



PECULIARITIES OF SPECIAL CONTINGENT'S PERSONALITY IN PENITENTIARY INSTITUTIONS OF ARMENIA

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Received 6/01/2017; accepted for printing 23/01/2018

ABSTRACT

Existing living conditions put forward increased demands on mental health of the person, which acquire special significance for people serving their sentence in the conditions of criminal and reform institutions. The study aimed to describe present subclinical manifestations of affective disorders, their prevalence and structure among the special contingent of penal institutions of Armenia.

The data analysis of investigating personality peculiarities of the special contingent has shown that in the general structure of the revealed types of affective temperaments (910) the hyperthymic type (291) had a significant prevalence with the specific weight of 32.0%, then comes dysphoric – 23.4% (213), cyclothymic – 17.7% (161), irritable – 14.4% (131) and eventually the anxious type – 12.6% (113). In the overwhelming majority of the investigated contingent on the whole by the selection this or that accentuation was determined in 87.03% (436) cases. The level of occurrence frequency of people with affective temperament among male and female contingent was 86.17% (355) and 88.73% (63) correspondingly and among the teenagers – 100.00% (18).

The results obtained during the investigation can promote creating a methodological base directed to the personality harmonization, alleviating the destructive influence of the penal institutions environment, as well as improving the quality of the medical service in the penitentiary system. The determination of the most expressed types of the affective temperament among the special contingent will allow to make a prognosis of their further behavior in conditions of criminal-executive institutions of Republic of Armenia.

KEYWORDS: convicts, affective temperament, personality peculiarities, character accentuations, penitentiary institutions, mental health.

INTRODUCTION

The current living conditions put forward heightened demands for a person's mental health, which acquire special significance for people serving their sentence in conditions of penal institutions. The mental state of a person is defined by

motivating-emotional, understanding and moral-spiritual components the base of which is the state of psycho-emotional comfort providing mental activity and adequate behavior of the person. Behavioral component of the human health is expressed by the degree of behavioral adequacy, the ability to communicate. Its base is composed of the vital position (active, passive, aggressive) and interpersonal relations which are defined by the adequate interaction with the external environment (biological and social) and the ability to work effectively.

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In this article, the problems of human mental health are actively discussed and investigations in this sphere are considered to be one of the top priorities taking into account the global character of the problem among people particularly among those who are isolated from the society. The conditions of places of confinement can't help influencing on the convicts' character and enabling the onset and development of the marginal forms of neuro-psychic pathology. The investigation of the personality peculiarities of people serving their sentence in penal institutions is of utmost importance for analyzing the latter's psychological state and for working out medical-psychological recommendations related to the corrections of the reformatory process. This will allow to personalize the approaches of correcting the revealed changes and in this way to increase the effectiveness of primary preventive measures concerning the special contingent's health. The psycho-preventive direction must be included in the volume of providing medical-psychological help in the penitentiary sector of the public health and realized in the dispensary system the full length of the sentence serving.

We can conclude from the above - mentioned that it is of a special importance to reveal the early subclinical forms of pathology, mainly nervousness, psychopathy and predisposition to them. The diagnostics of the character accentuations has a rather serious role in this aspect as under the influence of psycho-traumatic factors they can change into a pathological state [Mariyeva E, Senko V, 2011].

Arrest, imprisonment and isolation from the society are the most violent stress (penitentiary stress) for the great majority of people. Being a massive psycho-trauma, they provoke the development or decompensation of existing psychic disorders just in the places of imprisonment. The loss of real independence, restriction of freedom promotes significantly the individual disadaptation of a person and often leads to anxiety, depression or their combination as a manifestation of the individual's adaptation variants in the penal institutions [Spasennikov B, Smirnov A, 2011].

