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***"PSYCHOLOGICAL COORDINATES OF THE
INJURIOUSNESS IN THE PENITENTIARY
ENVIRONMENT"***

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ACTUALITY AND IMPORTANCE OF THE THESIS

A fascinating and at the same time revolting "universe", the penitentiary is a world where the psychological implosion is permanently present, where the coordinates of the existence is stress, despondency, failure, pathologic, crime. In this atypical world, the main protagonists are the prisoners that serve their time for a penalty of freedom deprivation and the personnel of the penitentiary, both categories being affected by the fact that they live in a universe of waiting, where the main rack is time.

But, if we look deeply, we will see the dimensions and the structure of the relations, norms and values, the system of privileges, the force relations, the statuses and roles of different persons. The community of each penitentiary is an anonymous world, consisting of private people with social prestige, with the consciousness of their minority.

Underlining the socio-cultural and political realities, the psychology applied within the penitentiaries becomes explosive due to its findings: criminality is a social presence during all the historical ages, defying all the measures taken against it; the severity of the problem of delinquency does not always consist of the numerical importance of the phenomenon, but in the fact that it invaded the social structures; the benefits of some categories of delinquents are so great, that the hope of some efficient interventions is, in the best case, naivety; the fear of delinquency among people has become a problem in all the countries, the values protected by the Criminal Law going through a period of erosion.

For the person that executes a penalty of freedom deprivation, the penitentiary environment arises more problems: adaptation to the norms and values specific to this type of life and the ulterior evolution of his personality. In spite of all the efforts now made by the administration of the detention places, in case of prisoners with bigger penalties and, especially, in case of the subsequent offenders, one may notice some negative transformations of the personal values, thing that diminishes the receptivity towards the re-educational process carried out in the detention place. Generally speaking, what seems to be greatly affected in case of prisoners are the norms according to which they conduct their activities and interpersonal relationships, the individual and collective appraisals of the daily facts, thing that betrays a system of inferior needs, a relation between good and evil according to the personal interests and, generally, a low level of morality.

Being in detention, the person deprived of freedom, that committed an antisocial action, comes into contact with a different world, where other norms, rules, values, to which the new prisoner must adapt, predominate. He has a socialization degree that allows him to continue his personal life in normal conditions after the expiation of the penalty, but, during the execution of the penalty he is strongly negatively influenced by the other persons that are deprived of freedom, influence distinguished by the learning of new techniques and tricks, that the prisoner assimilates and then, becoming free, applies these skills that he acquired during detention. This means that he came in the detention institution as an accidental law breaker and gets out as a specialized and organized one.

The entering in the penitentiary affects the equilibrium of the personality by a threefold reduction of the life space, of the personal time and social behavior. So, in case of the persons deprived of freedom, the territoriality instinct is inhibited, because they are not able to mark the territory that has been assigned to them; the valorization of the living space is devastated by the amplexness of the frustration; aggressiveness has other forms than the violent ones that we might expect, and namely: dependence creation, manipulation of information, distribution of the packages with food, others inhibition from participating in recreational activities, the appropriation of the penal clothes being in the best condition. The inhibition of the aggressiveness is mainly conditioned by the penitentiary agents, that permanently underline the formal hierarchy that exists in prison and steady impose its keeping.

The motivation for choosing this topic started from the observation that in the penitentiary institutions there take place a great number of violent actions, or committed with violence, against the personnel, the other prisoners, but also against the person itself.

While the specialized literature from our country is poor in this field and the ample studies that might deal with this problem lack or are in incipient stages being locally applied and involving a reduced number of prisoners, I considered that a study for identifying the risk factors that may lead to the production of violent manifestations and of the characteristics of the personality of the prisoners that present a high risk level is necessary, in order to know and control the behavior of these persons, for reducing the number and the severity of the violent manifestations in the penitentiary environment. These aspects should be seriously taken into account, while the injuriousness of an individual is differently seen by the civil society, the ordinary citizens, the personnel of the penitentiaries or by other persons that are deprived of freedom.

The inefficient handling of the aggressive behaviors in the penitentiary environment leads to the increase of the unease feeling, to an extension of the violent actions and actions committed with violence, that negatively influence the cohabitation and the good course of activities in the penitentiary institutions.

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The study of the penitentiary as an environment concentrates on the understanding of the life in the penitentiary and especially on the stress of the prisoners that have difficulties regarding the survival in the penitentiary: while some prisoners easily and serenely adapt to the challenges of the penitentiary environment, others really struggle during the detention period. These situations are of great interest for us, because they offer different perspectives on the attributes of the penitentiary and the needs of the prisoners. The known data show that the adjustment problems in the penitentiary are not rare or limited to extreme groups of vulnerable persons. Although stress mingles with vulnerability, most of the crises, the despondency and sufferance of the prisoners might be avoided. Apparently similar prisoners survive in the same setting, prisoners that survive in a setting dip in another one, situations that are oppressive for some of the prisoners have no impact on others.

Surprisingly, few things are known regarding the variables associated with anxious depressive feelings, with the inadequate psychological functioning in a penitentiary. The lifestyle before the reclusion influences the adjustment, sets differences regarding the levels of depression, the anxiety state, as well the reasons for which certain individuals consider life in the penitentiary much more difficult to bear. At the same time, the existence of friends, the physical exercises, the participation in educative and psychological activities contribute to an easier adaptation to the penitentiary environment.

The potential danger that a prisoner might represent is a compositional effect, where we will find not only the personality, but also the his present situation, the problems from the past and present, different aspects of the group that he is forced to live in.

The evaluation of the injuriousness level that a prisoner may present during the detention time is related to the caused negative elements or to the unsuccessful attempts, as well as related to the events that he might provoke.

One may ascertain that the manifestation of the aggressiveness is also a sign of the presence of the inferiority complex, a dissimulation of it. Paradoxically, many times, the desire to show the superiority towards others is caused by the fact that the person in question underestimates itself. Demeaning themselves or being aggressive towards others, these people try to bring the others to their level, do their best to show themselves tougher than they really are. This situation may be represented based on a mathematical formula: the desired thing - reality and the energy of the aggressiveness. In other words, the greater the distance between "dream" and reality is, the deeper the self-dissatisfaction, respectively the aggressiveness will be.

The influencing and manifestation sources of aggressiveness may be grouped in five categories:

- 1) environmental factors:
 - excessive heat and humidity;
- 2) intern sources of the penitentiary environment:

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- over-agglomeration, that is a stressing agent for some of the people;
- increase of the number of prisoners with high risk level, of mentally ill prisoners;
- increase of the number of rights and facilities that might be offered to the prisoners;
- the wrong perception of the changes that interfere in the legal detention treatment.

3) sources that are related to the individual, its conduct and behavior:

- frustration is one of the most spread factors that unleash the aggressiveness;
- the direct or provoked attack, in most of the cases a verbal, but also a physical one, may

lead to an aggressive behavior of the regarded one;

- the physical and moral pain, may lead to the increase of the aggressiveness;
- the frequent failures in life and the lack of personal fruition;
- the belief that they have been more severely punished than they deserved, not only for the

committed infraction, but also for the disciplinary deviations committed after the reclusion in th penitentiary.

4) sources arising from the situation of the family:

- the precarious material situation of the family that the prisoners come from;
- death / birth of a family member;
- the lack of visits made by the family or friends of the prisoners.

5) sources of the aggressiveness related to the means of mass communication:

• the access to materials for adults (movies, magazines, different emissions etc.) may be a factor that leads to the intensification or releasing of the aggressive actions.

Violence may appear under different forms: from simple physical and psychic constraints, for appropriating some goods or obtaining some services, to the direct aggression (hits and fights) or to extreme violences (murder attempts, homicide, sexual aggressions).

Most of the times these violences burst out spontaneously, incidentally, but many times they are premeditated and applied systematically and with sadism. Generally, very many cases of individual aggressions are known, but the most dangerous, regarding their consequences and the difficulty of being discovered and counter-attacked, are the group aggressions. Most of the times, the group of aggressors informally dictate rules and lead, and a quick and efficient intervening possibility is minimum.

Aggressiveness has three distinct forms of manifestation, these being tightly connected to one another:

- aggressiveness expressed by physiognomy, mime and pantomime;
- verbal violence;
- physical violence.

Aggressiveness expressed by physiognomy, mime and pantomime

For the linguistic communication, but especially the nonlinguistic one, the **human physiognomy** is itself a communicational subsystem. The human figure hides and, at the same time, reveals the most authentic character traits and the dynamic of the development of the personality.

Each person, by its appearance, communicates some data at the affective subliminal level, that, combined with gesticulation and language, induces a diffuse reaction, that may actuate a behavioral response, recorded on a scale that begins with sympathy and ends with antipathy and even hostile reactions.

In the direct interpersonal communicational relations, the body, with its entire arsenal of means, is one of the most important mediators. The corporal attitudes express instincts, primary emotions, attack and defense attitudes, these suffering shaping in expression, under the form of postponements and dissimulations.

All these elements confer a certain meaning to the demeanor, that results in multiple psycho-affective states of mind and that determine the partner to transform his own state of mind, as a response to the received message. If the mime of the partner conveys aggressiveness, the other partner also modifies his state of mind, becoming, most of the times, aggressive. But, sometimes, the one who gets aggressiveness as a message may reply with a mine and attitude of sympathy, being able to produce as effect the decrease or extinction of the aggressiveness.

