński, *Rola organizacji pozarządowych w odrodzeniu społeczeństwa obywatelskiego*, [in:] *Organizacje pozarządowe w społeczeństwie obywatelskim*, red. M. Załuska, J. Boczoń, Katowice 1998, pp. 11–33; A. Naumiuk, *Edukacja i aktywizacja społeczna w organizacjach pozarządowych. Przykład ruchu United Way*, Warszawa 2003; A. Fowler, *Ekonomia społeczna na Południu w kontekście społeczeństwa obywatelskiego*, [in:] *Trzeci sektor dla zaawansowanych. Współczesne teorie trzeciego sektora – wybór tekstów*, red. A. Gałązka, J. Herbst, Warszawa 2006, pp. 43–59.

motivation, conflicts and predicaments related to the cooperation with non-profit organizations, as well as in the context of their trajectories of life and the coordinators' leadership. The crisis of non-governmental leadership in terms of voluntary work coordination was disclosed in incoherent expectations and lack of mutual understanding of needs, and resulted in volunteers leaving the organizations.

The present survey was embedded in two paradigms: pedagogical constructivism and pragmatism. The first one, as a theory of learning and gaining knowledge, which is explored and re-explored, constructed and reconstructed in the process of education and gaining experience, places emphasis on educational aspects of volunteering, including strengthening ties and pro-social behaviour in communities, shaping individual and group identity, building cultural integrity and generating social capital.[2] Pragmatism, on the other hand, focuses on practical efficiency and problem solving. In the analysis of the relations between volunteers and NGOs activists, special prominence was given to lessons from concrete experience, which can provide guidelines for optimal development of voluntary work. The assumption was to show volunteering as a complex, evolving educational area and provide potential directions of its development which would prevent voluntary work from crisis.

The formulation of research problems shaped the direction of the mental process undertaken while conducting a research. The present paper was based on five research questions:

1. What are the reasons for the volunteers' resignation?
2. Is there any relation between the resignation of the volunteers and the organization of work or the way of communication in the NGO they work in, and in case of such a relation emerging, how to classify it?
3. What is the relation between the type of voluntary work and the decision to quit it?
4. How the differences between the expectations towards voluntary work posed by the volunteers and the coordinators influence the decision to quit the NGO?
5. What is the role of motivational change in the resignation?

The study was based on the following research assumption: inappropriate cooperation strategy of non-governmental organizations with volunteers and incompatibility of assessment, motivations and expectations about

---

[2] M. Górecki, *Idea, instytucjonalizacja i funkcje wolontariatu*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 10–11.

volunteering between the volunteers and coordinators of NGOs may be one of the reasons for their resigning from voluntary work.

The selection of the appropriate techniques was determined by the methodological approach, which in the case of this paper, due to the research purposes made semi-structured interviewing the most viable option. It "has much of the freewheeling quality of unstructured interviewing, and requires all the same skills, but semi-structured interviewing is based on the use of an interview guide. This is a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order,"[3] which helps the researcher to conduct interviews according to a pre-developed catalogue of issues. An interview guide contained analogical and open-ended questions, ten for the volunteers and fourteen for the coordinators. The abovementioned technique was used due to the characteristics of the research and the chosen research problems. According to Julie Laforest "interviews of this type are suited to working with small samples and are useful for studying specific situations […]. In addition, since they provide access to perceptions and opinions, they are effective for gaining insight into problems that are not immediately perceptible but that nonetheless cause concern in certain areas or in certain segments of the population."[4] The presented technique allowed to gather sensitive and problematic qualitative data, insufficiently presented in literature on non-governmental organizations. The shortest interview lasts eighteen minutes, the longest – over seventy minutes. Each survey was preceded by a conversation, which was to introduce the subject to the presented research and its goal, as well as to ask the interlocutor for the permission to conduct and record the interview for scientific purposes.

Sampling Method

Non-probability sampling, used in the presented research, is more suitable for qualitative research with the focus on understanding complex social phenomena.[5] Two types of sampling method were chosen, snowball sampling and purposive sampling. The sample included eighteen interlocutors (eleven former volunteers and seven workers of non-profit organizations).

