

EDUCATION AS A FACTOR OF RAISING THE ADAPTATION POTENTIAL IN A DELINQUENT PERSONALITY

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Peculiarities of the convict's personality adaptation processes while getting higher professional education during a period of serving a sentence at a correctional institution are given in the article. The features and activities oriented towards a high level of reforming convicts have been considered. The major problems of penitentiary psychology in the field of reformation impact have been identified. An assessment of convicts' adaptation processes has been given as well as mechanisms of work how to follow through the reformation process of a convict. Research results of the personal and adaptation potential of convicts in a correctional facility have also been provided. The personal and adaptation potential is considered to be as a factor determining the formation of effective strategies of convicts' behavior while serving a sentence. Intergroup distinctions on a number of adaptation indicators have been discovered (the communicative potential, moral norm) that have the greatest expressiveness in the convicts involved in the educational process. The conclusion has been made that in the course of getting a higher professional education convicts demonstrate an increase in the efficiency of adaptation processes. The applied aspect of the problem studied can be realized in consulting practice of psychological services in the system of execution of the punishment.

Keywords: The personality of a convict, reforming and correcting the personality of a convict, adaptation, personal and adaptation potential, resilience, re-socialization

INTRODUCTION

Social and economic transformations in Russia are followed by a number of negative consequences, one of which is an increase of the crime rate, and also a number of people committing recurrent crimes. Implementation of the criminal and executive legislation, a reform of the criminal and execution systems place the problem of reforming the personality of a convict in the foreground and prevention of its disadaptation, correction of negative psychological consequences of the prison environment.

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Being in social exclusion exerts the greatest effect on the personality, his further destiny since serving a sentence in prison can result in disadaptation of a person that may lead to a limitation of a range of the convict's capabilities to adapt to the existing rules of law and morals, living conditions in freedom in a post-penitentiary period (Valeeva & Kalimullin, 2016; Demakova, Valeeva & Shipova, 2016; Valeeva & Kulesza, 2016; Kayumova & Zakirova, 2016; Kalimullin, Khodyreva & Koinova-Zoellner, 2016; Vlasova, Masalimova & Alamanov, 2016; Vlasova, Simonova & Soleymani, 2016). Besides, the forms of interacting with the social environment of the convict who has been set free get broken that interferes with the formation of his adequate reactions to life situations and self-realization (Gernet, 1905).

Certain issues connected with the problems of disadaptation, adaptation and readaptation of the personality in the context of imprisonment were dealt with in works of pedagogical psychologists (socialization of the personality in the complicated conditions), legal psychologists (psychological essence of crime and punishment), penitentiary psychologists (psychology of the personality serving a sentence) (Belicheva, 1993; Ushatkov, 1998; Aleksandrovsky, 1976; Alferov, 1990; Deyev, 1979; Antonyan, 1996; Ratinov, 1980; Khokhryakov, 1982; Pastushenya, 1992; Ribak, 2001, etc.).

It is impossible to ensure psychological adaptation of convicts to conditions of imprisonment and of being kept in custody are associated with great intra personal experiences (accepting a penalty as a punishment, loneliness, a social position of a "convict", etc.) without mechanisms of this process and determinants of its positive outcome (Kudryavtsev, 1998; Mikhlin, 1991; Zhuleva, 2000).

When the habitual conditions of life change the factors arise that definitely bring disorganization in the mental activities regulating the person's behavior. There is a need for new mental reactions to the new irritants shown by the changed conditions for the most optimum interaction of the personality with this environment and efficiency of activities according to the external and internal changes that had happened. Relative disorganization of mental functions in this case is a signal to trigger the mechanism of regulation and compensation. The ultimate resulting effect of this action is the organization of new level mental activities in view of the changed environment conditions, that is readaptation mechanisms get activated (Lipatova, 2015).

Readaptation, in our opinion, can be defined in two meanings:

1. As a transition process from the condition of a stable mental adaptation in habitual conditions to the condition of a relatively stable adaptation in the new unusual (changed) living conditions.
2. As a result of this process having successful value for the personality and its mental activities.