When the neuropsychiatric level of the control and self-control mechanisms is affected, due to illness, trauma or education, the aggressive manifestation capacity appears as a blind uncontrollable force. As well, certain drugs, including alcohol, reduce the decision and control capacity, leaving place to spontaneous and uncontrolled reliefs of the person`s aggressiveness.

Mime and pantomime have a very diverse range of expression ways, materialized in the physiognomy and the movement of the body segments, in other words, body language. Regardless of the ways the aggressiveness signals reach the nervous system, they determine the activation of some endocrine processes with the help of hormones, increasing the sensibility level and straining the whole organism, determining the attack attitude. The higher the reactivity level is, the greater the aggressiveness becomes.

Verbal violence

Language, as main objective interpersonal communicational means, implies a great diversity of expression sources, all based on producing and spreading the symbols and significations. Besides non-communicational elements, the word is charged with logic information due to tone and accent, especially expressing the profound or relational moods.

The relations that are mediated by word are very sophisticated, more hidden or more perfidious than those mediated by actions, facts, violently expressed impulses. Word helps the being to reach the

essential values, the dissolution of the identity and dignity, the derogation of the freedom to exist. In fact, the most important values that the self and the socio-moral personality are based on are reached.

3.2.1. Calumny represents the most aggressive verbal form. Even though it seems a spontaneous action, it is a scenario planned in advance. Keeping the proportions, it represents a socio-moral assassination. First, the target around which the conflict takes shape is selected, that means an accumulation of resentments, of contrary, envy, hate positions. By calumny one may wish to annihilate the self-confidence, a change of the moral and social dimensions of the self, according to the wish of the slanderer, an acceptance of the erroneous truth imposed by the opponent. The effect of the verbal „poisoning” represents the man`d death from a moral and psychic point of view (C. Păunescu, 1994, p. 32).

The used methods are very diverse and well studied. The force of the suggestion of the word produces, through suggestive transmissions of some facts, the context that attracts the concentration of all the similar information towards the aimed person.

The fundamental need of social evolution, glory, success, generated the discovery of this malignant „weapon”, with which you can beat your opponent more rapidly or for a longterm. In fact, this is a very sophisticated form of fighting for existence, apparently superior, but also disrupted by amorality. Calumny is an immoral „weapon” of rise.

3.2.2. Denigration is used be the user with a negative or pejorative character, in order to discover those personality traits or facts, circumstances, intentions of the opponent, that he thickens, distorts up to grotesque, getting or wishing to get a disqualification, a moral-social compromise of the opponent (C. Păunescu, 1994, p. 38).

But, most of the times, we may speak about calumny without a real base, on themes invented by a perverse imagination, that compensates the impossibility of a direct attack, of violence or inferiority. The systematic denigration produces very often a marginalization, attracts the public opprobrium towards the denigrated person and, many times, towards the denigrating person, that makes nothing else but to reflect upon the opponent his own frailties of the personality. The denigrated person mostly gets an affective and moral trauma, manifested through psychic sufferings, sometimes with neurotic states, as reaction to the manifestations of depreciation of the self and loss of self-confidence, resulting in aggressive, violent, direct or denigrating forms of defense.

3.2.3. Self-denigration does not situate among the reactions resulting from a normal organization of the personality. It is the verbal equivalent of self-torture, consisting in the need to provoke oneself a moral suffering, a slow killing through the exacerbation of the conflicts that undermines the personality, trying to go beyond tension. It may not be the results of an inferiority complex, while this way the others need of spearing is stimulated, by negating the defamation and underlining some qualities, values and achievements, either real or invented (C. Păunescu, 1994, p. 38).

Self-denigration may appear due to the need of affection and protection. When a phenomenon of real or imaginative affective frustration exists, self-denigration is a form of stimulation of the friendship relations, sympathy, love coming from the others and, of course, of protection.

3.2.4. Irony is defined as a form of verbal aggressiveness, where the manifest statement hides dormant significations, with an aggressive value, different from the actual message. It is a way of aggression towards a certain situation, a person, using a subtle game of intelligence, that should bring the attacked subject a moral prejudice or psychic trauma (C. Păunescu, 1994, p. 39).

Having the form of a game, irony does not always produce immediate reactions, it inducing only the dormant reactivity states, that may determine the experiencing of an inferiority feeling of the partner and the organization of hate in his psychism.

Sarcasm is the more intense, more pertinent and traumatizing form of aggressiveness of the language. The word comes from the Greek language and originally means to bite from the meat. So, sarcasm is a caustic irony. While irony, under its usual form, does not have a net connotation of malice, sarcasm transmits a considerable charge of cruelty, of rancor. The sarcastic likes not only to verbally hurt the victim, but also to witness it feeling the pain (C. Păunescu, 1994, p. 39).

All the verbal aggressiveness forms are transmitted either by word of mouth, or by writing. Their traumatic effect depends on the context of the situation, the most injurious ones being those that imply denigration, the public or collective depreciation. Public denigration leads to marginalization, to the feeling of abandon, of moral contempt, from here resulting the tendency of the implicated person to withdraw into his shell or to isolate in his own minimum group of relations. These situations lead to the restructuring of the self, other times to aggressive, antisocial reactions.

3.3. Physical violence

The fact that in the detention units the violent acts are very frequent is not surprising: the tensions resulting from living in prisons, the "adjustment of the accounts", the fight for power, the dissensions with the personnel are the most frequent reasons that instigate certain prisoners to attack the others. As a rule, the prisoners use all the enforcements and frustrations, that they endured along with time, against the one seen as an enemy. The most acts of violence start from puerile disputes: the choosing of the TV channels, not keeping the rules of a game, the guess of some betrayals.

Physical violence takes different shapes in the penitentiary institutions: self-aggressiveness, "terrorism", prison-breakings or leaving the working points, suicides.

3.3.1. Self-aggressiveness - consists in generating pains of any types, from the moral to the physical ones, by bodily harms, accompanied by a decrease of the different degrees of the conservation instinct. Regarding the line between thinking and action, the self-aggressiveness forms may be described at the level of the self-aggressive intentions, phantasms and behaviors.

The main forms of self-aggressiveness in the penitentiary institutions are: scarifications, venous sections, abdominal or thoracic wounds, wounds of the extremities, sometimes accompanied by the

amputation of some segments, self-inseminations with different biological products, ingestion of hard objects or toxic substances, the rejection of food.

In most of the cases, the self-infliction of bodily lesions has a reactive character, the expressiveness having a disproportional intensity in comparison with the motivation that forces the individual to relatively brutally change his living stereotype, self-aggressiveness making the new state easier to accept.

Sometimes self-aggressiveness is a way of attracting the attention of the entourage towards certain persons and situations, fact that, from an objective point of view, brings disadvantages to the person in question.

Self-aggressiveness is influenced by certain circumstances, that depend on the individual or the social habitat:

a) psycho-pathological circumstances regard: drugs addiction, psychopathies (impulsive personality disorders), psycho-organic syndromes (epilepsy, retardation), congenital malformations, severe somatic diseases;

b) socio-genetic circumstances refer to the antisocial tendencies, unsolved relational conflicts, intimidation or bravery.

When the territoriality is endangered or the intimacy is reduced, the prisoners try to physically expunge the physical obstacle. While in detention the obstacle means rules, the getting beyond norms through protests becomes impossible. So, self-aggressiveness enters the internal norms of the prisoners' community, without creating conflicts with them. The intensity of the action is proportional with the message that he wants to deliver and with the accumulation of tension generated by the lack of manifestation. In this context, self-aggressiveness is interpreted as a moment of weakness, caused by the incapacity to externalize the aggressiveness towards an opponent considered to be very strong, this becoming the only way of letting loose the tensions.

We may certainly state that a high educational level consolidates the inhibition of aggressiveness and the tolerance to frustration increases. The self-aggressive persons are not to be found among the persons with higher education and only a small number of persons with middle level educations are to be found among them.

Regarding the personality of the subsequent offenders, most of them committing thefts, robberies, rapes, they are in a permanent search for novel experiences, with short-term satisfactions. The deprivation of freedom is for them very difficult to endure and they respond using original forms of protests that are as destructive as possible. The prisoners with life sentences, accepting the sentence that they have, do not inflict physical harm upon themselves.

3.3.2. Terrorism in prisons

From the very beginning we should distinguish between the contemporary signification of the terrorist phenomenon and the typical phenomenon in the penitentiary.

In the Romanian Explanatory Dictionary (2002), *to terrorize* means "to inject somebody horror through threats or other means of intimidation ; to make somebody live in a permanent state of fear, horror

; to horrify, to scare". According to the same source, *the terrorist* "is a person who terrorizes ; partisan, supporter of terrorism" and the *terrorist phenomenon* represents "the entire acts of violence committed by a group or an organization in order to create a climate of insecurity or to change the governmental form of a state ; attitude, terrorist manifestation".

In the penitentiary environment, the terrorist phenomenon expresses the domination tendencies of certain prisoners, in order to obtain some privileges, and it often takes the form of some permanent harassment acts, significantly disturbing the order and control from these institutions.

