

Original article

UDC 159.9.072

doi 10.46741/2686-9764.2024.65.1.010



Psychodiagnostics and Differentiated Approach Criteria in Penitentiary Psychology

LYUDMILA N. SOBCHIK

Institute of Applied Psychology, Moscow, Russia, luniso@yandex.ru,
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4963-5915>

Abstract

Introduction: the problem of identifying aggressiveness and criminal inclinations remains relevant in modern penitentiary science. Many psychologists have been using psychological diagnostic methods for many years, however, the number of works in the field of criminal personality psychology is insufficient. The author presents her own experience of studying personal characteristics of convicts in the process of determining the degree of aggressive manifestations and antisocial orientation. *Purpose:* description of a number of psychodiagnostic techniques that allow identifying personality traits in various groups of offenders, determination of psychodiagnostic criteria to distinguish the contingent of criminally inclined offenders from non-aggressive and non-antisocial ones. *Results and discussion:* humanization of the penitentiary system requires application of pedagogical measures in relation to the supervisory staff of the Federal Penitentiary Service. Based on the studied reference groups, the author has developed a set of computerized techniques to determine the severity of individual aggressiveness and the ability of its self-control in office situations. *Conclusion:* relying on many-year experience, the author proposes psychodiagnostic criteria that will help psychologists and educators to implement a differentiated approach to those serving sentences, thus improving the correctional function of the penitentiary system.

Key words: psychological diagnosis methods; humanization; personality; pathology; accentuation; correctional function; teacher.

5.3.9. Legal psychology and accident psychology.

For citation: Sobchik L.N. Psychodiagnostics and differentiated approach criteria in penitentiary psychology. *Penitentiary Science*, 2024, vol. 18, no. 1 (65), pp. 83–93. doi 10.46741/2686-9764.2024.65.1.010.

Introduction

The sphere of studying personal characteristics of the contingent of offenders with criminal

behavior and anti-social forms of aggression is an important aspect of the research direction of penitentiary science. [1–4]. The discussion on

criminal tendencies aroused [5–7] prompted us to describe psychological criteria of illegal aggression. This topic is important, since the number of psychologists using psychodiagnostics in their research and practical work (psychological and psychiatric examination) has increased significantly [8].

A long-term study of personal characteristics, motivation, specifics of the sphere of interpersonal relations, consequences of the identified social maladaptation and distortion of cognitive constructs, cooperation with the Crime Prevention Institute (A.P. Ratinov [9], S.N. Enikolopov [10], V. Serbsky National Medical Research Center for Psychiatry and Narcology) shows that psychodiagnostics brings important additional material that deserves serious attention on the part of psychologists, lawyers, sociologists, polygraph examiners, psychiatrists and human rights bodies of the state.

To begin with, it is necessary to consider possibilities of psychodiagnostics in terms of considering the very problem of crime from the point of view of personality. Is there a phenomenon, such as a criminal identity? Can a predisposition to antisocial, destructive, aggressive behavior be genetically inherited, and if so, how it can be diagnosed? Is everybody equal before the law? Should human rights bodies and penal system employees develop a differentiated approach to the regime and conditions of detention of persons sentenced to imprisonment?

Research methods and purposes

The survey of different groups of convicts was conducted using the most effective methods of psychological diagnosis and their computerized versions developed and adapted by the author of the article [11–15]. This is a Standardized Multiphasic Personality Inventory (SMPI) [16, 17], MMPI [18–20]) Individual Typological Questionnaire (ITQ) [21], Color Selection Method (CSM) (Lusher Test Modification [22]), Verbal Frustration Test (VFT) [18; 23], Portrait Choice Method (PCM) [24] (modification of Szondi Test), Drawn Apperceptive Test (DAT) [25], (adapted), Rorschach Test [26]. The study was conducted at the Crime Prevention Institute on the materials of the psychological and psychiatric examination conducted in 1980–2008 by the V. Serbsky National Medical Research Center for Psychiatry and Narcology. Since psychologists are mostly familiar with

these techniques and apply them in their practical and scientific research work, the author of the publication proposes psychodiagnostic criteria to distinguish the contingent of criminally inclined offenders from non-aggressive, non-antisocial, mainly young convicts, to whom pedagogical corrective measures can be successfully applied.

The results of the study show that most crimes are based on a high level of aggressiveness. As a psychological phenomenon, aggression is just an excessive activity aimed at self-affirmation and achieving an egocentric goal. Is it provoked by others or spontaneous? Is it controlled by reason or mind is darkened and even justifies aggression? It can flare up in response to someone's hurt self-esteem or a threat to one's own life, but it can be fueled by far-fetched resentments and suspicions, it can be the basis of selfish actions when, for instance, the appropriation of someone else's property is committed by brutal reprisals against a victim.

Let us consider criteria for the differentiation and differentiated approach to law violators.