Speaking about the problem of readaptation of convicts at detention facilities, it must be kept in mind that this process is directed towards the achievement of adaptability in the extreme, changed, unusual living conditions (disadaptive conditions). The analysis of factors of disadaptation allows us to draw a conclusion that the main psychogenic impact of imprisonment is the blocking of many habitual and natural requirements of the personality owing to the specificity of closed correctional institutions of various security types. The range of these requirements is quite wide: from purely biological to social ones. However, the frustrating influence of correctional institutions is determined by the fact of imprisonment itself linked to sharp changes in the person's destiny.

Being kept in prison the convict has a radical wreck of a criminal stereotype, life plans, a way of life which leads to the emergence of a complex specific manifestations in a person, so-called "the syndrome of the imprisoned" (Shikhantsov, 2003). To overcome these burdensome conditions the convict is capable in the course of adaptation, adaptation to new regulations and rules of conduct, activity conditions. To construct a new system of relations, views and ideas, behavioral models is possible by means of readaptation mechanisms based on common humane norms and moral rules while being imprisoned.

The process of readaptation is connected with a long stay in the changed living conditions. It arises in connection with the person's being sentenced to imprisonment, which is accompanied by the recovery of reflection processes, the system of relations and movement coordination, adequate for usual living conditions. Readaptation of the convict is followed by difficult psychophysiological, psychological and social mechanisms. They create a new functional system, the reconstruction of activities, new patterns of behavior (Lebedev, 1989), according to the aims and goals of re-education and reformation of a convict within the system of the punishment execution.

The success of the readaptation process in imprisonment conditions in this case shall depend on a number of factors: understanding the meaning and need of execution of the punishment as a penalty for the committed crime; understanding and accepting social psychological roles (the personality who broke the law of not only the criminal and penal systems, but also the principles of life); engagement in the activities to search for ways which could promote readaptation and prevent disadaptation.

Thus readaptation mechanisms of convicts in imprisonment conditions should represent a package of measures directed towards the normalization of the social and psychological state of the criminal's personality for the purpose of creating a basis for voluntary reintegration of this individual into society. Besides, this complex should provide psychologic and pedagogical conditions of serving a sentence determining the structure of interacting the personality with imprisonment conditions as a subject of activity and communication (Ananyev,

2001), in the course of creating a new world by the convict in which he will have to live in.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the concepts of developing social, psychological and educational work with convicts in correctional institutions, the problem elimination of disadaptation and activating the process of adaptation is based on the study and the psychological reformation of personal features and peculiarities of convicts' behavior. The results of these processes should be the prevention of the destructive phenomenon at detention institutions and favorable adaptation of convicts to life after being released, and also the prevention of recurrent crimes. In this aspect the study of the convict's personality when he is serving a sentence (difficult life situations) acquires special importance as it is possible to provide optimum effective correction of the criminal only by studying those components in the structure of his personality which determine behavior and activity of the person in this process (Salakhova, 2016a; Ribakova, Valeeva & Merker, 2016; Shaidullina *et al.* (2015).

In contemporary domestic psychology the studies of the personality characteristics responsible for successful adaptation and coping with life difficulties led to the origination of concepts and notions of the personal adaptation potential determining the stability nature of the person to extreme factors (Aleksandrovsky, 1976; Alexandrova, 2004). In international psychology S.R. Maddi (2002) developing the problem of creative potential of the personality and regulation of the stress, created the theory of a special personal quality - "hardiness" which he determines as a pattern of the structure of mindsets and skills which makes it possible to reverse the changes happening to the person which can be in his power. In domestic literature it is assumed to translate this concept as "tenacity" or "resilience" (Leontyev, 1977).

An interest to the problem of forming and maintaining a high level of resilience is connected with the need of assessing adaptation capabilities of a person in imprisonment conditions. To ensure psychological adaptation of convicts to imprisonment conditions and to activities of people in custody linked to the greatest intrapersonal emotions (acceptance of a penalty as a punishment, loneliness, social position of "convict", etc.) is impossible without considering the mechanisms of this process and success determinants of its course. The level of internal psychological comfort of the personality can be considered as the criterion of psychological tension determined by a balance of positive and negative emotions. Speaking about the problem of convicts' adaptation to imprisonment it must be kept in mind that this process is aimed at achieving adaptability in the extreme, changed, unusual living conditions.