---

[3] B. H. Russell, *Research Methods in Anthropology. Research Methods in Anthropology Fourth Edition Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Maryland 2006, p. 212.

[4] J. Laforest, *Safety Diagnosis Tool Kit for Local Communities. Guide to Organizing Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Informant*, Québec 2009, p. 1.

[5] M. N. Marshall, *Sampling for Qualitative Research*, "Family Practice" 1996, Vol. 13, Issue 6, pp. 522–526.

It is important to note that the conclusions from this research cannot be treated as a diagnosis of the whole non-governmental sector in Poland. The survey was an attempt to give – with regard to a particular group of organizations and former volunteers – a warning signal, revealing obstacles in the development of voluntary work and non-governmental leadership in Poland, and potential directions for cooperation more coherent, rewarding, efficient and based on mutual understanding of the non-profit sector with volunteers.

Respondents

The respondents in this research come from one single location – Warsaw, the capital city of Poland, with the highest concentration of registered NGOs (10396 by the end of 2014, according to statistics)[6] among Polish cities. The Third Sector in Poland covers 9% of all Polish non-profit organizations.[7] The institutions considered during the research employ at least the minimum of five permanent full-time workers, including the volunteer coordinator, directly interviewed. According to research conducted by Stowarzyszenie Klon/Jawor, only 19% of Polish NGOs employ full-time workers, and only 6% have more than five full-time employees.[8] The criteria in choosing the organizations, for the purposes of the research was their cooperation with external volunteers. At the same time, the selection was limited to institutions which have existed for five years at a minimum. Detailed criteria of choosing the organizations were aimed at presenting specific, long-lasting institutions, with set personal resources and well-developed strategies of management, including leadership and cooperation with volunteers, which could set an example for newly established, similar institutions.

The presented research focused on analysing stories of young volunteers who were taking initial steps on their way to professional voluntary work and whose original expectations were not fulfilled. The choice of the age group was also linked with the need to introduce the prospect of people entering the job market. Youth is a category described in social sciences as

---

[6] P. Adamiak, B. Charycka, M. Gumkowska, *Kondycja warszawskiego sektora pozarządowego 2015. Raport z badań*, [online] http://ngo.um.warszawa.pl/sites/ngo2.um.warszawa.pl/files/zalaczniki/aktualnosci/raport_kondycja_warszawskiego_sektora_pozarzadowego_2015_po_zmianach.pdf [accessed: 21.03.2016].

[7] Ibidem.

[8] P. Adamiak, *Praca w organizacji – czy warto?*, [online] http://civicpedia.ngo.pl/wiadomosc/1630618.html [accessed: 31.05.2016].

contesters of contemporary socio-political order, rivals in the struggle for goods and social status, as well as the reflection of their era.[9] The youth's attitude could be seen as a potential factor revealing a social crisis aiming to tackle it. According to the *audiatur et altera pars* rule, interviews were also made among NGO leaders with various experience in coordinating voluntary work. Among the respondent there were eleven former volunteers, aged 23 to 29, and seven coordinators, aged 25 to 37, mainly women (sixteen in total, including ten former volunteers and six leaders/coordinators). Four ex-volunteers were voluntarily involved for more than twelve months, five of whom were engaged in a particular voluntary work for two to twelve months and the other two were short-term volunteers, their engagement period being shorter than two months.

Results

On the whole, presented research showed that appropriate communication between non-governmental leaders and volunteers, based on mutual understanding of needs and incentives is the key postulate for efficient management in non-profit sector, raised by majority of respondents. Interviewees also referred to a demand to respect volunteers' ideas and proposals as well as an equal treatment of each member of organization team. As distinct from interviewed volunteers, coordinators did not mention the issue of well-thought, coherent and fair tasks division between team members.