According to the data of the psychodiagnostic study of different groups of offenders, aggression together with psychopathology (schizophrenia, alcoholism, organic damage to the central nervous system, epilepsy) is particularly dangerous. Aggression of mentally ill people is brutal, that is, it is not corrected by social and psychotherapeutic methods, and is difficult to mitigate with therapeutic and medical means. In the context of differential diagnostic research, it is clearly revealed by the following data of psychodiagnostic testing: high peaks on SMPI scales 6 (hostility), 8 (irrationality) and 4 (spontaneity) and on the ITQ Scale 3 (aggressiveness); excessive factor s+ (sadism, revealing disposition toward cruelty and violence) according to the PCM (Szondi Test); oppositional responses S (sadism) according to the adapted Rorschach Test; predominance of the outwardly accusing reaction according to the Verbal Frustration Test (VFT), the color range of the Color Selection Method test (MCV) with the 7th standard in the position I in combination with the 3rd one standing in one of the first or the last positions (3 7 5 4 6 1 0 2 or 7 5 4 6 1 0 2 3).

Manifestation of increased aggressiveness in forensic practice is characteristic of excitable, explosive, or impulsive psychopathic per-

sonalities, as well as of those of paranoid and epileptoid character accentuations. Psychopathic personalities have signs of a poorly integrated self and emotional immaturity, which are manifested in low emotional control. First, their behavior is dictated by momentary desires; the value hierarchy is dominated by realization of selfish needs; and disposition toward dominance and self-affirmation is based on painfully pointed self-esteem. Ego-protective reaction type is outwardly accusing. Common to psychopathic patterns is the SMPI profile with a noticeable predominance of "strong" register scales, such as impulsivity, rigidity, reduced criticality due to overestimated self-esteem (scales 4, 6 and 9) together with low indicators of scales 2 (factor limiting spontaneity), 7 (anxiety as a sign of caution and fear of punishment) and 0 (sociability restriction). According to the MCV test, the brightest color standards are revealed in the first positions, interspersed with achromatic color (a reaction of contrasting one's self with society). According to the PCM (Szondi), these personalities are characterized by cruelty reactions s+!, e-!, hysterical narrowing of consciousness hy0, k0p+! or excessive self-affirmation k+!p+!, hyperthymic response d+m-! simultaneously with severe subjective loneliness. The Rorschach Test reveals a high percentage of responses with a good form; however, a lot of (color) responses C show excessive emotionality; few color-form ones, that is, those where the image is clear, although it is associated with color (a sign of orderly thinking). There may be chaotic succession (sequence), many oppositional responses S, prevalence of responses Dd over W, an increase in images of animals and plants compared to the norm, M < C (extra-tensive, that is, right-hemisphere type of response). The RAT demonstrates these personalities' identification with aggressive characters (in particular, according to the 6th picture).

As for excitable and impulsive psychopathic personalities, instability characteristics prevail: peaks on SMPI scales 4 and 9; aggressiveness and opposition indicators are not so pronounced; cruelty and rigidity are less pronounced than among explosive and epileptoid psychopathic personalities (peaks on SMPI scales 6 and 8 (irrationality of aggressive outbursts) prevail). However, when a psychopath-

ic personality is in a calm state, the cognitive sphere is not captured by emotions, his/her thinking is in a fairly orderly state and aggressiveness does not dominate in behavior.

Speaking about illegal behavior of persons prone to sexual violence, persons with an attraction pathology are the most dangerous. At the same time, along with violent rapists and maniacs who have lost all moral attitudes (with a paranoid idea that creates a criminal attitude), one can meet professionally successful intelligent people, whose illegal behavior is provoked by alcohol or drug intoxication.

Latent disposition toward perversion and violence among people who do not cause any concern in their environment can hinder the work of the most experienced investigators and isolation of criminals when violence and murder are committed under the influence of alcohol or drugs. For example, the surveyed A, aged 45, with higher technical education, in the past – an unsolved crime (sexual violence in a perverted form followed by murder – strangulation of the victim), further – marriage to a woman who knew about A's pathology, but successfully controlled it for many years. And yet ten years later, under the influence of alcohol, A committed a similar crime again. An experimental psychological examination revealed preservation of thinking, a high level of generalization, clarity of perception, good memory, rich associations without separation from reality. So, there were no violations in the sphere of mental functions. The surveyed critically assessed what he had done, understood the degree of his responsibility, found no excuse for himself, except that "at that moment he was not controlling himself", that is, he could not curb an irresistible attraction. The SMPI profile with high (above 90T) peaks on scales 6 and 8 with a "drowned" scale 2 and elevated scales 1 and 4 indicates that the surveyed experienced a kind of painful obsession, which he cannot resist. The Rorschach test demonstrates an abundance of sexual associations with a sufficiently high and preserved intelligence, reduced self-control with affective saturation of experiences and a situationally conditioned increase in anxiety levels, which indicates a partial violation in the field of sexual desire. At the same time, neither alcohol abuse, nor noticeable decrease in professional skills is revealed (A is characterized by his colleagues

as a successful employee of the design laboratory of one of the leading research institutes). In a conversation with this person, a psychologist will not see features of a rapist and a criminal. He himself does not see pathological tendencies in himself. However, taking alcohol, which removes the blockage of the imperative urge to violence, leads to the disinhibition of the sexual instinct and removes the blockade of moral prohibitions. Being obsessed, a person cannot control his will and follow moral principles, which leads to crime.