The convict's psychology in imprisonment conditions is characterized by the absence of clear life prospects that leads to a decrease of life activities, to the absence of required restraint in relation to arising situations. With respect thereto

psychological support and follow-up of the convict's personality and behavior and also preventing disadaptive conditions occupies a special and promising direction in work on psychological assistance and adaptation enhancement of convicts in imprisonment conditions. Thus, the main link in the work system on psychologically sustainable maintenance of a high level of convicts' resilience in imprisonment conditions is the diagnostics, or an assessment of their adaptation abilities work with which is the most significant the sphere in the activity of penitentiary psychologists in the system of execution of the punishment. However only the diagnostics of the convict's adaptation potential does not give the chance to determine work fields connected with an increase in the efficiency of the criminal personality adaptation processes – it is necessary to introduce the indicator determining this process. To solve this objective we conducted an empirical research of adaptation abilities of convicts where getting higher education by convicts was chosen as the determinant that shows the development of the personality's adaptation potential in imprisonment conditions (Salakhova, 2016b).

The study was conducted at OFPS of the Russian Federation, correctional institution No. 2 in the town of Novoulyanovsk. The convicts getting higher education with the use of telecommunication technologies developed at the Modern Academy for the Humanities participated in the study (Karpenko, 2008). Doing higher education courses by convicts at the MAH was performed with distance learning methods, any convict could enroll in the training program. The following programs of study were offered on off-budget funded spaces: management, law, psychology and economics. Sessions, final state exams and defense of the degree projects were organized at the Ulyanovsk branch of the Modern Academy for the Humanities in the city of Ulyanovsk. Students-convicts were taken from the correctional institution by the staff of OFPS of the Russian Federation, the Federal State-Funded Institution, correctional establishment No. 2 in the town of Novoulyanovsk. Upon the end of training (4 academic years) the convicts were awarded a bachelor's degree. The testees sentenced for especially serious crimes participated in our study only. (part 2, section 7, chapter 16, article 105 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). The sample group in our study was composed of 370 male convicts (mean age - 30 years, mean punishment term - 5 years 3 months) of them 185 were getting higher education (GHE) and 185 – were not getting higher education (NGHE).

Methodical instrument of the study incorporated:

- 1) an empirical research with the use of the multiple-factor personal questionnaire "Adaptability" (MPQ) by A.G. Maklakov and S.V. Chermyanin (2001);
- 2) methods of mathematical statistics with the use of software programs EXCEL, SPSS 17.0, including determination of statistical reliability of arithmetic average distinctions.

The multi-level personal questionnaire (MPQ) “Adaptability” was developed by A.G. Maklakov and S.V. Chermyanin (2001). It is directed at studying adaptation capabilities of an individual on the basis of an assessment of some psychophysiological and social and psychological characteristics reflecting integrated features of mental and social development. The questionnaire is accepted as a standardized technique and is recommended for use while solving the tasks of professional psychological selection, psychological assistance in educational and professional activity.

The questionnaire (MPQ) “Adaptability” consists of 165 questions and has four structural levels that help to obtain information of a various amount and nature. Within our research to solve the objectives we will consider the scales of the third and fourth levels which make up personal and adaptation potential:

- the scales of the third level: behavioral regulation (BR), communicative potential (CP) and moral normativity (MN).
- the scale of the fourth level - the personal adaptation potential (PAP).

A notion about adaptation is the theoretical basis of the test as a constant process of active adaptation of an individual to social environment conditions that embraces all the levels of the person’s functioning. The adaptation efficiency, to a great extent, depends on both genetically conditioned properties of the nervous system, and on upbringing conditions, the acquired stereotypes of behavior, adequacy of self-evaluation of the individual. The process of adaptation is extremely dynamic. Its success in many respects depends on a number of objective and subjective conditions, a functional condition, social experience, life mindsets, etc. Each person treats the same events differently and the same effecting incentive can cause various responses in different people. It is possible to identify some interval of responses of the individual which will correspond to the notion of a mental norm, and also it is possible to determine some “interval” of the relations of the person to this or that phenomenon concerning, first of all categories of common human values that are not beyond commonly accepted moral standards. The conformity extent to this “interval” of mental and social and moral normativity also provides the efficiency of social and psychological adaptation process, determines the personal adaptation potential (PAP) being the most important integrative characteristic of mental development. Specific features of the personal adaptation potential can be obtained after having estimated behavioral regulation, communicative abilities and level of moral normativity.