Psychic overexertion is related to the conduction of forensic-investigatory activities, necessity of implicit subordination to the administration and fulfillment of the regimen demands, peculiarities and difficulties of life in the cell, termination of

routine relations with the family and the society [Kononets A, Bobrik A, 2011]

When studying the psycho-physiological side of the convict's character, we can see that the majority of the criminals suffer psychic disorders, emotionally are not stable. The imprisoned with problems of mental health suffer not only themselves. Their presence in the usual prison population can bring to reinforcement of intensity, risks for security, and as a result of it, it can bring to aggression which in its turn can cause breaking the human rights. The investigation of the data on the prevalence and structure of typological variants of personality disorders in the convicts can become a base for working out differentiated medical-preventive and psycho-correcting programs depending on the leading radical of anomalous personality

The establishment of the typological variant of psychopathy can ensure the prognosis of more probable clinical-dynamic improvement, early diagnostics of mental state worsening and optimal choice of treating methods, stipulates enlargement of the ranges of understanding the peculiarities of a mature person in complicated life conditions and juridical psychology as it intends to receive results of scientific significance enriching the knowledge underlying the differentiated approach to the convict in the process of their resocialization.

Present investigation is aimed to reveal early subaffecting, subclinical manifestations of affective disorders, their prevalence and structure among the special contingent of Penal institutions of Armenia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to conduct this investigation, we have prepared forms for psychodiagnostic testing aimed at revealing affecting temperaments among the selected people deprived of freedom and receiving a general characterological "picture".

Each participant was pointed out the principle of voluntary participation and for each case a written consent was received. All the procedures, related to the investigation conduction, information encoding, data base formation, material and result keeping and working out, have been carried out keeping strictly to the evidence-based medicine and ethic norms corresponding to the reviewed variant of the principles of the World Medical Association Declaration in Helsinki [World Medical

Association Declaration in Helsinki, 2000]. The ethical aspect of the investigation was reviewed and approved by the Committee of Bioethics of YSMU after M. Heratsi, which passed a resolution on the correspondence of the investigation complying with the necessary ethical norms.

The investigation was carried out from February to June 2016 in 11 out of 12 criminal-executive institutions of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia, except for the criminal-executive institutions "Hospital for the imprisoned".

The experimental selection was composed of 501 people deprived of freedom, namely: 412 men, 71 women and 18 youngsters-teenagers. At the moment of conducting the investigation there were no under age female people in criminal-executive institutions of Republic of Armenia.

Clinically healthy men, women and teenagers serving their sentence in criminal-executive institutions of Armenia were the object for the investigation. The criteria included – absence of any chronic pathology, being imprisoned for more than 6 months. The criteria excluded – presence of any acute or chronic pathologies among the investigated people, presence of verified alcohol or drug dependence, cranial-cerebral traumas in the medical history in conditions of imprisonment for less than 6 months.

The investigation was carried out by the method "Temperament assessment by Akiskal HS – questionnaire TEMPS-A" [Akiskal H, et al., 1983; Akiskal H et al., 2004; Rihmer Z et al., 2008; Gasparyan Kh et al., 2016; Jaracz M et al., 2017].

The questionnaire consists of 57 statements divided into 5 scales, characterizing this or that affective temperament. In parallels Latin letters are presented defining the affective temperament according to which the questions are formulated. If the investigated person gives a positive answer to more than 65% questions of a certain scale, the mentioned temperament is defined in him/her. The existence of more than one temperament is permissible.

This method is based on the theoretical conception of H.S. Akiskal and co-authors on affective temperaments which are premorbid for an emotional pathology. According to H.S. Akiskal and co-authors characteristic features of a personality are "subaffective", they reveal disorders of the affective specter in the characteristic features of a

personality. Such features precede diseases of the affective specter which the author prefers to combine not in the notion "personality disorder" but in the notion "temperament" [Akiskal H et al., 1983].

This questionnaire differs from the majority of other personality scales as it identifies the features in the form they are defined in Greek psychological medicine and quite not long ago – in German psychiatry. H.S. Akiskal worked out the typology of affective temperaments based on the classical conception of personality in the base of which is Hippocrates's idea of the "life juices" of the organism and emotional reactivity. The author extrapolated his theoretical ideas on patients and their mentally healthy relatives by describing 5 affective temperaments as well as composed a self-questionnaire for making affective temperaments objective among the population.

In this model the affective temperaments are considered as subaffective, subclinical manifestations of affective disorders [Akiskal H et al., 2005; Rózsa S et al., 2008], increased risk of their manifestation and suicidal behavior occurrence. According to the investigation data affective temperaments are considered as potential predictors of suicidal behavior [Eksioglu S et al., 2015; Karam E et al., 2015; Ardani A et al., 2017; Mitsu N et al., 2017].