Individuals with a pathologically pointed hysteroid-epileptoid radical differ in the SMPI profile, in which peaks (above 80T) are observed on scales 3 (hystero traits), 4 (impulsivity), 6 (rivalry and hostility) and 8 (weakening of the instinct of self-preservation and irrationality) and low scores are on scales 2 (restraining impulsivity) and 7 (anxiety and caution), which is typical for psychopaths who are prone to self-agitation. Their disposition to rivalry and jealous suspicions easily develops into a paranoid concept with pronounced aggression. A situation that hurts their self-esteem leads to narrowing of consciousness and weakening of self-control over emotions, which forms an affective outburst, fraught with antisocial behavior, aggressive destructive actions up to murder (most often on the basis of rivalry or jealousy).

The above psychodiagnostic indicators, characteristic of psychopathies, are somewhat weaker among accentuated personalities and excessive among persons having disorders on endogenous or organic soil together with pronounced disintegration of personality. There is a number of transitional personality patterns between indicators reflecting characterological features of persons of mental norm and psychopathic manifestations, but it is still possible to differentiate between the already pathological pattern of deviant personality and the norm with emerging features of imbalance using quantitative indicators of psychodiagnostic tests. However, it is also necessary to take into account the influence of the environment and the force of the impact of a specific situation that disorganizes human psyche. In short, they are not villains in their attitudes, but slaves of excessive manifestations of their character.

A concise Mini-SMPI test (65 points of the questionnaire) reveals a portrait of a person-

ality with chronic alcoholism. A profile of the technique, similar in parameters to the SMPI test, shows pronounced lies and lack of frankness on the confidence scales, an ego-protective reaction to the examination, a mechanism for protecting consciousness from unwanted information by displacement (high scores on scales of lies and correction (1 and 3) together with low scores on Scale 2), as well as uncontrolled impulsivity, antisocial orientation (high scores on Scale 4), outbursts of anger and aggression (Scale 6), overestimated self-esteem and lack of criticism regarding their statements and actions, anosognosia (denial of alcoholism as a disease).

If we talk about a personal predisposition to illegal behavior outside of gross pathology, then first of all we should pay attention to initially excessive aggressiveness as an innate property. If aggressiveness is one of the leading tendencies in the personality structure, then it underlies those antisocial forms of reaction that can lead to criminal actions. It should be emphasized that it is psychodiagnostics that is able both to forecast such a predisposition and to retrospectively detect a tendency to such actions [27]. The timely revealed basic personality traits allow us to understand where we can expect a "breakthrough" of inadequate reactions, as well as propose options for possible strengthening of control in this particular person with the help of thoughtful measures of an educational nature and psychological correction. In this regard, it is necessary to use several psychodiagnostic tests aimed at studying different levels of individual self-awareness, and most importantly, apply deep, projective tests. It is this approach that will make it possible to obtain reliable data and convincingly show what type of personality we are dealing with.

Psychodiagnostic criteria of predisposition to criminal tendencies

Indicators of psychodiagnostic techniques are informative and prognostically significant, since they not only shed light on the specifics of human behavior in a calm state, but also allow us to assess which trend may be symptomatic in extreme situations [28; 30]. Thus, individuals with increased anxiety tend to exaggerate the danger of the situation. A state of fear in a difficult situation can result in blocking activity, restrictive behavior, or stampede. At the same

time, in interpersonal relationships, anxious individuals, as a rule, are conscientious, law-abiding and, even when they find themselves in a criminal environment due to circumstances, they are only forced to obey general rules of coexistence; they can faithfully fulfill the role of guardians of common values, help in the implementation of various precautions, but they themselves are not capable of bold or cruel actions. The ITQ test indicates this type of personality with the help of high scores on Scale 7 (anxiety) and anxiety indicators according to the SMPI test. In the formula of the PCM test (Szondi), significant indicators are the following: $h+$, $s-$, $k-$, $hy-$ (sensitivity), psychasthenic (anxiety-suspicious) traits that are opposite to properties of a strong "I", that is, a personality that opposes his/her desire for self-realization and aggressiveness to the world around it. If properties of a strong type of reaction are expressed excessively and are not balanced by caution, which warns against rash actions, then the activity of such a person is more likely to manifest itself through criminal actions. Significant signs of aggression are an extrapunitive type of reaction according to the VFT, $s+!$ (sadistic tendencies) in the MPV test formula, a high scale of aggressiveness according to the ITQ, S-responses in the Rorschach test, the 7th color in any of the first three positions in the CSM, high peaks on Scale 6 (hostility, paranoia) in the SMPI profile.

