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THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING IN IMPROVING BEHAVIORAL DYSFUNCTIONS IN RECIDIVIST CRIMINALS

Cristiana BALAN

The Faculty of Psychology - Pedagogy, Spiru Haret University, Brasov, Romania

Abstract

This paper addresses certain behavioral disorders in prison environment, and also their nature and content of adolescent offenders and recidivists. The socio-dynamic criminal behavior is analyzed in general and that of the recidivist offenders as well, there are also established the correlations between the factors that contribute to the social maturation, the formation of collective consciousness in relation to the accelerated pace of somato-psychic development, the endogenous or exogenous conditions that favor a development that is early, disharmonic, perverted and masked, which, by their persistence, maintain the criminal phenomenon confirmed by the psychological evaluation. Behavioral disorders have an upward trend, and we observe within the first step the repeating of the same type of crime (the mono-criminal), then a second stage which is the polymorphic phase (the specialization of relapse), and the last stage is that of the general recidivism. The probability of recidivism is highlighted by eight factors: heredity, abnormal character, educational environment, educational problems, and consciousness of self, inappropriate use of time and entertainment, the gender and the severity of crime committed.

As strategies of recovery regarding the criminal personality predisposed to recidivism, we propose the following measures of social intervention: family adjustment, vocational adjustment, social adjustment. An important role in this regard plays the social rehabilitation measures, to improve ecological conditions of the individual (in family, workplace, at school, in the community group), by specific social actions, focusing on psychological counseling of young offenders by specialized people.

Keywords: *behavioral disorders, prison environment, crime, recovery strategies*

1. Behavioral dysfunctions in prison environment

The theme of this study approaches the behavioral dysfunctions in the prison environment, their nature and content in adolescent offenders and recidivists. It is socio-dynamic analyzed the criminal behavior in general, of the recidivists particularly, there

are established the correlations between factors contributing to social maturation, the formation of collective consciousness in relation to the accelerated somatic development, endogenous or exogenous conditions favoring an early disharmonious, perverted or masked development, that through their persistence maintain the criminal

phenomenon confirmed by psychological evaluation.

Behavioral disorders present an upward trend, and we are able to observe as a first step, the repetition of the same kind of offenses (the criminal mono-phase) and a second stage –the polymorphic phase (specialization of relapse), and the last one being the general recidivism. The probability of relapse is highlighted by eight factors: heredity, abnormal character, educational environment, educational difficulties and self criticism, injudicious use of time and entertainment, the kind and seriousness of the offense committed.

The prison living conditions have a simple logic, as the staff provides a range of services for prisoners - feeding, hygiene, recreation, literacy, security. The impression created is one of environmental sustainability as the inmates bear harder or easier the imprisonment.

After a longer contact with the prison, its human dimensions, relational structures, unofficial norms and values, rumors dynamic, system privileges, power relationships, statuses and roles of actors involved will begin to be perceived. These all have psychological and psychosocial consequences visible on prisoners and staff.

2. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

In prison, the issue of norms and values takes on particular aspects determined by prisoners situation: lack of freedom and other frustrations prevent proper relating to significant aspects of everyday existence. Dignity, health, employment, equality, human rights, protection and love are appreciated through the "state of being a prisoner " and ranked according to the pressure of needs unmet in the prison. Here, as in society, act three types of rules:

- Organizational – concerning the Functioning mechanism of the institution (law enforcement of sentences).
- Actional - indicating rules of a "correct" assessment of everyday situations and events that interest prisoners
- Relational Concerning effective ways for the relationships prisoner-

prisoner, prisoner-group of inmates, prisoner -prison staff.

Specific to prison environment is the parallel existence of formal rules that are enforced and pursue the objectives of the institution - productive, educational, preventive – with the unofficial rules expressing the experience generalization of prisoners aimed at building bearable relationships and living conditions during the execution punishment and acting only within the group of prisoners.

As will be demonstrated, the impact of imprisonment on the components of personality is in many cases dramatically, generating different behaviors from those of the free environment. Decisive for the evolution of the prisoner is his position on punishment and the degree of biological and psychological safety that he perceives in his new living environment. Moreover, as the prisoners are more adapted to the prison, the more pronounced their reactivity will be.

Typically, the human personality structure presents the following key components: emotions, motivation, will, temperament, skills and character. Those components which in special situations, like serving a sentence of imprisonment are omitted, acquire a special importance to maintaining the individual soul: family, home, friends, familiar objects, regard for others. The brutal separation of these elements contribute to psychological disintegration of the person that tries to compensate the "losses" through various defense behavior.

Custodial environment determines an aggressive behavior which consists in rejecting the norms and values of the group from the outside. Aggression could be defined as "*a verbal or acting offensive behavior, aiming at humiliating or physical suppression of others.*" [1].