The literature data testify that specific affective temperament types (dysphoric, cyclothymic, hyperthymic, irritable and anxious) are the subsyndromal (trait-related) manifestations and commonly the antecedents of minor and major mood disorders. Up to 20% of the population has some kind of marked affective temperaments; depressive, cyclothymic and anxious temperament is more frequent in women, whereas hyperthymic and irritable temperaments predominate among men [Rihmer Z et al., 2012].

According to H.S. Akiskal, the types of affective temperaments are: dysphoric, cyclothymic, hyperthymic, irritable and anxious.

The greatest number of positive features is typical for hyperthymic temperament features: optimism, self-confidence, high mood, joy of living, high activity, indefatigability, tendency to take risks, to head. Besides, mood overfall is typical for them, however, phases of increased tonus prevail, whereas depressions are momentary. During the increased mood hyperthym can do

both good and bad things depending on their inclinations. In such state, the criminal can commit a series of deeds “in a twinkling”. He is of a great demand in the society, his speech differs by improvisations and fluency, is a nice holder of conversation. In a depressive state incomplete phrase, monosyllable answers prevail. They are characterized by urgent inclinations and slackening of retardation, i.e. in the excitation phase the borders between permitted and not permitted are obliterated. They perceive criticism badly, self-conceit is increased, self-criticism is weak. They are initiators, energetic, inventive, tend to be the leader of the group. Not seldom the tendency to be the first becomes a motive for crime.

The cyclothymic temperament is manifested in a labile temporary insanity, i.e. in a sharp change of mood, instable energetic potential, self-estimation and social links. Such person can often be talented at something but quite dilettante at the rest. As a rule, people with cyclothymic temperament are receptive, disposed to intensive emotional experiences, romantic.

People with irritable accentuations differ by such peculiarities as the lack of self-control, impatience, and as a result, insufficient control. They are skeptic, envious, don't look for compromises in conflicts, give vent to irritability. Aggression in such people has somehow a preventive character as they estimate the situation not correctly. Such people are characterized by unwillingness to obey the established norms. The itch for a momentary benefit not seldom becomes a motive for crime.

People with dysphoric accentuation don't like

great changes, they are usually compliant, inclined to self-condemnation, put others' demands higher than theirs, easily insulted in case of criticism or refusal, set up an acquaintance with difficulty.

The doubt to the correctness of their ideas and actions is very characteristic for the representatives of the anxious type. Anxiety is manifested in nervousness and uneasiness. Such people see danger in every corner. They are often timid, and worry about failure for a long time, are afraid of repeating the mistakes made a long time ago, which always brings to hesitation. Sudden sounds frighten them, their complaints are often of psycho-somatic character (headaches, indigestion, intestinal colics, nausea, diarrhea, pollakiuria).

The obtained data have been worked out by using Microsoft Excel 2007 and XLSTAT 2009 programs. The following indices are considered: average arithmetic, standard deviation, index levels of sign occurrence frequency (calculating on 100 people), indices of standard error, the structure of the investigated phenomenon is defined (%).

The evaluation of the comparative indices is given based on Student's t-criterion value – the difference of comparative indices' values is statistically trustworthy in $t \geq 1.96$, $p < 0.05$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The investigation has revealed that the average age of imprisoned men was 38.6 ± 12.39 , ranging from 19 to 67 years of age, women – 40.2 ± 10.29 ranging from 20 to 67, and teenagers - 17 ± 0.94 , ranging from 17 to 18 years.

As table 1 shows on the whole according to the

TABLE 1
Distribution of the investigated contingent of penal institutions of RA according to their educational level

Education	Men		Women		Teenagers		Selection	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n _{sel.}	%
Secondary	249	60.4	38	53.5	8	44.4	295	58.9
Incomplete secondary	5	1.2	2	2.8	10	55.6	17	3.4
Secondary professional	46	11.2	13	18.3	-	-	59	11.8
Incomplete higher	5	1.2	-	-	-	-	5	1.0
Higher	107	26.0	18	25.4	-	-	125	24.9
Total	412	100.0	71	100.0	18	100.0	501	100.0

selection (501) the specific weight of the number of people with higher education was 24.9% (125), the level of which among male (412) and female (71) special contingent was 26.0% and 25.4% (107 and 18) correspondingly. The specific weight of people with secondary professional education on average according to the selection was 11.8% (59), among the investigated male contingent it was 11.2% (46) among the female – 18.3% (13).