Sensitivity revealed by Scale 6 of the SMPI and the ITQ, Scale 5 in the male profile of the SMPI, $h+$, $hy-$, $s-$ in the PCM formula, the 5th color standard in the first positions of the CSM, is closely related to the increased and finely differentiated human sensitivity to various nuances of environmental impact, with a reaction to the emotional warmth or coldness of the psychological microclimate. This individual typological property forms a dependent character pattern and is included in the structure of a weak type of reaction, which is characterized by a pronounced dependence on the behavior of a stronger personality or on the reactions of the crowd. Therefore, a person of this type, being involved in criminal activity, behaves conformally towards the group, even if the general activity of the group is antisocial.

On the contrary, spontaneity is a property manifested by high search activity, leadership

traits and impulsivity. Uncontrolled spontaneity in an extreme situation can lead to rash and risky actions, and in combination with aggressiveness represents the most pronounced type of non-conformal behavior and the basis for the formation of antisocial actions. There are high scores on Scale 2 (spontaneity) in the ITQ test, a high Scale 4 in the SMPI profile (impulsivity), $p+$ in the PCM formula (tendency to paranoid dominant hostility), and $C > M$ (emotions dominate mental activity) in the Rorschach test.

Introversion is a typological property manifested in external passivity together with high intrapsychic activity, and reflects the individual's desire to withdraw into his/her shell. According to psychodiagnostic research, a personality of this type has high scores on the ITQ introversion scale, a high Scale 0 (more often together with an increased 8th) in the SMPI profile, few or no color-form responses according to the Rorschach test; the PSM test (Szondi) indicates $-k+p-!$ reactions, in color choice the 0th color is in the I position, often in combination with the 5th or 7th. These personalities are more asocial than antisocial (that is, without a hostile component). In a state of socio-psychological maladaptation, their reactions are characterized by irrational, unpredictable behavior or autism, which is most often observed among drug addicts and homeless people [29].

Extraversion is the opposite property of introversion, associated with high external reactivity and low intrapsychic activity. Without an adequate balance provoked by moderate introversion according to the ITQ, excessive extraversion is manifested in indiscriminate and superficial sociability, lack of reliance on experience and fussy, non-constructive behavior. Offenses of this type of personality are mostly associated with imitative activity; these people copy behavior of a real criminal, skillfully manipulating the mood and behavior of infantile personalities devoted to him (as a leader among teenagers) [29].

Emotional lability is an individual typological property based on neuropsychiatric instability, manifested by variability of emotional mood and activity depending on attitudes of the reference group. Personalities of this type tend to dramatize the situation and thereby have an emotional impact on others. Their crimes are more often immoral in nature. Artistry and the ability to

transform are the basis of their criminal activity. Psychodiagnostic signs are a peak on the SMPI scale 3, high scores on the emotional lability scale in the ITQ test, predominance of images of animals and toys in the Rorschach test at C > M, the 4th color in combination with the 5th in the first positions of the color choice, hy+, m+! in the PCM formula.

Rigidity is a subjective and self-assertive type of response. In contrast to emotional lability, rigidity is based on the stiffness of nervous processes outside of stress and explosive reactions in a situation that causes irritation and anger. Behavior of rigid individuals is characterized by a lack of flexibility in difficult situations, easily flaring hostility, and troubled switching in rapidly changing conditions. It is individuals with high rigidity combined with irrationality who are most often involved in the commission of the most cruel and mercenary crimes. Their SMPI profile has high peaks on Scale 6, most often in combination with high scales 8 and 4; there are high scores on the rigidity scale (the ITQ test), e-! in combination with s+ in the PCM formula, oppositionality and stereotypy in the answers to the Rorschach test.

Naturally inherent basic character traits are sharpened and become the cause of difficult socio-psychological maladaptation in the adolescent period of personality development. Barely outlined contours of a complete personality are exposed to two-way effects – from inside and outside. A powerful surge of hormones released into the bloodstream, rapid development of signs of sexual affiliation, awakened sexual interest in the absence of an instilled culture of love relationships sometimes lead to ugly forms of behavior when contacting the opposite sex.

Representatives of the retarded type self-isolate, behave angular, clumsy, show negativity in the presence of persons of another sex, experience an inferiority complex. Hyperthymic, excitable personalities, on the contrary, behave in this situation either deliberately brazenly and demonstratively, then aggressively and passionately. Their sexual preoccupation sometimes takes ugly forms. They have no experience of properly understanding of the meaning and value of intersex contacts, as well as their physiological and social consequences. This is also their attitude towards smoking

and alcohol: the more forbidden, the more attractive. Changes in the figure and face and breaking of the voice, characteristic of 13–15 years old, run counter to a usual image of the “I”. No longer a child, not yet an adult, a teenager painfully searches for an image of his/her new self and it takes him/her a lot of time to find it. An adolescent with excessive physical energy, high search activity and a tendency to self-realization faces a problem of mastering a new social role associated with entering adulthood, the idea of which is based on book information, “truths” gleaned from movies and television screens, and on the model of society inherent in his/her environment – family, school, or yard. Becoming an adult, a teenager addresses the inconsistency of an “ideal” model of the world existing in his mind and reality. The more they differ from each other, the more the cognitive dissonance is manifested, which is experienced differently by teenagers with different personality characteristics. For most, this stress is accompanied by bitter disappointments, a breakdown of self-awareness, a change or renewal of the subjective image of the “I” in connection with a new understanding of their place in the world, protest reactions against the authoritarian tone of adults, tendencies to overthrow ideals of the older generation.