The categories of prisoners that are most frequently terrorized are: the young and without force ones, those who are in a penitentiary for the first time, the less intelligent ones, "the sexual transgressors", the drugs consumers and the debtors. The most frequently invoked reasons refer to the grab of the personal objects of the victim, its obligation to do certain services, for the recuperation of some debts (cigarettes, food, money, clothes, coffee, drugs), out of the pleasure of humiliating the other.

Out of the eventual forms of the terrorist acts among the prisoners I specify: dispossession, intimidation, rumors, direct hit, swear, debarment from going out for a walk or watch TV, invective against the family, the obligation of doing something or stay in a certain place.

3.3.3. Prison-breakings or leaving the working points

After riots, prison-breakings are the negative events with the most important consequences upon the prisoners and the personnel: the escaped prisoners go through dramatic situations and, when caught and brought back in the penitentiary, they loose a series of rights and the punishment to be executed extends. The personnel, who due to negligence or non-observance of some guarding and surveillance rules of the prisoners made their escape possible, are punished and sometimes changed from their position. If some extremely dangerous prisoners` escape, the measures taken against the guilty ones are very harsh.

According to the Romanian Penal Code (2002), **prison-breaking** is an "infraction that hinders the realization of justice, through the leaving of the place where the author is, without the necessary allowance obtained under the conditions of law and using different means (getting over, travesty, fraud)" (after Gheorghe, F., 2003, p. 158).

Prison-breaking is the active behavior of impulsive or premeditated running for leaving the detention place, determined by the interaction of some either structural factors (at the level of the personality and environment), or a situational nature (precipitating, catalyzing, favorable situations) and that place accent on the dynamic of the situation.

The escaped prisoners come either from among the subsequent, as well as non-subsequent offenders. The situations that recorded escapes have a greater incidence at the working points, the trial courts and less from the proper detention places.

The main reasons invoked by the escaped prisoners were:

❖ **despondency**, as a limit state of psychic tension, generated by physical violences, threats, terror, systematic humiliation, may be a triggering factor. The fear of the recurrence of the endured sufferance activates, through the „last drop” mechanism, a defense behavior by avoidance.

❖ **hunger for freedom**

The prisoner D.I.M., 21 years old, with 8 classes education, a non-subsequent offender who executed 6 month out of a punishment of 4 years, confesses: „I was for the first time in prison, the homesickness invaded me, nobody was coming to see me (...) I was receiving no letters. I was never far from home. Sometimes I also faced pretty big problems with the other prisoners. They wanted to boss me and one had to come to the fore... I saw freedom by prison-breaking”.

❖ **the feeling of injustice** – appears once with the discord between the prisoners` expectations and the received punishment, the commission of some abuses, unfairnesses made by the authorities or by some persons.

❖ **the family situation**

The prisoner`s relations with family, with persons that are affectively very close to the prisoner, may situate him in the middle of some events or situations that he is not able to control. This makes him feel helpless, neglected, abandoned, full of hate.

❖ **alcohol consumption**

M.A., 25 years old, with 8 classes education, subsequent offender: „I haven`t thought about it before, I drank together with the others 20 l of wine ... with the civilians that I was working with at timber. It suddenly came me to leave. I woke up in the disco in O...”.

❖ **speculative elements**

A.P., 20 years old, with 8 classes education, subsequent offender: „If you are preventively arrested and you break, the punishment for prison-breaking fuses. I found this thing while I was in quarantine”.

3.3.4. Prisoners`s riots

The fact that the stressed moments are relatively rare in the penitentiary institutions indicates that efforts are made in order to provide a satisfactory level of the material and spiritual conditions, that should have as result a solid peace in the penitentiary. Although, the prisoners have a chronic discontent, that may burst anytime: this is the moment when the very intense hostilities reach the surface, the actions are difficult to anticipate, the victims are numerous and the benefits and advantages are absent. Under these conditions, the personnel interferes irrespective of the number of implicated prisoners, in order to restore the institutional order.

The press gives details about the events, the prisoners make statements and present lists of demands, both parts announce ultimata. In the end, in most of the cases, the prisoners give up. Sometimes, if the press had not reported the incidents that take place in a penitentiary, everything would have remained at a local level: the perception of the common destiny makes many prisoners ally with those who initiated the hostilities.

During 1989 – 2008, three main riots took place in the Romanian penitentiaries, 1989, 1997 and 2006. These were possible only due to the social conditions actuated by the 1989 Revolution, that generated massive changes in the institutional life, in the composition of the incarcerated population, in the transparency for the public, in the number of the actors involved in this kind of situations.

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The 1989 riot was encouraged, in a certain degree, by the confusion and uncertainty of the political and economical institutions, but also due to the aggregation of certain problems regarding the prisoners` living conditions, that were expressed in this cloudy frame during time.

An important role in the burst of the hostilities played the lack of credible explanations that the prisoners expected from the personnel, regarding the events that occurred in the country, but especially the categorical requests that they formulated. The interruption of the radio and TV transmissions, as well as the press entering the penitentiaries were interpreted by the prisoners as their vilification as people, and the non-compliance acts shortly began.

The 1989 riot started with prisoners` vociferations and realignment, as well as with their getting out of their cells. Then, things degenerated, new spaces were occupied, hostages were taken among the personnel, preliminary actions for prison-breaking were made, altercations with the prisoners that refused to become a part of the riot took place and the gates of the detention places were forced.

Due to the fact that the local representatives of the new authorities answered the prisoners` grievances, corroborated with the operation of the intervention forces, the prisoners entered their cells and the situation came back to normal.

In some penitentiaries, after the first important riot came to an end, fumes were noticed at different time intervals. This thing may be explained by the fact that the administration paid no attention to the consolidation of the post-riot situation: the dialog with the prisoners was substantially reduced, the food quality decreased, the access to the medical consulting room became difficult again.

The 1997 riot was a part of the protest actions, having as objective the dramatization of the complaints and the forced procurement of concessions from the decisional factors. The riot began in the Penitentiary from Bucharest – Jilava, where the 3.500 prisoners initiated a hunger strike. Their reasons for this action are: the non-observance of human rights, the precarious living and hygiene conditions, the lack of decanting of the potable water, the censorship of letters, the exaggerated punishments, noncompliance with the conditions regarding the probation, the necessity of a reprieve and amnesty ordinance (Gheorghe, F., 2003, p. 179).

The riot also extended in other penitentiaries, mainly because of its propagation through the media, on TV channels and in the written press.

For the success of its slackening the provision of some preliminary conditions was necessary: the extend of interpersonal communication, the creation of the atmosphere of mutual trust, the increase of the ability to remain unaligned in certain situations, the application of the intervention strategies.

For preventing the burst of new riots in the penitentiary institutions, a few measures are recommended:

➤the elimination of the arbitrary conducts and decisions, while nothing can enrage more and subvert the justice and equity than the absurd orders and the groundless abuses of those that the prisoners depend on;

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➤the elimination of the discrimination between the prisoners, while the existence of some equal right for everybody brings along a relative calmness;

➤the elimination of the ambiguity of the problems that are important for the prisoners and the early information of the prisoners about any changes that have to do with their daily walking period, the schedule of the medical consulting room, the prisoners` rotation for the ordinary assignments, the duration of the telephone calls and their granting interval;

➤the recurrent opinion surveys regarding the prisoners` essential problems: food quality, access to medical care, the relationships with the personnel, the hygiene of the detention places, the program of the recreational and sport activities;

➤the transfer of the prisoners that cause and maintain tension among the groups of prisoners, of those who terrorize the others;

➤the establishment and observance of a standard schedule for the current activities: the morning and evening call, the getting out for a walk or for the sport activities, visits, presentation at the medical consulting room, the going before court;

➤the periodic consultation of the prisoners` representatives by the board of the detention institution, regarding the problems that occur in the detention place;

➤the organization of the prisoners` time for involving them in as many educative, sport and recreational activities as possible: the publication of a magazine, writing and performing some plays, participating in different contests of general knowledge, making of decorative and hand-made works.

On the other hand, for averting the burst of riots in the penitentiary environment, the following concrete measures could also be taken into consideration:

- the observance of the prisoner`s daily program, on each detention section;
- the analysis of the integration degree of the prisoners with a high risk level and of the vulnerable ones in the group of prisoners;
- the elimination of the frustration sources;
- the correct information of the prisoners regarding the legislative modifications;
- the clarification of the judicial affairs and of the transfers to other penitentiary units;
- a prompt medical, psychological and judicial care;
- intensification of the relationships with the prisoner`s family with the help of the available means, as well as the granting of the intimate visit to a higher number of prisoners, observing the legal provisions.

3.3.5. Suicide in the penitentiary institutions

The detention period is considered by each prisoner a powerful traumatic shock, especially at the first conviction, regarding the self image, the frustrations in the social and instinctual cadre. The brutal reaction of the individual announces his inability to adapt to the present situation: the last failure of the existence takes the shape of an unsuccessful life, fact that may be seen as a breaching moment, a crisis of the sense, the suicidal gesture being not an option, but rather the total rejection of the possibility to choose.

Anyway, the solution is not rational, because practically each situation has a gateway, the limits of a mental healthy man being endless.