Aggressive behavior can be turned against oneself (self-harm), towards destruction of objects invested with official meanings heteroaggression. A specific form of aggression in prison environment is slavery - the use by some inmates of other inmates in activities considered demeaning. Another form of aggression is the instrumented one, which is



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manifested in the form of individual or group conflict, competing for a limited source of income. Extreme forms of verbal and physical aggression are directed against prisoners convicted for felonies repudiated in prison. [2].

Research objectives

1. Determining detention consequences on the behavior of recidivists
2. Determining the influence of personality and self-image of recidivists on behavioral disorders in conditions of detention
3. Establishing the attitude of recidivists towards educational activities in prison

Research Hypotheses

General hypotheses

The evolution of recidivists behavioral disorders is influenced by internal factors and specific contextual prison environment.

Derived Hypotheses:

1. Behavioral dysfunctions in prison environment are influenced by the personality of inmate. If the prison inmate has a personality well-defined and confined in present, he is emotionally stable, with a strong ego and the range of behavioral disorders is lower.
2. The self-image of the prisoner influences the behavioral dysfunctions in prison. If a prisoner is collectively dependent, naive, sentimental, humble, kind, submissive, anxious, tense, frustrated, overtaken by events, the range of behavioral disorders is higher.

Sample

To test the hypothesis and achieve the objectives we used a sample of inmates from prison Codlea - Brasov, in the period January-December 2013

The sample includes 50 detainees, 30 recidivists (18 offenders are men and 12 are women) and 20 non-recidivists (12 are men and 8 women).

Analyzing the survey data we observe that most of the prisoners were up to three convictions for various offenses, without being considered recidivists, since the convictions were under 6 months of imprisonment or they did not meet the conditions for the small relapse, committing three acts of the same nature.

Most acts are directed against private property. It was noted that in 50% cases, the first offense was committed between the ages of 18-22, while the highest number of recidivists are in the age group of 26-35. In recidivists the criminal profile emerges in the juvenile phase.

The highest percentage of offenders comes from urban areas, individuals with no or insufficient training. A relatively high percentage are classified as unemployed.

Most come from dysfunctional families, from parents with criminal records or with parents who are unemployed.

The highest number of recidivists show disharmonious developments of personality, which often were overlapped on educational gaps in the family, school and society.

The criminal sanctions do not provide the necessary conditions for stopping the phenomenon, for most of the times we consider the danger solely in terms of the social relations that are violated, without taking into account the specific characteristics of the individual. To this is added the fact that the process of rehabilitation is not being done after relevant criteria and more important, will not continue after the execution of the sentence by a corresponding social classification and competent supervision.

Research methods and means

A. Methods:

a. Investigation of personality by personality inventory requires the subject to think deep before referring to the dominant characteristics of his behavior, his honesty when answering the questions

b. Questionnaire-based interview

B. Means of investigation:

In order to analyze the relationships between the variables of the classification and the level of relapse, the following samples were applied to the entire sample :

- interview-based survey
- anamnesis
- personality questionnaire 16 PF(R.B Cattell)

Starting from the general considerations that that in the deviant behavior socio-dynamic we must observe the action of social factors, since the period of the formation of personality, so primarily in environmental conditions (family, school, close entourage) [3]. and emphasizing that the analysis of personality, its antisocial incidents, the psychopathological aspects sociopatologice which motivate them, we can state that the research hypothesis and objectives of the work are confirmed.

The research examines socio-dynamic the behavior of offenders in general, of recidivists particularly, establishes the correlations between the factors contributing to social maturation, the formation of collective consciousness in relation to the accelerated somatic development, the endo or exogenous conditions favoring early disharmonious, perverted, masked development, which, by their persistence and chronicity, maintain the phenomenon confirmed by the tests applied.

The dissonance found between social maturity and delayed social maturation is one of the main factors of criminal behavior.

Behavioral disorders have an upward trend, as follows:

- as a first phase, we observe the repetition of the same kind of offenses (the mono-criminal phase);
- the second phase is the polimorf one – when the relapse specializes;
- the last phase – the general relapse[4].

Tested subjects fall in the category of complex relapse: they have committed three to four offenses.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The phenomenon of relapse generates and is largely responsible for the perpetuation of specific disfunctionalities specific for the detention environment.

The probability of relapse is highlighted by eight factors:

- heredity
- anomalies of character
- educational environment
- educational difficulties
- consciousness and self-criticism
- inappropriate use of free time
- the kind and intensity of the offense
- severity of offense.

As strategies for recovering the personality predisposed to recidivism, we propose to implement a plan of action aimed at achieving the following social measures:

- familial adaptation
- professional adaptation
- social adaptation

As a final conclusion, we point out that the evolution of behavioral disorders of the recidivists is influenced by internal factors related to individual personality and also, contextual factors specific to the prison environment.

An important role in this regard lies with the measures of social rehabilitation, of improving the ecological conditions of the individual (within family, at work, at school, in the community), by specific social actions, focusing on psychological counseling of young offenders by qualified personnel.

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