Behavioral Regulation (BR) is a concept characterizing the person’s ability to regulate the interaction with the environment of activity. Basic elements of behavioral regulation are: self-evaluation, the level of neuropsychic stability, and also the presence of social approval (social support) from the people around. The communicative potential (CP) is communicative capabilities (or an ability to find common ground and mutual understanding with people around). They are

determined by available experience and need in communication and also by the level of proneness to conflict. Moral normativity (MN) provides an ability to adequately perceive the certain social role by an individual that is offered to him.

RESULTS

Specific features of adaptation processes of the personality of convicts who get higher education in imprisonment conditions (difficult life situations) have been studied as a result of the conducted research.

On the basis of the data obtained with the use of the multilevel personal questionnaire “Adaptability” (MPQ-AM) by A.G. Maklakov and S.V. Chermnyanin (2001) the convicts have been referred to the following groups: 1) with good adaptation abilities; 2) with satisfactory adaptation; 3) with lowered adaptation. Convicts with good adaptation abilities were considered as the adapted convicts. People with satisfactory and lowered adaptation have been referred to the groups of “non-adapted convicts”. Adaptation capabilities represent a set of individual and psychological features which, in turn, dynamically change in connection with the change of social activity. Therefore, in our opinion the research of adaptation abilities of convicts-students and convicts who do not study while serving a sentence seems to be interesting.

Let us conduct a comparative analysis of the convicts’ adaptation abilities data in the course of their getting higher education (tab. 1). To process the obtained data we chose Student t-criteria as a mathematical and statistical criterion.

TABLE 1: ADAPTATION ABILITIES OF LEARNING CONVICTS

<i>MPQ «Adaptability» scales</i>	<i>Before learning</i>	<i>1 year of learning</i>	<i>2 year of learning</i>	<i>3 year of learning</i>
Reliability	5,88*	4,2*	5,48	5,28
Behavioral regulation	3,64**	3,96**	4,88**	5,12**
Communicative potential	4,84**	4,32*	5,12*	5,36**
Moral normativity	4,96*	4,36*	5*	4,48*
Personal and adaptation potential	4,52***	4,64***	4,56***	5,64***

Note: *** differences are reliable when $p < 0,001$; ** differences are reliable when $p < 0,01$; * differences are reliable when $p < 0,05$

In view of the comparative analysis results the of convicts’ adaptation abilities in the course of learning and getting higher professional education depending on the learning stages significant differences were found on the following indicators: “reliability”, “behavioral regulation”, “communicative potential”, “moral normativity”, “personal adaptation potential”. The research results obtained demonstrate that before learning the convicts showed low values of adaptation abilities in their expressiveness degree: lack of the adequacy of self-evaluation and adequate perception of the environment; difficulties in making contacts with

people around, aggression implications, an elevated propensity to conflicts; an inadequate assessment of the place and role in a group of people, lack of aspiration to respect commonly accepted standards of behavior. In general the learning convicts were referred to the group of “the lowered adaptation”. However, after the first year of learning the augmentation of values on the scale “moral normativity” is observed ($t = 2,078$; when $p < 0,049$). After completing the second year of learning the growth of values is observed on the following scales: “communicative potential” ($t = 2,138$; when $p < 0,043$); “behavioral regulation” ($t = 2,790$; when $p < 0,01$); “personal adaptation potential” ($t = 4,548$; when $p < 0,001$). Besides, the convicts while getting higher education demonstrate a change in the degree of expressiveness of such indicators as “behavioral regulation” ($t = 2,910$; when $p < 0,008$), “personal adaptation potential” ($t = 4,201$; when $\delta < 0,001$) and “communicative potential” ($t = 2,831$; when $p < 0,009$). The conducted analysis of convicts’ adaptation powers before learning confirms the availability of statistically significant difference on scales “behavioral regulation” ($t = 3,362$; when $p < 0,003$) and “personal adaptation potential” ($t = 4,201$; when $\delta < 0,001$). The obtained data indicate that after completing the process of learning the convicts show an average level of neuropsychic stability and behavioral regulation (an adequate perception of reality), an average level of communicative abilities (lack of propensity to conflicts), an average socialization level (the orientation to follow commonly accepted standards of behavior).