Expectations and Motivations

(*How differences of expectations towards voluntary work posed by volunteers and coordinators influence on decision about quitting the NGO? What is the role of motivational change in resignation?*)

Five interviewed volunteers confessed not to have any initial expectations related to voluntary work. Four of them confirmed to have multi-motivational character of voluntary engagement, combining pragmatic motives with the need to meet new people and develop their own competences. Some of them struggled with disappointment, related to inappropriate, unfair tasks division and selection, provided by NGOs leaders, nonrelevant to their needs, skills, expectations and initial arrangements between two sides. Six responders testified that the willingness to improve competences related to

[9] M. Niezgoda, *Młodzież. Kłopotliwa kategoria socjologiczna*, „Jagiellońskie Studia Socjologiczne" 2014, t. 1, nr 1, pp. 13–34.

studies, job or interests was the major reason to start a voluntary work. This type of motives was usually linked with the readiness to become a deeply involved, decisive and hard-working volunteer. Given opinions are reflected in the source literature which presents voluntary work as vital chance of self-development, enabling individuals to obtain social and professional competences and improving intellectual and cultural potential.[10] Interestingly, the rest of former volunteers, despite the initial declaration of having no aspirations at the beginning of voluntary work, provided deep and exhaustive answers on meeting expectations.

Interviews conducted among NGOs leaders clearly showed that they either impose very general demands towards all volunteers or do not have any expectations at all. Majority of them confessed that requirements towards volunteers are usually not openly communicated or even unknown. Among generalized expectations, three main categories were mentioned: responsibility, consequence and involvement of volunteers. Five interviewed leaders/coordinators were able to make a general assessment of volunteers' expectations and motives. However, they claimed that their evaluation was rather a dubious assumption, not based by open communication and statements. Only two coordinators linked particular motives and hopes with personal stories of volunteers. Examined leaders could not provide a detailed analysis of the context of former volunteers' involvement. According to their declarations, an excessive number of their duties resulted in having a problem with reconstructing and describing any concrete stories of former volunteers, their motivations, needs and involvement. Only three of them made a reflection about the level and change of former volunteers' motivation. Two of them raised objections related to the quality of volunteers' work and the level of their engagement. There was only one an unequivocally positive assessment of particular ex-volunteers' engagement and efficiency, formulated by examined leader.

The Scope of Responsibility and Communication

(*Is there any relation between resignation of volunteers and organization of work or a way of communication in the NGO they work in? What is the relation between type of voluntary work and a decision to quit it?*)

---

[10] M. Arczewska, G. Całek, E. Gliwicka, F. Pazderski, W. Rustecki, K. Bobek, *Długofalowa polityka rozwoju wolontariatu w Polsce*, [online] http://www.mpips.gov.pl/bip/projekty-aktow-prawnych/projekty-programow-i-inne/ugofalowapolitykarozwojuwolontariatuwolsce/ [accessed: 31.04.2017].

Two former volunteers expressed their frustration and dissatisfaction related to the incoherence of the character and scope of duties initially presented, described by leaders and implemented by the organization afterwards. Tasks and expectations from the organization were, according to them, poorly adjusted to volunteers' needs and qualifications. They even mentioned that there were times when they felt used or treated unfairly. One volunteer strongly disapproved the hierarchy, leadership and communication in the organization. Another interviewee lost contact with the leader of the organization in the middle of the project she was involved in. Lack of regular communication, meetings and activities demotivated her and lead to the silent, unannounced resigning from voluntary work. Surprisingly, the leader did not even try to regain relation with the volunteer. Another former volunteer noticed the unskilful task division in the non-profit organization, where some of activists were strongly engaged while others did not support overworked ones. She discerned the inefficient management and leadership as one of the main reason of it. The story of another former volunteer also exposed the problem related to tasks division and a leadership. In this case, two volunteers received set of equal, overlapping responsibilities, without clear suggestions and evaluation related to the implementation of duties from the leader's side. Being aware that the same set of obligations are shared with the second person, followed by communication's shortage, led to gradual demotivation and resulted in her leave. According to the next volunteer's narrative, she received the range of responsibilities which were not equal to the initial voluntary work's description, provided by the organization, inadequate to her expectations and competences. In other words, five narratives of former volunteers indicated that there was a relation between task division, the scope of responsibility and generally-organization management and their decision to leave the NGO. However, in only two cases, organizational aspects lead directly to volunteers' resigning and were listed as the main reason of it. For the rest of responders, these issues were assessed as minor, additional factors, indirectly leading to resigning from voluntary work.