The National Health Organization defines **suicide** as „**the act by which an individual tries to physically destroy himself, with the intention, more or less original, of loosing his life, being more or less aware of his reasons**”. (Gheorghe, F., 2003, p.106).

The social psychology dictionary (1981) points out: **suicide** is „**the act by which an individual causes his death himself**”.

Being an affection of the preservation instinct, suicide appears as a complex reality, that may take different shapes:

a) *suicidal actions*, having as varieties the proper suicide, the suicide attempt, the pre-suicidal syndrome, the suicidal ideas;

b) *suicidal equivalents*: self hurting, abnormal behavior (simulation of a disease, refuse of the medical care, departure from the social role, drug addicts, alcoholism).

In the penitentiary institutions take place three types of suicide:

□ *the emotional suicide*, resulting from a great anxiety and being for the subject a way of solving a powerful emotion (fear, anger, blues);

□ *the passion suicide*, that is a desperate behavior, representing the individual`s self-depreciation, when the emotion is extended and intellectualized, engaging the entire personality of the subject;

□ *the suicidal equivalents* are very frequent due to the secondary benefits brought by medical care.

The factors that determine the suicide are:

➤ sociological factors, explained by a frail social integration, the person in question not feeling well in the group that he belongs to;

➤ psychological factors, when the self-murderer is very strict with himself, considering himself guilty of many irregularities of which others are guilty; they deal out justice putting an end to their lives;

➤ economical factors.

In the penitentiary institutions we will find two forms of self-aggressiveness, similar to suicide, that have very serious effects: simulation and self-injury.

Simulation is an action by which somebody imitates or consciously provokes himself bodily or physical modifications, in order to obtain certain advantages.

Self-injury is a violent form of physical self-aggression, that consists of an intended, advisedly wound or mutilation, made by the individual towards himself, that is not enough gravely enough to cause death.

Seen as an aggressive behavior towards one`s own body, self-aggression is caused by a reduction of different degrees of the conservative instinct.

In most of the cases, the self-inflicted lesions of the body have a reactive character, the expression having in return a disproportional intensity compared with the motivation, that, under the present conditions, would not explain the action. In case of certain situations, that force the individual to quite

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brutally change the stereotype of live, self-aggression manages to replace this deficit and makes the new state easier to bear.

To the individual`s personal difficulties the penitentiary environment brings favorable elements (isolation from the family, the precarious quality of the human relationships), inevitable to the detention places, but playing an important role in the materialization of the suicidal act. What a prisoner with suicidal intentions needs is a conversational partner with whom he could analyze his problems, to clearly see his place and role in the specific circumstance of life, a partner that should help him increase his possibilities to face the troubles and, last but not least, to find new existential senses, not only during the detention period, but also afterwards.

The present study is a step forward regarding the penitentiary psychology, aiming at the identification of the personal and social resources that have a powerful impact upon the factors that picture the penitentiary environment, identifying the ways the prisoners adapt to the penitentiary environment where they have to live in for a period of time; concurrently, it delivers actual data that can lead to a specific intervention plan, that may improve the adaptation to the penitentiary environment, with direct consequences upon the decrease of the aggressive manifestations and violence in the penitentiary environment.

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

Along the applied therapeutic program I monitored the increase of the tolerance to frustration, the reduction of the number of violent manifestations in the penitentiary, the delivery of information regarding one`s own personality, bringing forward the self-knowledge and self-evaluation process, the development of some rational thinking habits for obtaining positive modifications in the structure of the prisoners` personality with a antithetical-aggressive behavior. This research tries to discover if this program is efficient for the reduction of those aggressive manifestations, in case of the prisoners with a antithetical-aggressive behavior.

The surmises of the research

1. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a higher level of openness after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the openness level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

2. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a lower level of psychotism after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the psychotism level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

3. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a higher level of agreeableness after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the agreeableness level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

4. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a lower level of delinquency after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the delinquency level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

5. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a higher level of emotional stability after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the emotional stability level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

6. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a lower level of neurosis after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the neurosis level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

OBJECTIVES AND THE SURMISES OF THE RESEARCH

7. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a lower level of aggressiveness after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the aggressiveness level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

8. The prisoners included in the therapeutic program will present a higher level of assertiveness after the participation in the therapeutic program in comparison with the assertiveness level they presented before the participation in this program, as well as in comparison with the prisoners that did not participate in such a program.

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH : METHODS, INSTRUMENTS, PARTICIPATORS

I. Participators:

In the present study participated a number of 64 persons from the penitentiaries Oradea and Satu Mare, that were divided in two lots, as follows:

1. *experimental lot* – 31 participators who committed violent infractions and serious disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom and participated in the therapeutic program;

2. *control lot* – 33 participators who committed violent infractions (who did not commit serious disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom) and did not participate in the therapeutic program.

Using the biographical data, at the level of the *experimental lot* I observed the following characteristics:

- average age: 27,37 years old;
- marital status: not married and without a stable life partner - 12 subjects (38,70%), married – 4 (12,92%), 14 were living in concubinage (45,16%), one was divorced (3,22%);
- level of education: 12 subjects graduated 8 classes (38,70%), 14 graduated 10 classes – vocational school (45,16%), 4 graduated 12 classes (12,92%), and 1 is higher education graduate (3,22%);
- occupation had / declared at arrest: 16 subjects had no occupation (51,61%), 11 were workers or skilled workmen (35,49%), 3 were farmers or unskilled workmen (9,68%), and one was a student (3,22%);
- criminal antecedents: 9 subjects have no criminal antecedents (29,04%), 6 have criminal antecedents (19,35%), and 16 are subsequent offenders (51,61%);
- deed for which they execute the penalties of deprivation of freedom: 5 prisoners are convicted for committing murder / complicity in murder (16,13%), 18 are convicted for committing robberies (58,07%), 3 for committing rapes (9,68%), 2 for committing qualified thefts (6,45%), 3 for infractions of organized crime and terrorism (9,67%);
- according to the background: 18 subjects come from the rural background (58,07%), and 15 come from the urban background (41,93%);
- according to the financial situation: 3 subjects have a good or very good financial situation (9,68%), 11 have an average financial situation (35,49%), and 17 have a precarious financial situation (54,83%).

Using the biographical data, at the level of the *control lot* I observed the following characteristics:

- average age: 31,6 years old;

- marital status: not married and without a stable life partner - 13 subjects (39,39%), married – 6 (18,18%), 12 were living in concubinage (36,36%), one was divorced (3,03%), and one was a widower (3,03%) – he killed his wife;
- level of education: 16 subjects graduated 8 classes (48,48%), 4 graduated 10 classes – vocational school (12,12%), 11 graduated 12 classes (33,33%), and 2 are higher education graduates (6,06%);
- occupation had / declared at arrest: 12 subjects had no occupation (36,36%), 13 were workers or skilled workmen (39,39%), 4 were farmers or unskilled workmen (12,12%), 3 were engineers / sub-engineers (9,09%), and one was a computer operator (3,03%);
- criminal antecedents: 15 subjects have no criminal antecedents (45,46%), 9 have criminal antecedents (27,27%), and 9 are subsequent offenders (27,27%);
- deed for which they execute the penalties of deprivation of freedom: 14 prisoners are convicted for committing murder / complicity in murder (42,42%), 9 are convicted for committing robberies (27,27%), 3 for committing rapes (9,09%), 4 for committing qualified thefts (12,12%), 3 for infractions of organized crime and terrorism (9,09%);
- according to the background: 18 subjects come from the rural background (54,54%), and 15 come from the urban background (45,46%);
- according to the financial situation: 10 subjects have a good or very good financial situation (30,31%), 12 have an average financial situation (36,36%), and 11 have a precarious financial situation (33,33%).

A number of 6 persons were excluded from the experimental lot, as a consequence of the undifferentiated answers and the pronounced tendency of the answers to social desirability. Other 2 subjects (from the experimental lot) were eliminated due to their extremely dangerous aggressive manifestations they had during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom, along the participation in the therapeutic program. The control lot was also slightly modified, while 4 prisoners were transferred / discharged during the study.

II. The used instruments: for testing / retesting the participators in the therapeutic program and those from the control group I used the following instruments:

1. Eysenck scales for adults – EPQ-R adult, the revised form - will measure the main dimensions of the personality that resulted from the observational studies, the experimental investigations, the psychophysiological experiments and biochemical analyses.

The questionnaire contains 106 items of a binary answer (Yes/No), distributed in the scales Psychotism (P), Extroversion (E), Neurosis (N), the control scale Lie (L) and the subclasses of Addiction (A) and Criminality (C).

For the EPQ-R adaptation in Romania a final form of the questionnaire was used, as it was published by the author. As mentioned above, the questionnaire has 106 items. The EPQ-R questionnaire

was created and published in English. Its translation from English was gradually made. In accordance with the recommendations of the authors and the editor, the questionnaire was not translated using consecutive retractions, as often recommended, but with the help of experts. The primary translation was made by a group of three psychologists, Horia Pitatiu, Dragoş Iliescu and Cosmin Peleaşă. This translation does not contain ordered items in conformity with the original questionnaire, but categories of items, according to their grouping on scales. The items were taken out of the questionnaire and grouped on categories, in conformity with the scale that they belonged to. Then, the items were translated in the context of that scale, independent of the three mentioned translators. These primary translations were compared and the items that had no evident unity were subjected to a negotiation process. The translation that was accepted by all the three above mentioned translators was kept. A number of 51 items (31.88%) out of the 160 translated, namely 37 items (34.91%) of the EPQ-R were subjected to this negotiation.

