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PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE CONVICT'S PERSONALITY DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF CRIMINAL RECORDS

ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКОЕ ИЗУЧЕНИЕ ЛИЧНОСТИ ОСУЖДЕННОГО В ЗАВИСИМОСТИ ОТ КОЛИЧЕСТВА СУДИМОСТЕЙ

Abstract. The article is devoted to an empirical analysis of diagnostics problems study of personality traits among convicts serving sentences in prison. On the basis of the obtained data, the psychological characteristics of negative personal traits of convicts in the aspect of psychological support of educational impact on them are determined. The author of the article used the «Dark triad» questionnaire developed in 2002 by Canadian researchers Delra Paulhus and Kevin Williams. This questionnaire is aimed at measuring the subclinical personality traits included in the so-called «Dark triad»: narcissism, psychopathy and machiavellianism. This method has shown its effectiveness in the diagnostic work of prison psychologists. The key task of the study was to identify statistically significant differences in the groups of convicts serving their first sentence and those who had previously been convicted several times. The study involved 200 convicts. Comparing the differences in the groups of convicts, the author notes their specificity. In particular, high levels of dark constructs were identified from a group of repeatedly serving sentences in places of liberty deprivation. The presence of pronounced negative personality traits form a single global index of «dark personality». Scales of the «Dark triad» that reflect the negative personal core allow to quickly get the necessary indices and identify the mechanisms of convicts' functioning serving sentences in correctional institutions. Prison psychologists need to take into account the high rates of negative constructs in order to implement psychological support measures for convicts throughout the entire period of serving their sentence.

Keywords: dark triad, narcissism, psychopathy, machiavellianism, psychological support, psychological support of educational impact.

Аннотация. В статье представлен эмпирический анализ исследования проблемы диагностики личностных черт осужденных, отбывающих наказания в местах лишения свободы. На основании полученных данных определена психологическая характеристика негативных личностных черт осужденных в аспекте психологического обеспечения воспитательного воздействия на них. Автором статьи

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в ходе проведенного исследования использован опросник «Темная триада», разработанный в 2002 г. канадскими исследователями Делрой Полхаус и Кевином Уильямс. Данный опросник направлен на измерение субклинических личностных свойств, входящих в так называемую «Темную триаду» – нарциссизм, психопатия и макиавеллизм. Указанная методика показала свою эффективность в диагностической работе пенитенциарных психологов. Ключевая задача проведенного исследования состояла в выявлении статистически достоверных различий в группах осужденных, впервые отбывающих наказание и ранее неоднократно судимых. В исследовании приняли участие 200 осужденных. Сравнивая различия в группах осужденных, автор отмечает их специфичность. В частности, высокие уровни темных конструкторов были выявлены у группы неоднократно отбывающих наказание в местах лишения свободы. Наличие выраженных негативных личностных черт образуют единый глобальный индекс «темной личности». Шкалы «Темной триады», отражающие негативное личностное ядро позволяют быстро получить необходимые индексы и выявить механизмы функционирования осужденных, отбывающих наказание в исправительных учреждениях. Пенитенциарным психологам необходимо учитывать высокие показатели негативных конструкторов с целью осуществления мероприятий психологического сопровождения осужденных на протяжении всего периода отбывания наказания.

Ключевые слова: темная триада, нарциссизм, психопатия, макиавеллизм, психологическое сопровождение, психологическое обеспечение воспитательно-го воздействия.

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Currently, every convicted person serving a sentence in a correctional institution has the right to receive psychological assistance. The organization of psychological support for convicts is implemented through a set of psychological and pedagogical measures aimed at improving the effectiveness of educational impact. An urgent problem is to conduct a qualitative study of convicts' personality, which will determine the totality of socio-psychological characteristics, views and values that are causes and conditions of existing behavior problems.

In recent years, there is a tendency to reduce the number of convicts serving sentences repeatedly: for the second, third time or more. However, at the same time, according to the census of convicts, the number of crimes committed for the first time has increased over the past 5 years. Today, a new generation of criminals gets into the institutions of the penal system, which is affected by the modern negative consequences of the last decades. The interrelated socio-psychological complex of various features that directly or indirectly caused the criminal behavior of the individual focuses on explaining the causes of the crime. Knowledge of psychological characteristics of the convicts' personality provides the necessary basis for individual corrective impact.

The use of psychodiagnostic methods should focus primarily on identifying the personality structure that defines its basic elements and stable aspects. When creating a personal profile of a convicted person, the prison psychologist analyzes the psychological characteristics that led to a violation of the normal functioning of the individual. The impact on the personality of a convicted person without taking into account their individual characteristics increases the psychotraumatic factors of isolation, roots the criminological characteristics of convicts, generates conflict situations and levels the quality of educational influence and correction of convicts.

The list of psychological methods used by prison psychologists includes the main

diagnostic methods for determining the typological structure of the convict's personality (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory MMPI, California Psychological Inventory CPI, Multi-level personal questionnaire MPQ of A. G. Maklakova, characterological questionnaire of G. Eysenck etc). However, at present there is a need for a high-quality and compact measuring tool that does not take much time for convicts and is easily included in sets of techniques. Developed in 2002 by Canadian researchers Delra Paulhus and Kevin Williams, the "Dark Triad" questionnaire aims to measure the subclinical personality traits included in the so called "Dark Triad": narcissism, psychopathy, and machiavellianism. It is non-clinical psychological traits such as narcissism, psychopathy and machiavellianism that form a kind of complex of personality traits aimed at measuring the negative "dark" side of the convict's personality. The narcissism scale defines a stable long-term state of the individual, which arose on the basis of a distorted view of the individual about himself, and also characterizes the personal trait of his own unlimited and omnipotence. Psychopathy scale includes personality traits such as high impulsivity, thoughtlessness, a desire for risk and thrills, and low empathy for others. The machiavellian scale characterizes the general ability of an individual to manipulate behavior for personal purposes. Machiavellians are those who are more have a tendency to manipulate others, often without their knowledge, and achieve their own goals. In our opinion, the study of the dark sides of the convict's personality should provide an exhaustive answer to the main question of the prison psychologist: what is the "dark" type of convict's personality in front of us, as well as determine the further trajectory of psychological correction with him.