On the other hand, two respondents appreciated professionalism of the NGOs leaders and well-prepared trainings provided by the organizations. They indicated that organizational communication was coherent and suitable for the particular person. Consequently, the scope of their duties was diverse, clearly and explicitly stated from the beginning, which lead to clearly positive opinion of the responders about the organizational leadership. Moreover, according to former volunteers' narratives, the leaders took a spe-

cial care about regular assessment, evaluation and communication between team members and volunteers, providing group and individual feedback as well as a favourable atmosphere. Additionally, volunteers, working in groups, could freely decide on task division. Interviewees underlined also the fact that all involved volunteers were deeply convinced of the sense and purposefulness of all performed tasks.

Few leaders referred to the lack of management strategy in the organization, aimed at leading and supporting volunteers. Some organizations accepted each person, entering the office, proposing partially inadequate tasks, resulted from current institutional needs. Three of examined coordinators provided a deep reflection and self-criticism related to tasks given to former volunteers (physically and intellectually exhaustive, partially unrewarding obligations, lack of regular assessment and feedback, lack of structured and well-prepared management and leadership in the organization).

Relations

(*Is there any relation between resignation of volunteers and organization of work or a way of communication in the NGO they work in?*)

Issues related to relation in organizations, communication strategies and a sense of belonging to the team appeared in narratives of all examined respondents, both former volunteers and leaders. For majority of them these were the crucial spheres, constituting NGOs leadership and management. Each of interviewed leaders declared a strong attachment to aspects of their leadership which refers to the type and quality of ties between the organization members and activists. Three former volunteers paid attention to the difficulty related to the process of becoming a member of the team. Regardless the satisfaction of the responsibilities that had, they declared nonattachment to any other, experienced member of the organization. For the examined former volunteers, the act of "entering into" organization and their trials to 'anchor' and bond themselves with the NGO was described as particularly difficult and inconvenient process. After their initial observation, they soon resigned from building strong relations with other team members. Hidden conflicts, lack of trust, tension between leaders and other team members or volunteers, mutual pretensions and resentment led directly to the decrease of volunteers' satisfaction and, eventually, to their decision of leaving the organization. Concerning volunteers focused on minimalized, computer-based relations with the leaders, at some point, they lost

contact with them, which prevented them to deepen their bonds with the organizations and to receive any concrete feedback or support. Even though they described the relations as relatively positive ones, it was also inefficient and irregular. There was a lack of continuity in maintaining the relationships, long-lasting motivation and the adequate procedures and tools for systematic communication. For five other, former volunteers relations did not lead to their resigning but rather made them derive satisfaction and psychological comfort from voluntary work.

Discussion

Presented research concerned difficult, often personal issues, related to the inner reality of selected organizations. Conducted interviews aimed at presenting individual, private stories of former volunteers and non-governmental leaders, as distinct from strictly theoretical works and common generalizations about the condition of leadership and voluntary work in the Third Sector in Poland. This type of reflections were particularly challenging, both for the authors, leaders and former volunteers. In the course of interviews, six coordinators had a problem to connote specific, individualized stories related to former volunteers, trying to avoid sharing details about concrete relation. Some of interviewees, after researcher's suggestions, touched however, the kernel of the matter.

Dominance of female interviewees is reflecting the structure of the Third Sector in Poland, which is considered as highly feminized.[11] According to National Survey from 2012, 72% of non-profit sector workforce is consisted of women.[12] It is important to note that the gender imbalance could have an influence on the course of research and the character of dicta. However, considering the character of the research, its scale and assumptions, the aim was not to provide an exhaustive diagnose of Polish Third Sector. Conducted interviews are presenting only emerging tendencies in selected organizations, where women are in the majority of both leaders and former volunteers.