Thereafter, the translated items were also examined by a panel of six psychologists familiar with Eysenck`s theory and with the older forms of the questionnaire (EPI, EPQ) and comments regarding the wordings of the items in Romanian were made. The offered suggestions were not only linguistic, but also conceptual. Hereby a number of 19 items were modified.

Eventually, during the third phase, the items were retranslated, namely they were again translated from Romanian into English, and their concordance with the original version was examined. No additional modification was necessary. The form obtained as a result of this process is the final form of the EPQ-R questionnaire used in Romania.

The normative Romanian pattern does not have a structure that is similar to the structure of the normative British pattern. We might enumerate more reasons for this thing. On one hand, the structure of the normative British pattern is an unbalanced one: the author picked up data from quite different sources and, although he saw that the pattern contains persons of both sexes and different ages, he did not take thought of the balancing of the percentages represented in this manner. This is why the distribution of the normative British pattern is unequal regarding the women and men, as well as regarding the different age categories. Unlike this approach, the Romanian normative pattern is a pattern for which was made a remarkable effort for equilibrating the distribution of certain variables. This effort was especially mad for equilibrating the number of women and men in the pattern and this thing was not made only in the main, but on each age category.

The Romanian normative pattern also differs from the British one with regard to the amplexness of the comprised ages. The British pattern contains a small number of persons belonging to the age categories 70-79 and 80 and over 80. In Romania, enough data from the persons belonging to these two age categories could not be gathered, and, accordingly, these were completely excluded from the analysis. In addition, the British normative pattern does not contain data for ages under 16. The previous versions of EPQ-R were used in Romania also for more reduced age categories. Conclusively, data for the age category 12-15 years old were experimentally gathered. The subsequent researches demonstrated that the

last version of the questionnaire, namely EPQ-R, is fit for being used also with this age category, so, for the psychologists` work with teenagers.

The Romanian normative pattern was isolated according to an undifferentiated extraction from a bigger database of 3741 subjects. The volume of the Romanian normative pattern consists of 2600 participators. Out of these, 1300 are females and 1300 males. The distribution according to age is not perfectly equilibrated, but is enough balanced for being considered coherent. 250 women and 250 men were inserted for each age category, but in case of the persons belonging to the category 40-49 years old, data were collected from only 400 subjects (200 women and 200 men), for the category 50-59 years old were included only 300 subjects (150 women and 150 men) and for the category 60-69 years old only 200 subjects (100 women and 100 men). The experimental pattern of teenagers between 12 and 15 years old also contains only 200 subjects (100 girls and 100 boys).

Certain cultural differences may be observed, as expected, between the scores of the averages calculated according to the EPQ-R scales from Romania and Great Britain. So, in case of men, the scores for the scales Psychotism (P), Extroversion (E) and Neurosis (N) are bigger and the scores for the scale Lie (L) are even much bigger than expected for the British pattern.

Therefore, we consider that the Romanian EPQ-R version confirms the equivalence with the original version of the questionnaire, catching very well, at the same time, the cultural differences between the two countries, infirming the possibility of using the original patterns and confirming the need of patterns specialized on the Romanian culture.

Criminality and drugs and alcohol addiction are two areas of the human behavior that are wedded to personality. While these two fields get over the significance of the main scales of the EPQ-R, the special scales C and A were developed. These were generated on empirical bases, combining the items of more main scales of the EPQ-R, that strongly correlated with these types of behavior. The two special scales are really useful for practical diagnostic, prevention and selection problems, connected with the two specific areas.

While the law breakers` characteristics are far from normality, regarding all the three main personality scales described by EPQ-R, fact unanimously acknowledged by the scientific community, the authors considered that the development of a scale that should discriminate as coherent as possible between the two groups is desirable. The **Criminality** scale was created by combining the items that are the most important for the criminality diagnostic, extracted from the three main personality scales.

This research was successfully made (Eysenck & Eynseck, 1971), and the C scale („*Criminality*”) that resulted from this intercession had good characteristics of discrimination between law breakers and non-law breakers. The scale was improved during the revision of the EPQ-R and was included in this final form of the questionnaire.

The characteristics of the Criminality scale of EPQ-R were examined in Romania not only related to the normative pattern, that placed at the disposal of the researchers and the practitioners norms for this

scale, but also related to some specialized patterns of prisoners convicted for different infractions and being in detention during the application of the questionnaire.

In case of the group of prisoners, the Criminality scale is not the only one that demonstrates a modification in comparison with the normative pattern. Although the other scales of the test are expected to modify less than the Criminality scale, is it nevertheless naturally to observe changes for the other scales of the questionnaire, too.

One may observe that the Extroversion (E) scale remains unchanged at a practical level, modifying only from 15.37 in case of the normative pattern, to 15.25 for the specialized pattern. Psychotism increases from 7.93 in case of the normative pattern to 8.88 in case of the prisoners` pattern. Neurosis significantly increases from 11.75 in case of the normative pattern to 15.13 in case of the prisoners. The scale Lie (L) slightly decreases from 11.61 in case of the norms to 10.75 in case of the prisoners` pattern.

We used in our study the neurosis, psychotism and criminality scales.

2. Scala Personal Assertion Analysis Scale - Personal Assertion Analysis Scale - Personal Assertion Analysis (PAA), developed by Hedlund, B.L. and Lindquist, C.U., (1984) – is an instrument that comprises 30 items, designed for relieving the passive, aggressive and assertive behavior and to identify one subject`s need to participate in an assertiveness developing training. PAA wants the respondents to describe what they really do and not what they know how to do. At the beginning one started from 87 items gathered out of a series of inventories of the assertiveness; based on the factorial analysis PAA got to 30 items and 3 factors, each factor comprising 10 items. The three factors are: indifference (items 3, 6, 11, 13, 16, 21, 25, 26, 27, 29), aggressiveness (items 5, 7, 10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 23, 24, 30) and assertiveness (items 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 14, 18, 19, 20, 28).

Quotation: The individual items are brought together for each sub-scale; a high score indicates the presence of that behavior. The scores for each sub-scale vary between 10 and 40.

Validity: PAA indicates a good level of the construct validity. The PAA sub-scales correlate, in the prognosticated directions, with some measures with that they should correlate, including a big number of personality tests for assertiveness and aggressiveness, self-characterizations and the colleagues` characterizations. In case of the answers of the PAA, a low effect of the social desirability was observed (Corcoran & Fisher, 2000).

The aggressiveness and assertiveness scales were used in the present study.

3. DECAS Personality Inventory developed by Florin Sava (2008) – measures the personality from the perspective of the most famous theory – the Big-Five model. The scale comprises 95 items, distributed in five content scales (openness – O, extroversion – E, conscientiousness – C, agreeableness – A and emotional stability – E) that correspond to the Big-Five model and three filter scales (social desirability / lie – SD; answers given randomly – RD and approving answers – AP) that aim at the validation of data.

Most of the personality experiments have a major deficiency, and that is the long time needed for applying a test. So, famous experiments as CPI-434 and even CPI-260, NEO PI-R contain a great number of items, that means an application time up to one hour. In return, the DECAS Personality Inventory was developed as a short personality experiment, consisting of 95 statements with True/False answers, with an average application time of 15 minutes.

Regarding the **Openness (O)** dimension, Costa and McCrae (1992) underline that the aspects related to openness to experience are central. Saucier (1992) presents empirical data that incline to sustain both directions, that regard not only the intellectual activities (e.g.: introspective, intelligent, cultivated persons, persons preoccupied with philosophic problems), but also creativity and non-conformism (rebel, artist, creative, unconventional, taste for variety). But Saucier (1992) suggests that the two aspects might be integrated into a larger concept, named imagination. That is why, Saucer considers the term imagination or originality proper for describing this personality dimension.

Agreeableness is probably the personality factor from the Big-Five model that has the greatest impact upon the quality of the interpersonal relationships. Among the central aspects of the agreeableness we enumerate the trust in the others and orientation to cooperation.

Emotional stability is one of the most encountered dimension measured using the personality tests, showing the strong character (lack of negativism and fears) and the calm and rational approach of the problems (without stress and tension).

All the ten possible combinations mentioned above with their specific typologies are particularly described in the standard report generated by the computer. What should be kept in mind is the fact that an interpretation that takes into consideration the simultaneous analysis of at least two factors offers a more exact description of the personality than the interpretation of each factor apart.

DECAS Personality Inventory is a very useful instrument and, at the same time, it presents a great validity and fidelity, being representative for the population in Romania.

For confirming these aspects, Sava and Iliescu (2008) made a rival validation study that reveals the stability degree of the connection between these four experiments that picture the Big-Five model. The applied tests were: The BFQ-2 questionnaire developed by Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni and Perugini (1993); the list with 100 short statements from IPIP (Goldberg, 1999); the FF-NPQ Nonverbal Personality Questionnaire developed by Paunonen, Jackson and Ashton (2004) and the DECAS Personality Inventory.