The specific weight of the number of people with secondary education was higher, the level of which on average according to the selection was 58.9% (295) and with prevalence both in men – 60.4% (249) and in women – 53.5% (38) among the teenage contingent it was 44.4% (8).

The specific weight of the number of people with incomplete secondary education on average according to the selection was 3.4% (17), the level of which among the investigated men and women was 1.2% and 2.8% (5 and 2) correspondingly, among the teenagers it was higher – 55.6% (10). The specific weight of the number of people with incomplete higher education on average according to the selection was only 1.0% (5), the level of which was formed exceptionally at the expense of men (1.2%).

The data analysis of investigating the personality peculiarities of the special contingent has shown (Figure) that in the general structure of the revealed types of affective temperaments (910) the hyperthymic type (291) had a significant prevalence with the specific weight of 32.0%, then comes dysphoric – 23.4% (213), cyclothymic – 17.7% (161), irritable – 14.4% (131) and eventually the anxious type – 12.6% (113). According to the data of Eksioglu S. and co-authors (2015) the cyclothymic tempera-

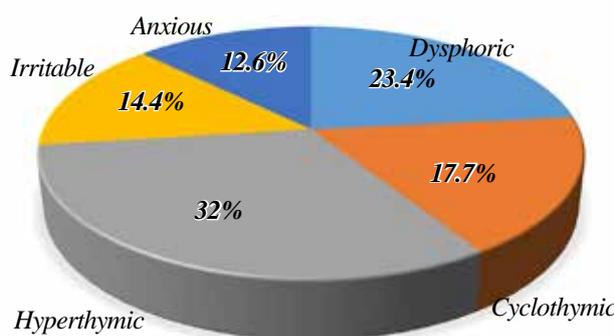


FIGURE. The structure of the distribution of affective temperaments' types

ment at the greatest degree is the predictor of suicidal behavior the latter is excessively urgent for this contingent who are constantly under penitentiary stress [Eksioglu S et al., 2015].

According to the comparative analysis of the frequency levels of affective temperament types' occurrence we can see that on the whole according to the selection the hyperthymic type (58.08) is far ahead compared with the others independently gained the first rank and ordinary place; the dysphoric type (42.51) had a really lower level compared with the hyperthymic one ($p < 0.05$), in the II rank and the 2nd ordinary place; the cyclothymic type (32.14) with a significant difference compared with the dysphoric one ($p < 0.05$) with the 3rd ordinary number in the III rank (Table 2).

According to Ardani A.R. and co-authors (2017) there is an expressed association between the depressive temperament and the attempt of suicide [Ardani A et al., 2017]. The irritable type of the affective temperament (26.15) with a trustworthy difference related to the cyclothymic level ($p < 0.05$) is in the IV rank and the 4th ordinary

TABLE 2

Levels of indices of the affective temperaments' types frequency rate among the investigated special contingent in penitentiary institutions of RA

Types of affective temperament	Men		Women		Teenagers		Selection	
	n=412	p, %	n=71	p, %	n=18	p, %	n=501	p, %
Dysphoric	177	42.96	27	38.03	9	50.00	213	42.51
Cyclothymic	121	29.37	30	42.25	10	55.55	161	32.14
Hyperthymic	240	58.25	41	57.75	10	55.55	291	58.08
Irritable	100	24.27	25	35.21	6	33.33	131	26.15
Anxious	82	19.90	27	38.03	5	27.78	114	22.75
Total	720	174.76	150	211.27	40	222.22	910	181.64

place. The anxious type according to the level index (22.75) with an insignificant difference compared with the level of the irritable type ($p>0.05$) together with the latter appeared in the IV rank and the 5th ordinary place.