---

[11] J. Herbst, J. Przewłocka, *Podstawowe fakty o organizacjach pozarządowych. Raport z badania 2012*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 90–92.

[12] Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Departament Badań Społecznych i Warunków Życia oraz Urząd Statystyczny w Krakowie, *Wstępne wyniki badania społecznej i ekonomicznej kondycji organizacji trzeciego sektora w 2012 roku*, [online] http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/gospodarka-spoleczna-wolontariat/gospodarka-spoleczna-trzeci-sektor/wstepne-wyniki-badania-spolecznej-i-ekonomicznej-kondycji-organizacji-trzeciego-sektora-w-2012-r,3,5.html [accessed: 28.04.2017].

Age of responders could also have an impact on the course of research, the language of interviews and its content. Presented paper is largely presenting stories of young people, staring their professional development and representing mostly the same generation, raised in similar socio-political reality which shaped the operation of Polish Third Sector. The choice was also a result of the need to present the youth viewpoint as the age group who reflects the challenges and problems of the epoch and is striving for changes in existing social order.[13] Described decision enabled the researcher to establish smooth interaction with responders and conduct interviews with people with similar set of features. Nevertheless, restricted age group of responders is not a representative sample of Third Sector activists in Poland, but a specific, diligently chosen community with particular features, problems and challenges resulted from the stage of life. Due to that fact, crisis of volunteerism is yet the question (as stated in the title) which needs further study.

Main goal of results of conducted research was to provide a comprehensive analysis of relations and difficult moments related to management and leadership of selected NGOs, with a particular attention focused on volunteering. The analysis verified if there are signs of crisis of non-governmental leadership, from individual and institutional perspective. This research also examined if the process of volunteers' resigning from NGOs was a direct reaction to dysfunction of interaction with leaders/coordinators, leading to ceasing of series of events which formed foregoing order. Conducted interview revealed vital transitions on the way of thinking about voluntary work, differences and incoherence of expectations and motivation among former volunteers and NGOs leaders, as well as tough, conflictive moments on individual and institutional level. Presented research indicated that some of selected leaders were not prepared to accept volunteers, integrating them to the existing team. Problems and challenges related to mutual disappointment and underachievement could be eliminated or minimalized due to comprehensive, diligent analysis of institutional and individual needs, as well as the scope of leaders' responsibility and legal aspects of voluntary work.[14]

Regardless of the initial statement about lacking aspirations at the beginning of voluntary experience, few former volunteers presented well-thought and exhaustive reflections on meeting expectations. Therefore, the process of an awareness 'awakening' among former volunteers came into

---

[13] M. Niezgoda, op. cit., pp. 13–34.
[14] W. Rustecki, *Praktyczny poradnik współpracy z wolontariuszami*, Warszawa 2014, pp. 8–16.

existence in the course of time. It seemed that, based on experience of co-operation with non-profit organizations, they (re)assed and (re-)shaped their own aspirations, either realizing an inability to meet expectations or appreciating the chance to fulfil their needs. Research showed that both volunteers' and leaders' expectations were mainly subconscious, not articulated by both volunteers and leaders. Aspirations were rather general and multi-motivational, combining pragmatic issues (getting a credit, passing the subject at school, having an apprenticeship) and willingness to develop oneself, networking efficiently, supporting an important initiative. Apart from one narrative, there were no statements about precise expectations and motives, unchanged in the course of time. On the whole, research exposed a supraindividual displacement of leaders' expectations and approach towards volunteers. Majority of examined coordinators could not distinguish precise, individual expectations. Declaration of one interviewed leader, who appreciated and implemented specification of mutual needs and demands, as well as individualized, open communication, was a distinctive exception. What is more, depersonalized expectations of the leaders could be a proof of either the openness of the examined organizations, limited selectivity in choosing volunteers or inability, lack of time and competences to identify volunteers' aspirations. Major criteria of assessment, evaluation and management were unchangeable, partially inadequate, obsolete and non-individualized. However, the unanswered question is whether a well-structured, strict and company-like management and leadership strategies are needed and possible to implement in the Third Sector.