The penitentiary system is carrying out a huge amount of work aimed at finding effective ways of psychological and pedagogical influence on persons who have committed crimes, in order to correct them and prevent recidivism in the future. A significant difference

in approaches to personality correction is the formation of the attitude of convicts to law-abiding prosocial behavior of persons serving their sentences for the first time, as well as those serving their sentences repeatedly. The second group of convicts is characterized by exposure to criminogenic deformation, remoteness from legal ways of regulating relations between people. They are difficult to educate and change their own antisocial attitudes and traits.

The key task of this study was to identify statistically significant differences in the groups of convicts serving their sentences for the first time and those who had previously been convicted several times. 200 convicts took part in this study. The survey included men serving their first sentence in a correctional colony, as well as persons serving their sentences repeatedly for crimes of varying severity (tables 1–2).

Further, to identify significant differences in the groups of convicted men, depending on the number of convictions, a comparative analysis was performed using the Student's t-test, the results of which are presented in table 3.

As a result of mathematical data processing, differences in the indicators "psychopathy" and "machivellianism" were revealed. In both groups of convicts, according to the "Dark Triad" questionnaire, a low level of narcissism was found in 56% of convicts serving their sentences for the first time, while 48% of convicts repeatedly serving their sentences had a high level of narcissism. It can be assumed that narcissism as a stable long-term state is characteristic of antisocial individuals who tend to consider themselves leaders, demonstrate their own superiority and are difficult to adjust their own behavioral strategies. Narcissism is typical for people who are repeatedly serving sentences, since narcissistic strategies worsen volitional self-regulatory characteristics; therefore, there is no ability to critically analyze the consequences of their own behavior.

Subjects with a high level of psychopathy among the first-time offenders were 3%; while in the group of convicts repeatedly serving

sentences, 45% of them have an average level of the psychopathy construct. In the dark triad, psychopathy is a symptom that begins with extreme versions of the "norm" and reaches a specific personality disorder (asocial or dissocial). Psychopathic individuals are characterized by high impulsivity, risk, and low interpersonal sensitivity. We can say that those who have repeatedly served their sentences have such traits as selfishness, heartlessness, and ruthlessness.

The number of subjects with a high level of machivellianism was 12% of those convicted for the first time, which is significantly less than among those who were repeatedly convicted – 64 this is significantly less than the number of previously convicted persons – 64%. And to a lesser extent, convicted persons are repeatedly characterized by the ability to accept someone else's point of view, have a low degree of consciousness and personal responsibility.

M. S. Egorova (2009, p. 70) connects "high" machivellianism with indicators of a dysfunctional personality, whose behavior is compensating, but not for the purpose of achieving power and leadership, but for the purpose of preserving the status of *quo*. It is assumed that people who repeatedly serve sentences are characterized by emotional coldness, lack of guilt, negativism and increased hostility. This may be due to reduced adaptation due to long-term stay in a correctional institution, well-established antisocial orientation and attitudes, or long-term exposure to the influence of the antisocial environment.

Thus, comparing the differences in the groups of convicts, we can note their specificity. In particular, high levels of dark constructs were identified among a group of repeatedly serving sentences in places of liberty deprivation. The presence of negative personality traits form a single global index of "dark personality". Scales of the "Dark triad" that reflect the negative personality core allow you to quickly get the necessary indices and identify the

Table 1

Results of descriptive statistics in the group of convicts serving their first sentence

Indicators of the "Dark Triad" method	Number of subjects	Average	Median	Mode	Min.	Max.	Standard deviation	Asymmetry	Excess
Narcissism	100	10,3800	10,0000	14,00000	3,0000	20,0000	4,268229	0,096825	-0,913240
Psychopathy	100	6,3800	6,0000	4,000000	3,0000	20,0000	3,080666	1,666589	3,263570
Machiavellianism	100	7,5200	6,0000	4,000000	4,0000	20,0000	4,162070	1,196936	0,686386

Table 2

Results of descriptive statistics in the group of convicts repeatedly serving their sentences

Indicators of the "Dark Triad" method	Number of subjects	Average	Median	Mode	Min.	Max.	Standard deviation	Asymmetry	Excess
Narcissism	100	9,320000	9,000000	4,000000	4,000000	20,00000	4,364411	0,543838	-0,468074
Psychopathy	100	8,030000	6,500000	4,000000	4,000000	20,00000	4,330897	1,051849	0,323026
Machiavellianism	100	9,030000	8,500000	4,000000	4,000000	20,00000	4,529265	0,600386	-0,463044

Table 3

Results of descriptive statistics in the group of convicts repeatedly serving their sentences

Indicators of the "Dark Triad" method	GC	GR	Student's t-test value	Significance level of the student's t-test
Narcissism	10,38000	9,320000	1,73640	0,824970
Psychopathy	6,38000	8,030000	-3,10453	0,000811
Machiavellianism	7,52000	9,030000	-2,45481	0,401686

Note. GC – group of convicts serving their first sentence, GR – group of repeatedly convicted persons.

mechanisms of functioning of convicts serving sentences in correctional institutions. Prison psychologists need to take into account the high rates of negative constructs in order to implement psychological support measures for convicts throughout the entire period of serving their sentences.

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