In the era of change and social upheaval, when the old ideology and values are crumbling, and new ideals have not yet been formed, the model of a socially desirable personality turns out to be destroyed and distorted. The young, nascent generation is particularly acute in frustration, nihilism, negative attitude towards adults around them, rebellious tendencies with the denial of any authority. A high profile is recorded on the scales of impulsivity, individualism, rigidity, a contradictory combination of hope for success and ambition with pessimism in the SMPI test (scales whose indicators are above the upper limit of the normative spread, a coded profile showing high peaks on the scales, *49826’–/0), which indicates unstable self-esteem, militant individualism and aggravated stubbornness; choice of colors 7 3 in the first positions; s+!! – (tendency to cruelty) and m–!!– (inadequate self-esteem) according to the PCM test (Szondi). These data warn of the possibility of unpredictable actions. At such a moment, an antisocial personality can

become a hero in the eyes of a teenager, and the values of a street group of peers can gain the greatest importance and lead him into the sphere of illegal actions.

Against the background of cruel breaking of familiar stereotypes and collision with the truth of real life, thoughts of suicide may arise (encoded profile of the SMPI 2"4'—/9; choice of the CSM 6 0 7 5 2 3 4 1 or 7 0 6 5 4 1 3 2; s—!!!, negative choice of portraits vectors S (masochism, self-deprecation), hy—!! (hysterical manifestations), k—! (increased suggestibility), d—m±, m—! (signs of depression) in the PCM – Szondi formula), harmful habits and addictions may appear, as well as antisocial acts may be committed. These data confirm the opinion that deviant behavior of adolescents is basically the result of a bad impact of their social environment. Disharmonious relations in the family, lack of attention to the problems of the emerging personality of a teenager, lack of warmth and understanding, repressive nature of educational measures, a punitive approach in choosing pedagogical methods of influence often lead to the fact that a teenager turns out to be "bad" both in the family and at school. Low self-esteem is a condition unbearable for the normal existence and development of a person, which forces a teenager to go to a place where he/she is "good" and told, "Nice guy, he plays the guitar great!", "Good man you drink and smoke – like us!", "It's great that you stole money from your father, let's go have a beer!" This flatters teenager's self-esteem, and he/she goes to the yard company, where he/she is encouraged and "taught a lot".

It should be borne in mind that the misconduct of adolescents is initiated not so much by the desire to break the rules of life, as by spontaneous, uncontrolled self-affirmation without taking into account the consequences to which such self-realization leads. This should be taken into account and serve as a mitigating circumstance in deciding a future fate of the teenager who violated the law. The conducted research allows us to conclude that aggressiveness as a personality trait is not a genetically determining factor of criminal behavior. Antisocial tendencies in certain conditions are caused by instability of the emotional sphere of a poorly integrated personality with increased spontaneity (impulsivity) combined with aggression; most

often with an immature personality structure, which has not formed self-control and has an undeveloped egocentric primitive hierarchy of values, when moral foundations of the environment do not have a proper effect on the personality, as they are perceived as hypocrisy and lies, and intrapersonal morality has not yet been formed.

Psychodiagnostic criteria of criminal tendencies

The work on the study of criminal tendencies was carried out jointly with the laboratory of Professor A.R. Ratinov [9] (Crime Prevention Institute). Generalized (averaged) data on psychodiagnostic studies of individuals united into representative groups according to the type of crimes committed made it possible to identify personality patterns typical for each group. The surveyed groups were named according to the nature of the crime: "hooligans", "robbers", "bandits", "murderers" and "robbers of state property". The average profile of "hooligans" (4"9'—/270) almost completely coincided with the profile typical for adolescents with hyperthymic accentuation, which generally corresponds to life observations: it is adolescents who most often bully, and hooliganism as a type of illegal behavior is characteristic of individuals with a hyperthymic type of reaction with pronounced emotional immaturity.

The average profile of "robbers" differs from "hooligans" by being less impulsive, but more selfish and hostile (the SMPI profile 64'98—/5, 6"4'98—/5). Average profiles of "robbers" reveal similarities with "robbers" and "murderers", also occupying an intermediate place in height (68"4'9—/75). Average SMPI data in the group of "murderers" were distinguished by even more pronounced aggressiveness, irrationality, and emotional rigidity (profile *8"64'9—/75). Due to their extremely pointed individualism, manifested mainly in extremely low psychological compatibility with other people, emotional coldness with easily ignited hostility, which develops into destructive aggression, they do not tend to unite in groups.