Relations with others are treated as "elementary substance, building our human existence"[15] and, as the research expose, a crucial factor, predominantly shaping voluntary work. A way of building and maintaining ties between volunteers and team members, including NGO leaders, posed great value to the interviewees. Postulate of systematic, well-thought development of relations with volunteers, based on mutual trust and respect and widely described in the source literature,[16] was not always fulfilled in the examined NGOs.

The analysis showed that a type of voluntary work and the scope of responsibility varied former volunteers' attitude towards non-profit organizations. Unclear and changeable rules of task division lead to their discontent

---

[15] P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie. Fundament społeczeństwa*, Kraków 2007, p. 12.

[16] Cf. R. Griffin, *Podstawy zarządzania organizacjami*, tłum. M. Rusiński, Warszawa 1998, pp. 117–133; M. Kukowska, *Przepis na wolontariat*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 26–48; M. Ochman, P. Jordan, *Jak pracować z wolontariuszami*, Warszawa 1997, pp. 8–16.

and often, as a consequence, resulted in volunteers' resignation. Nevertheless, two interviewees testified that there was a positive relation between a type of volunteers' obligations and their approach toward the examined NGOs. They paid a special attention to the contentment and satisfaction they derived from performing given tasks. Simultaneously, the additional key element of gratification was the transparent, permanent and openly communicated management and leadership strategy. In the other narratives, above mentioned aspects appeared as additional, side issues. All former volunteers' statement treated the issue of their own motivation in a shallow way. Interviewees struggled with a difficulty to provide a diligent, precise description of their engagement. Majority of them, however, assessed their motivation and reliability positively. Diversity and adequacy of tasks, as well as the efficient way of presenting them by organizations' leaders fostered former volunteers' satisfaction and involvement. Problems and challenges related to unfulfilled expectations and unsustained motivations could have been eliminated or minimalized by the complex, diligent analysis of mutual needs, scope of responsibilities and legal aspects.[17]

Conclusion

Voluntary work should be a positive experience and free choice of individuals, led by non-governmental leaders who appreciate the quality of the relation more than the amount of voluntary work done by volunteers. Yet, the conducted research proved that the accomplishment of such postulate is a challenge for many institutions and activists. The aim was to verify if there are any signs of non-governmental leadership's crisis among examined organizations. Reasons of volunteers' resigning from voluntary work were analysed through the prism of expectations, motives and difficult moments related to the non-governmental management and relations between team members.

The conducted research did not evidence univocally that there is a crisis of non-governmental leadership. However, the analysis showed significant changes in a way of thinking about voluntary work, the inconsistence of expectations and motivations, conflict situations on individual and institutional level as well as the context (life trajectories) of volunteering. The crucial conclusion is that there are potential solutions to each of these challenges, in order to empower the management and leadership among nonprofit organizations. Recommendations include: a suitable communication

---

[17] W. Rustecki, op. cit., pp. 8–16.

strategy and the openness to diverse expectations, needs and competences of volunteers; a profound, diligent recruitment of volunteers and regular assessment of their achievements and engagement; providing a professional support and conflict management by NGOs leaders/coordinators; reconstruction of the obsolete, inadequate strategies of task division; flexibility and receptiveness to the ideas and proposals of changes, provided by both volunteers and workers.

Having embedded the dissertation in two paradigms, pedagogical constructivism and pragmatism, one the one hand enabled to follow and review the educational and socializing profile of volunteer work as presented by the interviewees, while on the other concentrated on the message from experiences acting as hints for the Third Sector environment for the optimal development of volunteerism. In accordance with the hypotheses, the project has presented volunteer work as a complex, evolving educational space, as well as put forward possible future directions, in the form of abovementioned postulates. In order to avoid difficulties, organization employees shall consciously construct an internal community of experiences for the free exchange of thought and beliefs, proposals for change and assessment directed not only at the control over volunteers, but also the development of the whole institution. Volunteers should be granted the opportunity to actively contribute to the common creation of the Third Sector, as an educational environment.