Thus, the results of the conducted research give the grounds to state that in the course of learning and getting higher education the efficiency of the adaptation process increases in convicts. There is a change of such components as behavioral regulation, communicative potential and moral normativity. In our opinion, a special attention should be paid to the change of the regulation system in convicts that includes self-evaluation, the level of neuropsychic stability, social approval (social support) from the people around. The change of the convict’s regulation system while getting higher education is a result of the change of a complex, hierarchical structure, an integration of all the levels into a single complex that provides stability of the process of regulating the criminal’s behavior at a correctional institution. Let us carry out the comparative analysis of the adaptation capabilities data of convicts who do not participate in learning (table 2).

TABLE 2: ADAPTATION ABILITIES OF CONVICTS NON -LEARNERS

<i>MPQ «Adaptability» scales</i>	<i>1 test</i>	<i>2 test</i>	<i>3 test</i>	<i>4 test</i>
Reliability	4,88	5,2	5,4	4,44
Behavioral regulation	3,16	3,28	3,32	3,24
Communicative potential	3,68	3,92	3,84	3,88
Moral normativity	3,8	3,92	3,96	3,76
Personal and adaptation potential	3,44	3,32	3,44	3,48

Note: ***differences are reliable when $p < 0,001$; **differences are reliable when $p < 0,01$; *differences are reliable when $p < 0,05$

During the comparative analysis of adaptation abilities of convicts who do not participate in studying we did not find any fluctuation of values in indicators, characterizing adaptation processes. Convicts throughout the research demonstrated low values of adaptation abilities and personal adaptation potential in general. The people of this group possess a low neuropsychic hardiness, they tend to come into conflicts and inclined to delinquent behavior.

The comparative analysis of the values in adaptation abilities of convicts showed that a lowered adaptation is characteristic of both the group of convicts-students (mean value = 3,21), and (tab. 3) the group of non-learners (mean value = 3,38). At the same time it is necessary to note that low values of “behavioral regulations”, “communicative potential”, “moral normativity” are characteristic of the two groups of convicts (fig. 1.).

However, we found significant differences on the indicators of communicative potential ($t = 3,762$; when $p < 0,001$) and moral normativity ($t = 0,896$; when $p < 0,01$). The data of the mathematical and statistical processing demonstrate that though low values both in the behavioral regulation, and moral normativity scales are characteristic of the two groups of convicts, however, in the group of students these numbers are the closest to norm values.

The comparative analysis of the values in adaptation abilities of convicts showed that a lowered adaptation (tab. 3) was characteristic of both the NGHE group (mean value = 3,21) and the GHE group (mean value = 3,38).

TABLE 3: MEAN VALUES OF CONVICTS' ADAPTATION ABILITIES

<i>MPQ «Adaptability» scales</i>	<i>NGHE</i>	<i>GHE</i>	<i>Statistical significance</i>	
			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Reliability	5,06	4,912	0,495	0,621
Behavioral regulation	4,42	4,81	1,637	0,103
Communicative potential	4,41	4,97	3,762	0,001
Moral normativity	4,09	4,56	3,189	0,002
Personal adaptation potential	3,21	3,39	0,896	0,371

Along with it, it should be noted that the groups of convicts are characterized by low values in the indicators «Behavioral regulation» «Communicative potential», «Moral normativity».