According to the SMPI, all groups of offenders are characterized by overestimated positive self-esteem; they justify their aggressive actions towards others by believing that the world around them is cruel and unfair and that they defend themselves or revenge for all misad-

ventures. This is the psychology of “Steppenwolf”, so convincingly outlined by H. Hesse in his novel of the same name. Problems of this type of people are rooted in those social conditions that, at a certain stage, frustrated the urgent need of sthenic individuals for positive self-esteem in the absence of necessary positive attributes that allow them to establish themselves in this opinion. Having no real opportunity for socially acceptable self-affirmation, they use an antisocial path of self-realization, the destructive “path of Herostratus”. According to the typology, these are hyperthymic personalities with explosive traits, high spontaneity and properties of expansive-schizoid accentuation (or with similar psychopathic traits, since it is psychopathic personalities who are more prone to maladaptation according to the antisocial type, especially in the presence of a pathology of drives; then aggression bears the imprint of excessive or perverted sexuality). Organically altered soil (brain injuries, early alcoholism – sometimes even in the womb, drug addiction, infections, industrial intoxication) and a lack of emotional warmth in early childhood are often found at the heart of the formation of such trends.

Interesting results are obtained by studying a group of offenders called as “robbers of state property”. If emotionally immature psychopathic individuals encroach on people’s property and lives, then completely normal people steal state property, their average profile is calmer than the national average. They are all in the corridor of a balanced norm, and only a slight increase in the SMPI Scale 6 (within 58-60T) in a profile devoid of signs of maladaptation and stress suggests that these are not just “normal” personalities, this is the type of superadaptive philistine who adapts well to any conditions. At the same time, their devoid of rich imagination, but very practical mind helps estimate everything in advance and, using the accumulated experience and knowledge, find those “gaps” in the legislation that will allow them to circumvent the laws for a long time and fill their own pockets without fear of retaliation. Their fearlessness before arrest and carelessness after exposure are due to the fact that they have planned everything for a long time ahead. The size of the loot allows them to count on a comfortable existence for their family after arrest and serving a completely tolerable sentence

with rich transfers, which will be enough for the immediate environment and (quite possibly) for early release. And after their release, “savings” kept by family members guarantee them successful social readaptation. Self-esteem among individuals of this type is directly proportional to their idea of their own material well-being, so they maintain a positive self-esteem. The social and legal framework of each epoch unwittingly forms a certain style of illegal activity. If aggressive crimes in their socio-psychological essence have found similarities with the same problems abroad, then illegal actions related to the laws of the country’s economy are worthy of these laws and this era. This group also includes those efficient business executives of 1980–1989 – balanced, harmonious personalities with a slight touch of adventurism (scales 4, 9 and 6 are leading in the linear profile), who showed entrepreneurial spirit, pulling their production out of the unprofitable status, trying to correct unreasonable legislation and independently make inter-production economically profitable contacts, bypassing state control. Those of them who have lived to this day are now likely to succeed as entrepreneurs.

Correlation between illegal behavior and social conditions

When identifying causes of illegal behavior, it is necessary to take into account factors related to the circle of communication (especially for teenagers), specifics of family conditions, economic situation, and presence of parents’ criminal record. In these cases, psychodiagnostics reflect features of loneliness, loveless childhood, inferiority complex (minus factor, elevated SMPI scales 2 and 7, and high ITQ scales 6 and 7. A comparative analysis of psychodiagnostic research data and empirical observations clearly show correlation (or even conditionality) between illegal behavior and the impact of a social factor both in the form of the immediate environment and in tune with general trends in different epochs, which allows in some cases to consider the crime not only by consequences, but also from the point of view of psychological features of development and formation of a personality in their social environment.

Conclusion

Reliable materials of scientific research show that criminals with pronounced criminal ten-

dencies in conditions of serving their sentence find an environment that largely corresponds to their needs (manifestation of released primitive drives, reaction of aggressive emotions, triumphant lawlessness and rudeness in interpersonal relations), while another group of convicts who are non-aggressive, restless, compliant, ready for correction, accustomed to other norms of social relations, finds itself enslaved, humiliated, beaten physically and mentally.

Undoubtedly, the law is written based on general rules and regulations. There is a formal side of this situation that does not have such nuanced approaches in its arsenal that would take into account psychological nuances of human situations and experiences. But if society adheres to a humane position and the main task is to protect the law-abiding population from crime, whether this means that humanism ends when people transfer from one category (law-abiding) to the opposite (offenders)? Should they immediately be recorded as villains and experience the full force of punitive services? And that is how it happens. A person stolen loaf of bread (from hunger) and a miscalculated accountant, a girl first sniffed marijuana and a house owner exceeded the necessary degree of defense and beat a robber find themselves in places of deprivation and meet with criminal who have distorted morality and their own idea of interpersonal interaction norms from the position of revenge on humanity for their fate, for which they blame everyone but themselves.

Scientifically proven homeostasis is the synchronicity of interaction of the whole organism provided by nature, coordinated work of all human organs. A violation in one of them leads to the violation of the activity of all friendly organ activity and metabolism. In some cases, an illegal act is provoked by a combination of unfavorable conditions, age characteristics (adolescent reactions of an immature personality), threat to life or general background of the era, which creates criminogenic prerequisites for the behavior of a person who violates the law. There are many such cases, not to mention deliberate provocations by intruders and fraudsters, which should be the reason for the differentiated placement of offenders in places of punishment.