The research does not exhaust the matter at hand. It can be treated as an exordium to subsequent analysis of the reasons of volunteers resigning from non-profit organization and its relation with non-governmental leadership, the topic virtually non-existent in the source literature.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Adamiak P., Charycka B., Gumkowska M., *Kondycja warszawskiego sektora pozarzą-dowego 2015. Raport z badań*, [online] http://ngo.um.warszawa.pl/sites/ngo2.um.warszawa.pl/files/zalaczniki/aktualnosci/raport_kondycja_warszawskiego_sektora_pozarzado-wego_2015_po_zmianach.pdf [accessed: 21.03.2016].
2. Adamiak P., *Praca w organizacji – czy warto?*, [online] http://civicpedia.ngo.pl/wiadomosc/1630618.html [accessed: 31.05.2016].
3. Arczewska M., Całek G., Gliwicka E., Pazderski F., Rustecki W., Bobek K., *Długofalowa polityka rozwoju wolontariatu w Polsce*, [online] http://www.mpips.gov.pl/bip/projekty-aktow-prawnych/projekty-programow-i-inne/ugofalowapolitykarozwojuwolontariatuwolsce/ [accessed: 31.04.2017].

4. Fowler A., *Ekonomia społeczna na Południu w kontekście społeczeństwa obywatelskiego*, [in:] *Trzeci sektor dla zaawansowanych. Współczesne teorie trzeciego sektora – wybór tekstów*, red. A. Gałązka, J. Herbst, Warszawa 2006.

5. Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Departament Badań Społecznych i Warunków Życia oraz Urząd Statystyczny w Krakowie, *Wstępne wyniki badania społecznej i ekonomicznej kondycji organizacji trzeciego sektora w 2012 roku*, [online] http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/gospodarka-spoleczna-wolontariat/gospodarka-spoleczna-trzeci-sektor/wstepne-wyniki-badania-spolecznej-i-ekonomicznej-kondycji-organizacji-trzeciego-sektora-w-2012-r,3,5.html [accessed: 28.04.2017].

6. Górecki M., *Idea, instytucjonalizacja i funkcje wolontariatu*, Warszawa 2013.

7. Griffin R., *Podstawy zarządzania organizacjami*, tłum. M. Rusiński, Warszawa 1998.

8. Herbst J., Przewłocka J., *Podstawowe fakty o organizacjach pozarządowych. Raport z badania 2012*, Warszawa 2012.

9. Kukowska M., *Przepis na wolontariat*, Warszawa 2015.

10. Laforest J., *Safety Diagnosis Tool Kit for Local Communities. Guide to Organizing Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Informant*, Québec 2009.

11. Marshall M. N., *Sampling for Qualitative Research*, "Family Practice" 1996, Vol. 13, Issue 6.

12. Naumiuk A., *Edukacja i aktywizacja społeczna w organizacjach pozarządowych. Przykład ruchu United Way*, Warszawa 2003.

13. Niezgoda M., *Młodzież. Kłopotliwa kategoria socjologiczna*, „Jagiellońskie Studia Socjologiczne" 2014, t. 1, nr 1.

14. Ochman M., Jordan P., *Jak pracować z wolontariuszami*, Warszawa 1997.

15. Russell B. H., *Research Methods in Anthropology. Research Methods in Anthropology Fourth Edition Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Maryland 2006.

16. Rustecki W., *Praktyczny poradnik współpracy z wolontariuszami*, Warszawa 2014.

17. Salamon L., *America's Nonprofit Sector: A Primer*, New York 1992.

18. Sztompka P., *Zaufanie. Fundament społeczeństwa*, Kraków 2007.

19. Toczyński W., *Rola organizacji pozarządowych w odrodzeniu społeczeństwa obywatelskiego*, [in:] *Organizacje pozarządowe w społeczeństwie obywatelskim*, red. M. Załuska, J. Boczoń, Katowice 1998.