As we can see from the data in Table 2 among the men the types of the affective temperament appeared in 4 ranks and 5 ordinary places due to both their level indices and on the whole according to the selection. However, if the first three (I-III) and ordinary (1-3) places according to the decrease of the index value and trustworthy level difference of each subsequent compared with the previous one were gained by the hyperthymic (58.25), dysphoric (42.96) and cyclothymic (29.3) types correspondingly ($P_{hyp.}-P_{disph.} - p<0,05$; $P_{disph.}-P_{cycl.} - p<0,05$), the irritable type keeping the 4th ordinary place for itself, appeared between the III-IV ranks due to the index level (24.27) without statistically any significant difference compared with those of the cyclothymic and anxious (19.90) types ($P_{cycl.}-P_{irrit.} - p>0,05$; $P_{irrit.}-P_{anx.} - p>0,05$), whereas the anxious type, remaining in its last 5th ordinary place, due to its index level with a trustworthy difference compared with that of the cyclothymic type appeared alone in the IV rank ($P_{cycl.}-P_{anx.} - p<0,05$).

Among the investigated female and teenage special contingent, the picture of the affective temperament type distributions differed by the number of both rank and ordinary places, namely according to the index levels of the affective temperament types presented by the ordinary numbers 1-4, among the female contingent they were distributed in two ranks, whereas among the teenagers – on one.

Thus, among the female special contingent the hyperthymic type of the affective temperament was presented by the 1st ordinary number in I rank according to the index level (57.75). The cyclothymic type (42,25) appeared between I-II ranks due to its index level in the 2nd ordinary place, with an insignificant difference compared with both the previous one ($P_{hyp.}-P_{cycl.} - p>0,05$), and the indices of dysphoric and anxious types ($P_{cycl.}-P_{dis.anx.} - p>0,05$).

The dysphoric and anxious types sharing the 3rd ordinary place equally, due to the level indices were quite lower compared to those of the hyperthymic type ($P_{hyp.}-P_{dis.anx.} - p<0,05$) and were presented in II rank where without any significant difference in the index level compared with them ($P_{dis.anx.}-P_{irrit.} -$

$p>0,05$) appeared the irritable type of the temperament (35.21), too, by the 4th ordinary number.

Among the investigated teenagers' contingent, the types of the affective temperament were presented in one rank statistically without any differences in the levels of comparative indices ($p>0.05$) in the following sequence, namely: according to the index levels hyperthymic and cyclothymic types shared the 1st place composing 55.55 each, the 2nd place – the dysphoric type (50.00), the 3rd place – the irritable one (33.33) and the 4th – the anxious type (27.78).

The levels of total occurrence frequency indices of all the cases of the affective temperament's registered types for 100 people (table 2) among the special contingent on the whole (501) composing 181.64% (910), among the male contingent (412) – 174.75% (720), and among the female - (71) – 211.27% (150) and teenagers (18)- 222.22% (40), testify to the occurrence among the investigated contingent of people with one and more types of affective temperament

So, the results of analysis show (Table 3) that the level of occurrence frequency without affective temperament on the whole composed only 12.9% (65) among the contingent (501), among the male (412) and female (71) contingent - 13.83% (57) and 11.27% (8) correspondingly, whereas among the investigated teenagers people without affective temperament were not revealed.

Significantly the level of occurrence frequency was high in people with affective temperament among the special contingent on the whole in 87.03% (436) cases, among men and women – in 86.1% (355) and 88.73% (63) cases, and among the teenagers in 100.00% (18) cases. The analysis of the distribution of people with affective temperament according to the number of types has shown that among the investigated selection on the whole the level of the total index (87.03%) in people with affective temperament in 33.13% cases (166) was noted at the expense of the occurrence of people with one type of temperament; in 25.95% cases (130) two types simultaneously; in 18.16% cases (91) – three types and in 6.79% (34) cases and 3.00% (15) cases – four and five types correspondingly composing 9.79% (49) cases in total.