The penitentiary authorities deciding the fate of convicts should take into account the differ-

ence between a criminal who intentionally and cruelly carries out criminal acts and a person who has violated the law involuntarily, unintentionally, through stupidity, because of someone else's fault or due to an unfortunate coincidence of circumstances when behavior is caused by distorted or perverted social relations. After all, their joint existence in correctional facilities together with murderers, robbers and repeat offenders will not bring either remorse or correction, but only harden, awaken aggression in them and form a criminal orientation. The same can be said about young criminals, for whom the first conviction is experienced as the collapse of their whole life, career prospects, family, etc. But this is rarely taken into account, and the attitude towards any convict comes from the wording of the sentence, which does not always mention special circumstances. And this is unfair and not humane. The situation is especially fraught with negative consequences when the supervisory staff and some leaders use convicts who have lost their human appearance as their assistants in taming the general mass of prisoners. Prison should not be a forge for criminalization of society. Criminals with destroyed positive self-esteem and a loss of self-esteem are unlikely to find the strength to recover. As the great psychologist and psychotherapist K. Rogers believes, a person cannot feel like a full-fledged member of society if he/she does not have a positive self-esteem. Teachers are ready to strengthen their influence on prisoners in order to correct their criminal orientation. But these efforts will be more useful if they are directed to the education of the supervisory staff. They need to be explained that convicts are unhappy people, doomed to prolonged isolation and restrictions, who need moral support and human treatment in order to repent of what they have done and preserve their "I" for the sake of the future.

In conclusion, we note that humanity is interested in getting rid of crime by improving the penitentiary service. The results of the efforts of individual countries (mainly to improve sanitary and hygienic conditions) to some extent have a positive impact on the overall microclimate of the prison community. But this is not enough. If the penitentiary services continue to focus on punitive measures, this will not reduce the level of criminality in society (perhaps

even vice versa). According to the author, a differentiated approach to persons who have violated the law, taking into account their individual and personal characteristics, degree of criminal danger of misconduct and harm caused to the social environment, should be the basis for

determining a term and conditions of serving a sentence. We see this as the mission of a penal psychologist, and we are ready, together with the staff of the Institute of Applied Psychology, to enhance the level of professional training of practical psychologists.

REFERENCES

1. Antonyan Yu.M., Bovin B.G., Chernyshkova M.P. *Rabota s osuzhdennymi za ubiistva i umyshlennoe prichinenie tyazhkogo vreda zdorov'yu na osnove ikh sotsial'no-demograficheskikh, ugolovno-pravovykh i individual'no-psikhologicheskikh kharakteristik: metod. rekomendatsii* [Work with convicts convicted of murder and intentional infliction of serious harm to health on the basis of their socio-demographic, criminal law and individual psychological characteristics: methodological recommendations]. Moscow, 2016. 71 p.
2. Kroz M.V., Ratinova N.A. Psychological features of corruption criminalsю *Psikhologiya i pravo = Psychology and Law*, 2018, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 15–34. (In Russ.).
3. Sobchik L.N., Spasennikov B.A., Kulakova S.V. Criminological Aspects of Aggression. *Psikhologiya i pravo = Psychology and Law*, 2022, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 209–225. (In Russ.).
4. Myatyash M., Sopov V. *Moral'na shkoda* [Moral wild child]. Kiev, 2018. 79 p.
5. Sobchik L.N., Efremova G.Kh. Personality and criminal tendencies. In: *Lichnost' prestupnika kak ob'ekt psikhologicheskogo issledovaniya: sb. nauch. tr.* [Criminal personality as an object of psychological research: collection of scientific]. Moscow, 1979. Pp. 57–62. (In Russ.).
6. Sobchik L.N. Slavinskaya Yu.V. Psychodiagnostic criteria for assessing criminal tendencies. *Prikladnaya yuridicheskaya psikhologiya = Applied Legal Psychology*, 2008, no. 3, pp. 6–23. (In Russ.).
7. Sobchik L.N. Psychodiagnostics of criminal tendencies. In: *Kochenovskie chteniya: vseros. konf. po yurid. psikhologii s mezhdunar. uchastiem* [Kochenov readings: All-Russian conference on legal psychology with international participation]. Moscow, 2016. 339 p. (In Russ.).
8. Sobchik L.N. Conceptual approach in personality psychodiagnostics. In: *Sovremennaya psikhodiagnostika Rossii. Preodolenie krizisa: sb. materialov III Vserossiiskoi konferentsii po psikhodiagnostike. Ch. 3* [Modern psychodiagnostics of Russia. Crisis resolution: proceedings of the 3d All-Russian conference on psychodiagnostics. Part 3]. Chelyabinsk, 2015. Pp. 283–286. (In Russ.).
9. Efremova G.Kh., Ratinov A.R. *Pravovaya psikhologiya i prestupnoe povedenie. Teoriya i metodologiya issledovaniya: monogr.* [Legal psychology and criminal behavior. Theory and methodology of research: monograph]. Krasnoyarsk, 1988. 256 p.
10. Enikolopov S.N. Aggression concept in modern psychology. *Prikladnaya psikhologiya = Applied Psychology*, 2001, no. 1, pp. 60–72. (In Russ.).
11. Sobchik L.N. *Psikhologiya individual'nosti. Teoriya i praktika psikhodiagnostiki* [Psychology of individuality. Theory and practice of psychodiagnostics]. Saint Petersburg, 2018. 489 p.
12. Sobchik L.N. *Diagnostika psikhologicheskoi sovместimosti* [Diagnosis of psychological compatibility]. Saint Petersburg, 2002. 75 p.
13. Sobchik L.N. *Psikhodiagnostika v proforientatsii i kadrovom otbore* [Psychodiagnostics in career guidance and personnel selection]. Saint Petersburg, 2003. 66 p.
14. Sobchik L.N. *Psikhologiya individual'nosti. Teoriya i praktika psikhodiagnostiki: prakt. rukovodstvo* [Psychology of individuality. Theory and practice of psychodiagnostics: practice guideline]. Saint Petersburg, 2018. 599 p.
15. Sobchik L.N. *Upravlenie personalom i psikhodiagnostika: prakt. rukovodstvo* [Personnel management and psychodiagnostics: practice guideline]. Moscow, 2008. 184 p.
16. Sobchik L.N. *Standartizirovannyi mnogofaktorny metod issledovaniya lichnosti SMIL – adaptirovannyi test MMRI. Metody psikhologicheskoi diagnostiki: metod. posobie* [Standardized multifactorial method of personality research SMPI – adapted MMRI test. Methods of psychological diagnosis: methodological guideline]. Moscow, 1990. 74 c.
17. Sobchik L.N. *Standartizirovannoe mnogofaktornoe issledovanie lichnosti SMIL (MMPI): monogr.* [Standardized multifactorial personality study of SMPI (MMPI): monograph]. Saint Petersburg, 2022. 191 p.
18. Dahlstrom W.G., Welsh G.S. *An MMPI handbook: a guide to use in clinical practice and research*. Minneapolis, 1960. 559 p.