From a number of 185 persons were collected complete data for all the four used experiments. The used statistic method was the confirmatory factor analysis. It revealed the fact that those four experiments do not aspire after the five expected factors, and a secondary analysis of a factor sampling type revealed the existence of a sixth factor exclusively created out of FF-NPQ scales. Moreover, from the analysis of the matrix of correlation between scales resulted the fact that the FF-NPQ scales, except for Extroversion, seem to be less appropriate for being interpreted in the classic terms of the dimensions of the Big-Five model. As a consequence, we will present at large the results obtained from an explanatory factor analysis, taking into consideration only three of the experiments: BFQ-2, IPIP Goldberg and DECAS.

An additional evidence of the rival validity of the DECAS experiment is offered by the correlation that exists between the DECAS experiment and NEO PI-R (Sava, 2008), the latter one being the most famous experiment that measures the personality after the model of those five factors.

The data reproduce very well the expectations. So, between all the homonym scales there are correlations that are important from a statistic point of view that vary, in absolute values, between .57 (between DECAS A and NEO PI-R A) and .81 (between DECAS E and NEO PI-R E). Furthermore, a series of small secondary correlations seem to reproduce the relations between the two scales. Thus, D DECAS correlates with E DECAS ($r = .23$) or with E NEO PI-R ($r = .40$), but such a connection is to be found between D NEO PI-R and E NEO PI-R ($r = .39$). Similarly were obtained negative correlations between the scales A and N ($r = -.24$ between A NEO PI-R and N NEO PI-R, respectively $r = -.34$, for the relation between A DECAS and N NEO PI-R).

From the presented things comes out a good concurrent validity of the DECAS experiment, this being an important evidence of the fact that the presented scales efficiently reflect the five fundamental Big-Five dimensions.

DECAS Personality Inventory was conceived for having a factorial structure in five factors. The study of Sava (2008) disclosed such a factorial structure, pointing out that the analysis was made at the level of the item parcels and not at the level of direct items, while the first solution is more adequate from the perspective of the psychometric features revealed for the analysis of the dichotomic items (Sava, 2004). Each parcel of items means, in fact, a sub-scale obtained by the summarization of three similar items as a content, the score of a parcel varying between 0 and 3 points. Accordingly, the factorial analysis described below contains 30 parcels of items, that should be concentrated in five distinct factors.

DECAS Personality Inventory was standardized based on a study made on a representative national pattern of 1264 persons, proportionally divided with the frequency within the population according to the criteria: genus (men vs. women); age (16-25 years old; 26-40 years old; 41-60 years old), historical regions (Banat, București, Crișana-Maramureș, Dobrogea, Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia and Transilvania) and residential areas (urban vs. rural). Furthermore, taking into account the DECAS target public, the experiment was applied only to persons with the age between 16 and 60 years old, graduates of at least ten classes.

The sampling procedure of multiphase, probabilistic type, having as last phase a systematic undifferentiated sampling, was developed and implemented by two companies for investigating the public opinion at the request of the producer of this experiment.

The results obtained after analyzing the 1246 persons favor the factorial solution with five factors, not less than 29 of those 30 item parcels being impregnated with the factors that were expected to present correlations. The lack of a clear and consistent saturation for the item parcel C3 may suggest the need of a future punctual improvement of the DECAS experiment, replacing 1-2 items from the Conscientiousness scale.

In this study I used the Openness (O), Agreeableness (A) and Emotional stability (S) dimensions.

II. Procedure:

In a first phase the initial evaluation of the aimed dependent variables was made with the help of the presented instruments. So, the participators were told how to fill in the questionnaires, being advised to answer each question/statement presented in that scale as plain as possible, taking into consideration that there are no good or bad answers, no correct or wrong statements. The questionnaires were applied using the pencil – paper method, on small groups. Before filling in each questionnaire, the general indications were presented; the difficulties were immediately cleared. In this context, they were told that the answers that they will write down were confidential and will not influence at all the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom and the results will be used for scientific purposes and they can retreat whenever they wanted. Only the initials and not the full name were written down on the questionnaires. The procedure is applied according to the ethic norms, benefiting by the agreement of the persons deprived of freedom and the administration of the detention place. For encouraging them to participate in the therapeutic program, they were informed about the recompenses awarded for participating in and bringing it to an end (the supplementation of the right to visit and/or packages, the annulment of some disciplinary measures anteriorly applied, the detailed explanation of the results obtained after the evaluation).

Subsequently, the therapeutic intervention according to the „Therapeutic program for decreasing the aggressive behavior” (D.C.A.), presented at the beginning of this chapter, was made. So, the participators were divided into 3 small groups (10-15 persons), within the experimental lot, and into 3 small groups (10-15 persons), within the control lot. During the sessions the number was quite equal, taking into consideration the changes caused by the transfer of some subjects to different penitentiaries and the presentations before different law courts.

I divided the participators in small groups of 10-15 persons, due to the advantages that working with this category offers, the socio-affective climate, namely:

- a good perception and mutual acquaintance with the group members;
- the possibility of direct communication with the others;
- common affective relationships (sympathy or appeal);
- communication speed and high integrity of the information;
- the reduced possibility of creating sub-groups and the parallel existence of the formal and informal leader;
- common goals, with a strong resistance to the outside influences.

The working sessions were held twice a week, for 1 hour, for 7 weeks. At the beginning of the program were presented its aim/reason and functioning rules, were formulated the personal objectives, the declared reasons and aspirations of each participator in the program and was made an acquaintance with the group. Furthermore, different aspects, according to the content set for each session, were discussed.

During the 12th and 13th sessions were reapplied the questionnaires of the experimental lot for measuring the aimed dependent variables (in a similar manner as that presented during the initial phase of the evaluation). At the end of the program were discussed with the group the progresses made for

decreasing the aggressiveness and about the necessity of the program. Different significant situations from each person's personal life were presented, as well as actual aspects that appeared from the moment the participation in the program began (avoidance of some quarrels, self-injuries, altercations with other prisoners, a stricter conformation to the daily program, not committing disciplinary deviations etc).

The questionnaires were applied for both lots, experimental and control, at the same time, at the beginning and at the end of the therapeutic program. Upon the control lot was made no intervention. The data processing was made using the statistical software SPSS version 15.0.

The used therapeutic program has a series of advantages: time and money saving, presence of the factors of the group dynamics that might facilitate change (arguments, comments of the group members), desecretization, the implicit admission of the existence of a problem, the possibility to face the unexpressed problems, as well as the chance to exercise new behavioral models and to check new attitudes in a controlled environment. Thus, an efficient behavior within a group does not represent the guarantee of some low relapse rates (Seto & Barbaree, 1999).

The therapeutic group program inclines to have the following characteristics: installs a sense of hope at the level of the members, are well organized and full of cohesion and emotional expressiveness, freedom to act and express emotions, within the interactions respect, support, self-revelation, unconditioned acceptance, positive strength, humor are facilitated and the leaders are supportive.

MAIN RESULTS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

The study of the penitentiary as an environment concentrates on the understanding of the life in the penitentiary and especially on the stress of the prisoners that have difficulties regarding the survival in the penitentiary: while some prisoners easily and serenely adapt to the challenges of the penitentiary environment, others really struggle during the detention period. These situations are of great interest for us, because they offer different perspectives on the attributes of the penitentiary and the needs of the prisoners. The known data show that the adjustment problems in the penitentiary are not rare or limited to extreme groups of vulnerable persons. Although stress mingles with vulnerability, most of the crises, the despondency and sufferance of the prisoners might be avoided. Apparently similar prisoners survive in the same setting, prisoners that survive in a setting dip in another one, situations that are oppressive for some of the prisoners have no impact on others.

The present study is a step forward regarding the penitentiary psychology, aiming at the identification of the personal and social resources that have a powerful impact upon the factors specific to the penitentiary environment, identifying the ways the prisoners adapt to the penitentiary environment where they have to live in for a period of time; concurrently, it delivers actual data that can lead to a specific intervention plan, that may improve the adaptation to the penitentiary environment, with direct consequences upon the decrease of the aggressive manifestations and violence in the penitentiary environment.

The aggressive tendencies are based on a low tolerance to frustration, a low self-esteem, plus impulse and aggressiveness, negative thinking models, fear of involvement in affective relationships. For decreasing these aggressive behaviors, a program developed in a cognitive-behavioral manner, that may be applied to a group of prisoners with a high level of aggressiveness or that were convicted for infractions committed with violence (rape, robbery, body injuries, murder etc.) or that committed disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom, may be used.

The therapeutic program is based on the premise according to which most of the negative affective feelings are generated by the distorted perception of the information that gets to the individual, emphasizing their negative nature. The model that underlies the intervention is exactly the **connection between feelings – thoughts – actions – consequences**, cycle that can be resumed, and, in the absence of a correction, may lead to the most ample and serious effects.

The present study investigates the problem of adapting the behavior of the persons deprived of freedom to the penitentiary environment, from the perspective of the personal resources and the social support, of the environmental factors, of the process of cognitive evaluation, of the interrelations between variables and the identification of the causes that lead to the increase / decrease of the aggressive manifestations and the violent actions during executing the penalty of deprivation of freedom by applying „**The therapeutic program for decreasing the aggressive behavior**” (D.C.A.).