However, we have found significant differences on the indicators of CP ($t = 3,762$; when $p \leq 0,001$) and MN ($t = 0,896$; when $p \leq 0,01$). The data of the mathematical and statistical processing demonstrate that though low manifestations are characteristic of the two groups of convicts both in behavioral regulation, and moral normativity, they are closer to norm values in the GHE group

The comparative analysis of the values of the NGHE and GHE groups has shown that the groups of convicts-learners and convicts who do not participate in

learning differ from each other in a number of parameters. Basic differences in individual and psychological features of these groups have been revealed on the scales “communicative potential” ($t = 3,762$; when $p \leq 0,001$); “moral normativity” ($t = 0,896$; when $p \leq 0,01$); morbid depression (Hs, $t = 6,718$; when $p \leq 0,001$); correction (K, $t = 6,005$; when $p \leq 0,001$); impulsiveness (Pd, $t = 4,028$; when $p \leq 0,001$); anxiety (Pt, $t = 13,884$; when $p \leq 0,001$); schizophrenia (Sc, $t = 10,231$; when $p \leq 0,001$).

DISCUSSIONS

Research results of the adaptation abilities dynamics found by means of the multi-level personal questionnaire “Adaptability” in convicts-students and convicts who do not study demonstrate that in the course of doing a higher education course the efficiency of adaptation capabilities in an individual increases in the group of students and remains at the same level in the group of non-students.

As a result of the conducted research directed to studying the adaptation abilities the convicts who were doing a degree course one can make the following conclusion: while getting an education convicts demonstrate the adaptation processes efficiency that determines the process of re-socialization at all its stages. These conclusions are also confirmed by the results obtained by us during the observation and analysis of documents (content analysis) of convicts (studying the materials of convicts’ personal records and other documents – familiarizing with the autobiography and characteristics given by various institutions and the investigating officer, with the sentence and other materials of the personal record, detection of valuable and orientation and behavioral features of the convict, his role status in the criminal community, behavior in the course of pre-trial investigation and legal proceedings, the analysis of publications, correspondence, social ties). The analysis of real results of convicts’ activity demonstrates that students tend to statistically reduce offenses at a correctional institution, and this depends on learning levels and indicators of socially positive activities also increase.

Besides, the analysis of research results gives the grounds to state that the personal and adaptation potential of the convicts who get higher education differs from the personal and adaptation potential of the criminals who have not been involved in the educational process.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results of the conducted research demonstrate that in the course of getting higher education the efficiency of adaptation processes increases in convicts. There is a change of values in indicators such as behavioral regulation, communicative potential and moral normativity. Besides, the change of the regulation system is observed in convicts including self-evaluation, the level of neuropsychic hardiness, social approval from the people around. However, these structural elements are

not a fundamental principle of behavior regulation. They reflect the ratio of convicts' requirements, their motives, an emotional background of the mood, consciousness, "I-concept", etc. The regulation system change of the convict in the course of educational professional activities is a result of the change of difficult, hierarchical structure, an integration of all the levels into a single complex and provides stability of the behavior regulation process of the criminal in a correctional institution. With respect to this, higher education serves as an effective factor of increasing convicts' adaptation abilities in a correctional institution. The convicts who did not get higher education, throughout the study show low values of adaptation abilities and the adaptation and personal potential in general. People of this group possess a low neuropsychic hardiness, they tend to come into conflicts and inclined to delinquent behavior.

Convicts with a high personal and adaptation potential show the most effective strategy of behavior in the situation of conviction (difficult life situation); they are characterized by a positive behavioral orientation and favorable tendency to re-socialization. Convicts with low values in indicators of adaptation abilities show the least effective strategy of behavior in the situation of conviction. Convicts with a low personal and adaptation potential are characterized by a negative orientation of behavior and adverse tendency to re-socialization.

The results of the study demonstrate that the personal and adaptation potential determines the convict's level of resilience in the situation of serving a sentence (difficult life situations) and contributes to forming an effective strategy of behavior while coping with life difficulties.

The results of the empirical research presented in the article can be used by the staff of the federal service of the punishment execution, psychologists and social workers in the course of implementing practical work directed to reforming and correcting the personality of a convict.

Acknowledgements

The study is conducted with the financial support of Russian Fund for Humanities within scientific-research project "The research of indicators features and dynamics of value-semantic sphere of prisoners receiving higher professional education", project ¹ 15-36-01329/17

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