We can see from the given data (Table 3) that among the investigated men and women

the levels of occurrence frequency general indices of people with affective temperament (86.17% and 88.73%) in 33.98% (140) and in 30.99% (22) correspondingly) were noted at the expense of occurrence of people with one type of temperament; in 26,46% (109) and 16.90% (12) cases - two types; in 17.48% (72) and in 25.54% (16) cases – three types, and the presence of four and five types of temperament – among men in 5.83% (24) and in 2.43% (10) cases correspondingly, composing 8.26% (34) in total whereas in women in 12.68% (9) and in 5.63% (4) cases composing 18.31% (13) cases in total

Among the teenagers' contingent the level of general index of occurrence frequency in people (100.00%) with the presence of affective temperament in 50.00% (9) cases was established at the expense of occurrence of people with two types of temperament; in 22.22% (4) cases with one type of temperament; in 16.67% (3) cases – three types simultaneously, and with the presence of 4 or 5 types of temperament on the whole in 11.12% (2) cases of them 5.56% (1) each.

The obtained data correspond to the opinion of other investigators dealing with the problems of individual- personality peculiarities of people being in conditions of social isolation.

According to the data of the investigations conducted in the penitentiary institutions of Russia the ecstatic-hyperthymic-demonstrative type

of personality prevails among the healthy convicts, which is characterized by increased level of contact, high level of adaptability, superficial feelings, as well as great excitement and neurotization. Besides, such subjects are notable for their aspiration for leadership, unsociability, talkativeness, light-mindedness, egocentrism, tendency to amoral actions, falsity. In situations leading to personal interests' infringement they are disposed to hysterical neurosis [Olenko E et al., 2015]. Our data differ from those obtained by Scherbakova L.M and Belaya O.P. (2013) who note that among women violator-criminals hysterical (demonstratives), unstable (cyclothymic) and pedant types of accentuations are more common, anxious and hyperthymic types are absent, whereas among our contingent the leading one was the hyperthymic accentuation.

The pilot investigation conducted among 100 people serving their sentence in penal institutions of Armenia has revealed that the prevailing type of the affective temperament is the hyperthymic one [Vardanyan K et al., 2016]. Similar results have been obtained when working with women – criminals being imprisoned for the first and second times. It has shown that among them the prevailing accentuations were the hyperthymic and cyclothymic ones [Gasparyan Kh et al., 2016]. According to Kadis L.R. (2015) in more than half of the investigated interned teenager's depressive and anxious manifestations of

TABLE 3

Occurrence frequency of people with an affective temperament among the investigated special contingent in presence of the affective temperament types

Presence of the affective temperament types	Men		Women		Teenagers		Selection	
	n	p, %	n	p, %	n	p, %	n	p, %
One	140	33.98	22	30.99	4	22.22	166	33.13
Two	109	26.46	12	16.90	9	50.00	130	25.95
Three	72	17.48	16	25.54	3	16.67	91	18.16
Four	24	5.83	9	12.68	1	5.56	34	6.79
Five	10	2.43	4	5.63	1	5.56	15	3.00
Total number of people								
with affective temperament	355	86.17	63	88.73	18	100.00	436	87.03
without affective temperament	57	13.83	8	11.27	-	-	65	12.97
Total number of people	412	100.00	71	100.00	18	100.00	501	100.00

prenosologic level have been noted, which were combined with ascentism, somato-vegetative disorders, changes in self-relations and communication. Among the investigated teenagers everybody had this or that type of affective temperament without any exception (100%). Another study conducted among women in conditions of isolation has shown a higher level of emotional tension, anxiety, impulsivity and psychosexual problems compared to women of the control group [Iliceto P et al., 2013]. Emotional disorders influence the physical and psychological prosperity of imprisoned women and it is quite possible that these problems can bring to suicide. According to the author the specialists of public health must work out gender therapeutic interventions for women in prison [Iliceto P et al., 2013].

CONCLUSION

In the overwhelming majority of the investigated contingent on the whole by the selection this or that accentuation was determined in 87.03% (436) cases

The study results can promote creating a methodological base directed to the personality harmonization, alleviating the destructive influence of the penal institutions environment, as well as improving the quality of the medical service in the penitentiary system.

Prenosologic diagnostics is an essential element of the prophylactic examination of people who are in conditions of social isolation, to determine correctly the system of the medical service individual influence on them. The determination of the most expressed types of the affective temperament among the special contingent will allow to make a prognosis of their further behavior in conditions of criminal-executive institutions of RA.

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