7.1. Quantitative analysis

With the present study we intend to investigate the efficiency of a therapeutic program applied on a lot of participators, namely prisoners from the penitentiaries Oradea and Satu Mare. These persons were convicted for infractions committed with violence (murder, robbery) or that committed disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom.

We decided to intervene in a set of variables that were identified as being of major importance in case of the prisoners with a high level of aggressiveness (all forms) and the antisocial behavior in general. We supposed that this program will lead to the reduction of the elements implicated in the triggering of the aggressive behavior and will cause an increase of the elements that block their triggering. We made a series of measurements of the variables aimed before and after the participation in the therapeutic program. The results of the participators were compared with those of a control lot made up of a pattern of prisoners with similar characteristics to those of the experimental lot.

First, we analyzed the efficiency of the therapeutic program upon the participators` openness level. The obtained results indicate significant differences between the participators regarding the moment of evaluating the openness level ($F_{1,58} = 14,87$; $p < 0,01$). We observed that, in case of the participators in the therapeutic program the openness level increases (from 50,66 to 53,36), while the level of this variable remains almost unchanged in case of the control lot (from 56,60 to 56,20).

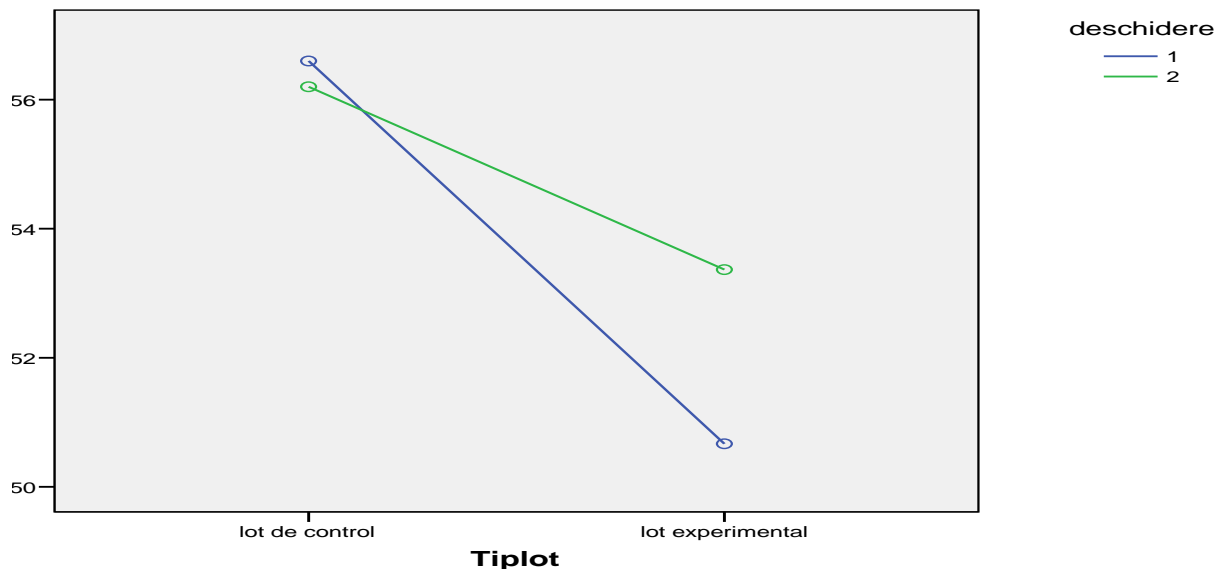


Figure no. 7.1.1. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participators for the variable openness.

Further, we monitored the efficiency of the intervention program upon the participators` psychotism level. The obtained results indicate the lack of statistically significant differences between the participators regarding the moment of the evaluation of the psychotism level ($F_{1,58} = 3,32$; $p < 0,05$). Thus,

taking into consideration that the signification limit is very close to the critical one, we may speak about a tendency. We may state that, in case of the participators in the therapeutic program, there is a decreasing tendency of the psychotism level (from 12,16 to 10,86), while the level of this variable remains rather unchanged in case of the control lot (from 13,06 to 13,26).

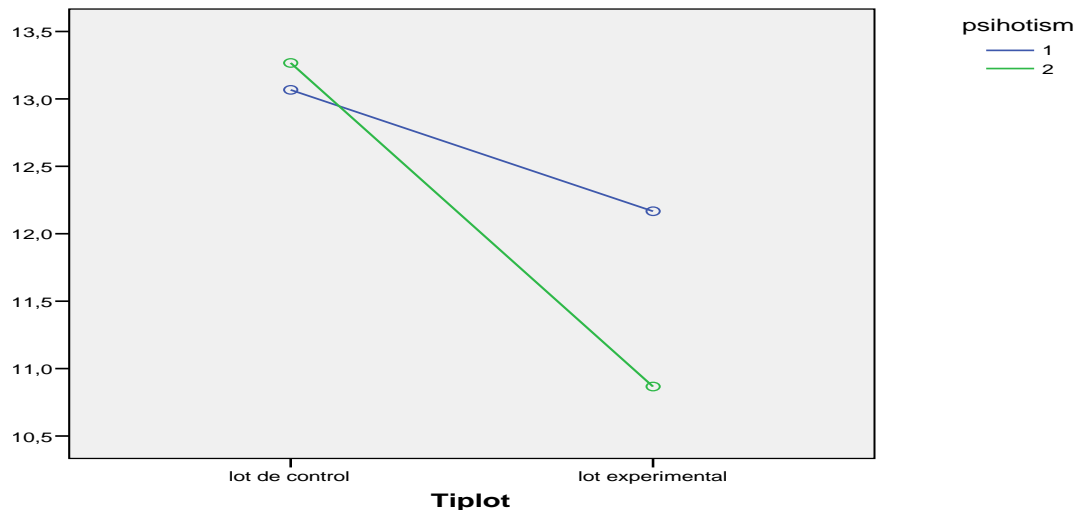


Figure no. 7.1.2. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participators for the variable psychotism.

Regarding the efficiency of the intervention program upon the participators` agreeableness level, the results indicate the statistically significant differences between the participators regarding the moment of the evaluation of the agreeableness level ($F_{1,58} = 11,54$; $p < 0,01$). These differences, regarding the increase of the agreeableness level, are present not only in case of the participators in the intervention program (from 48 to 49,13), but also in case of those who din not participate in the program (from 54,70 to 55,10).

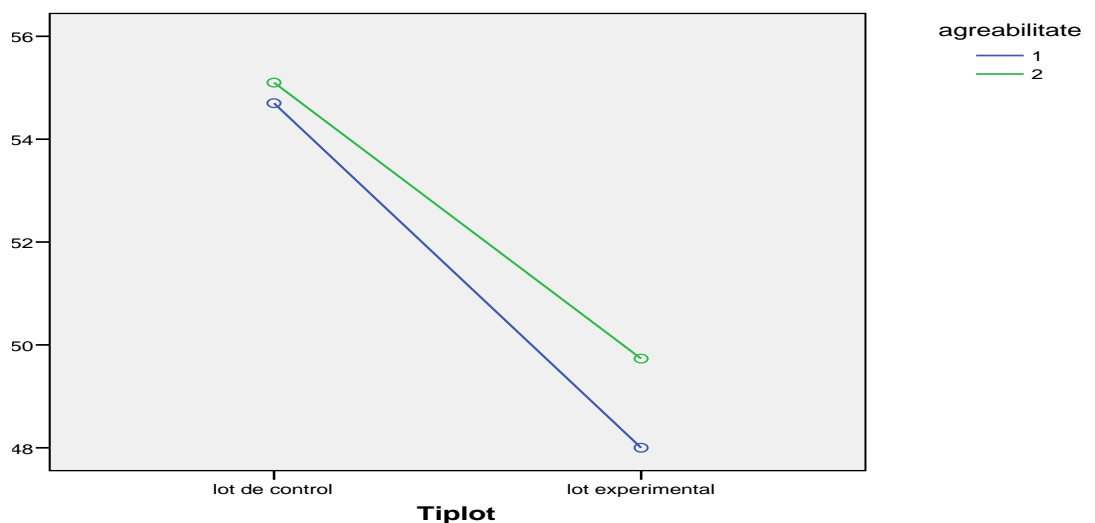


Figure no. 7.1.3. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participators for the variable agreeableness.

The next investigation was made upon the efficiency of the intervention program upon the participants` criminality level. The results indicate statistically significant differences between the participants regarding the moment of the evaluation of the criminality level ($F_{1,58} = 15,62; p < 0,01$), whether they participate in the therapeutic program or not. These differences, regarding the decrease of the criminality level, are observed not only in case of the participants in the intervention program (from 16,43 to 15,23), but also in case of those who did not participate in the program (from 16,36 to 15,46).