19. Sobchik L.N. Multifactorial personality test MMRI. In: *Fiziologicheskie korrelyaty psikhicheskoi deyatelnosti: materialy nauch. konf. Vyp. 1* [Physiological correlates of mental activity: materials of scientific conference. Issue 1]. Kursk, 1971. Pp.115–118. (In Russ.).
20. Sobchik L.N. *Posobie po primeneniyu psikhologicheskoi metodiki MMRI: metod. posobie* [Handbook on the application of the psychological methodology MMRI: teaching aid]. Moscow, 1971. 61 p.
21. Sobchik L.N. *Individual'no-tipologicheskii oprosnik: prakt. ruk.* [Individual Typological Questionnaire: practice guideline]. Moscow, 2010. 34 p.
22. Sobchik L.N. *Metod tsvetovykh vyborov: prakt. rukovodstvo* [Color Selection Method: practice guideline]. Moscow, 2009. 100 p.
23. Sobchik L.N. *Prakticheskoe rukovodstvo po psikhodiagnostike. Verbal'nyi frustratsionnyi test* [Practical guide to psychodiagnosics. Verbal Frustration Test]. Saint Petersburg, 2002. 20 p.
24. Sobchik L.N. *Metod portretnykh vyborov, modifitsirovannyi test vos'mi vlechenii L. Sondi* [Portrait Choice Method, modified Test of Eight Drives by L. Szondi]. Moscow, 2006. 118 p.
25. Sobchik L.N. *Risovannyi appertseptivnyi test* [Drawn Apperceptive Test]. Saint Petersburg, 2002. 16 p.
26. Belyi B.T. *Test Rorshakha. Praktika i teoriya* [Rorschach test. Practice and theory]. Saint Petersburg, 1992. 200 p.
27. Sobchik L.N. *Diagnostika mezhlichnostnykh otnoshenii* [Diagnostics of interpersonal relations]. Moscow, 2010. 52 p.
28. Sobchik L.N. The art of psychological diagnostics. *Psikhologicheskaya diagnostika = Psychological Diagnostics*, 2014, no. 2, pp. 76–95. (In Russ.).
29. Sobchik L.N., Shostakovich B.V., Svirinovskii Ya.E. et al. Clinical and psychological features of mild forms of reactive states. *Nevropatologiya i psikhiatriya = Neuropathology and Psychiatry*, 1985, no. 4, pp. 579–583. (in Russ.).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LYUDMILA N. SOBCHIK – Doctor of Sciences (Psychology), Professor, Academician of the Moscow Psychotherapeutic Academy, Corresponding Member of the International Academy of Informatization, Honorary Professor of the All-Russian Community of Psychologists, Sociologists and Psychotherapists, Director General of the Institute of Applied Psychology, Moscow, Russia, luniso@yandex.ru, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4963-5915>

Received January 5, 2024