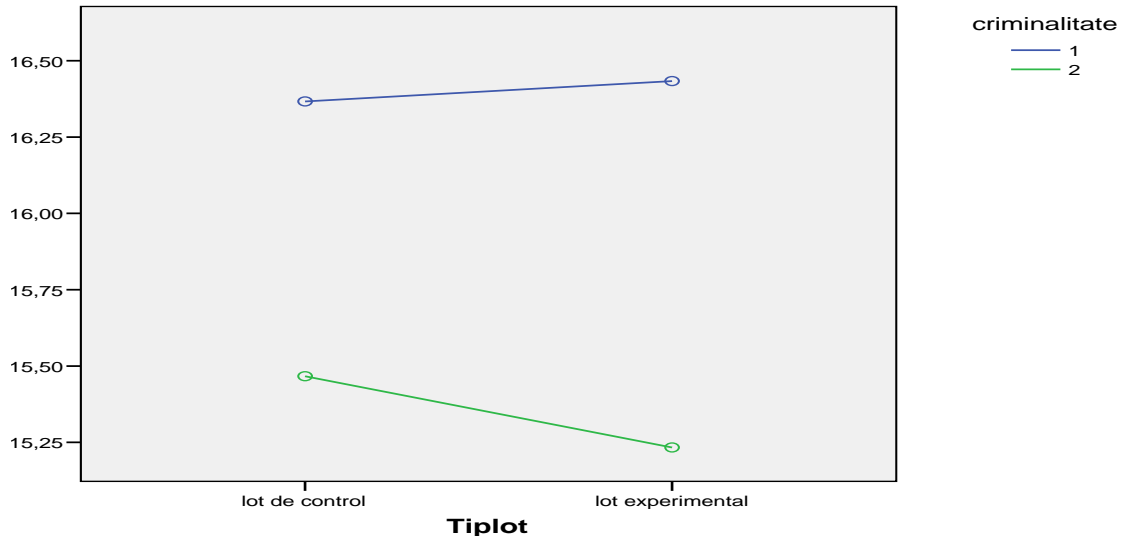


Figure no. 7.1.4. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participants for the variable criminality.

Further, we monitored the efficiency of the intervention program upon the emotional stability level. The results indicate statistically significant differences between the participants regarding the moment of the evaluation of the emotional stability level ($F_{1,58} = 20,04; p < 0,01$). These differences, regarding the increase of the emotional stability level, are observed only in case of those who participated in the intervention program (from 42,16 to 44,86). In case of the control lot, the results between the two evaluations are approximately similar (51,10 at the first evaluation and 51,16 at the second evaluation).

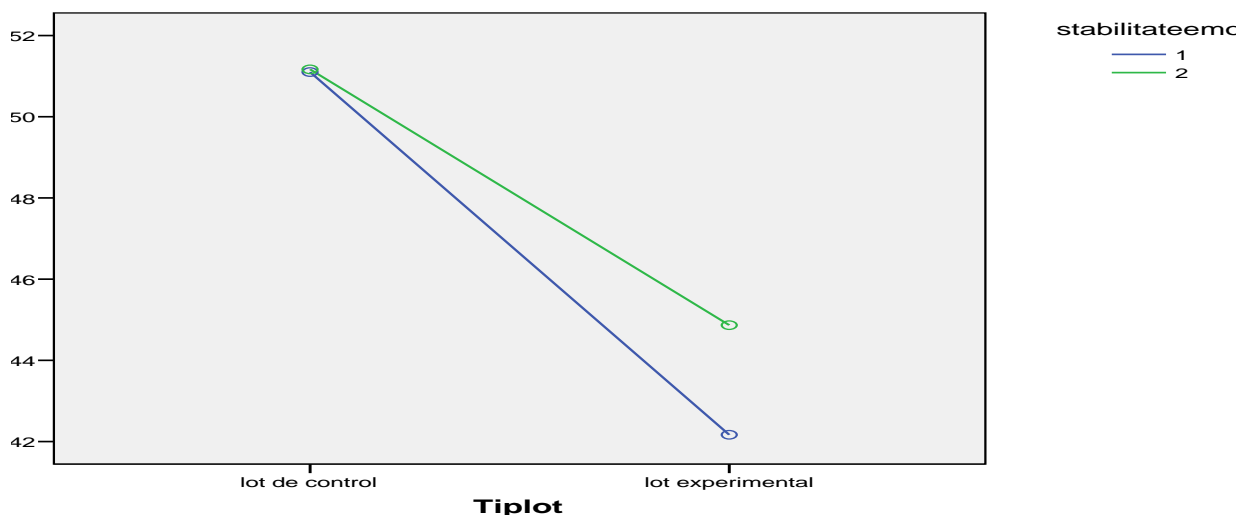


Figure no. 7.1.5. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participants for the variable emotional stability.

The next investigated dependent variable was the neuroticism level. We wanted to point out the influence of the therapeutic program upon the participants' neuroticism level. The obtained results indicate the lack of statistically significant differences between the participants regarding the moment of the evaluation of the neuroticism level ($F_{1,58} = 0,66$; NS).

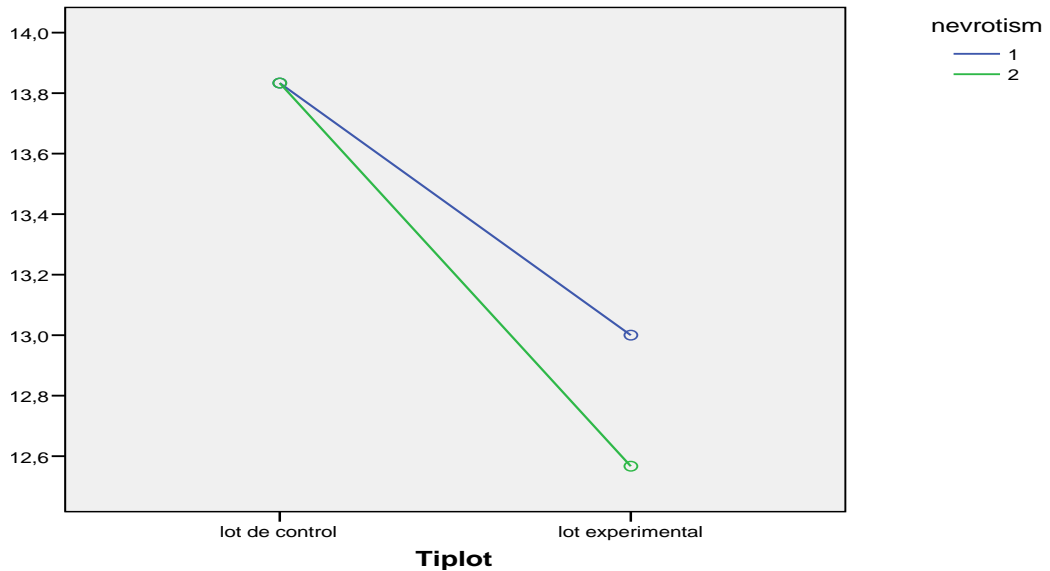


Figure no. 7.1.6. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participants for the variable neuroticism.

Regarding the efficiency of the therapeutic program upon the aggressiveness level, the results indicate the lack of statistically significant differences between the participants ($F_{1,58} = 0,29$; NS).

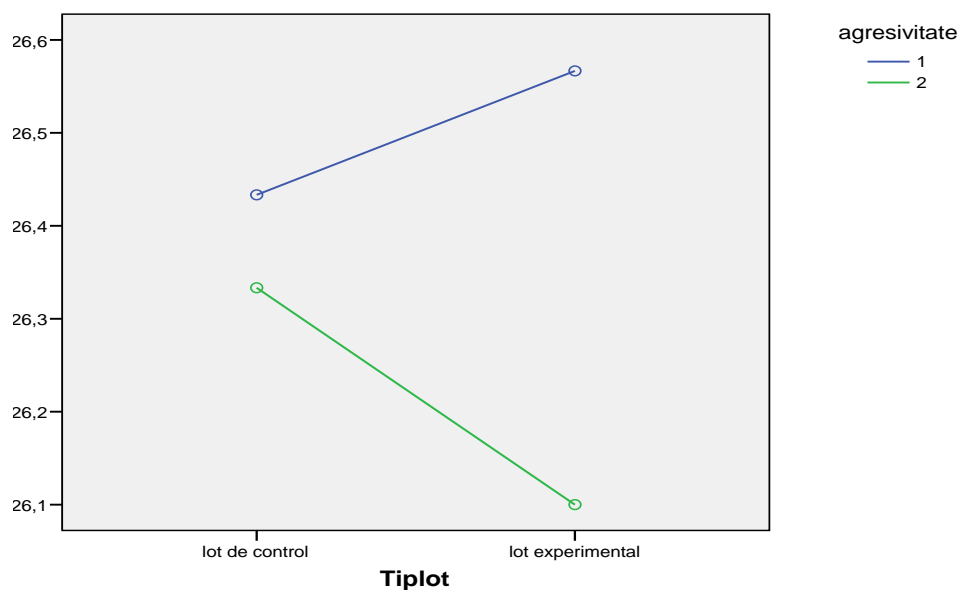


Figure no. 7.1.7. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participants for the variable aggressiveness.

During the last phase we investigated the efficiency of the intervention program upon the assertiveness level. The results indicate statistically significant differences between the participants regarding the moment of the evaluation of the assertiveness level ($F_{1,58} = 38,44$; $p < 0,01$). These differences, regarding the increase of the assertiveness level, are observed only in case of the participants in the intervention program (from 26,06 to 28,96). In case of the control lot, the results between the two evaluations are approximatively similar (24,40 at the first evaluation and 24,60 at the second evaluation).

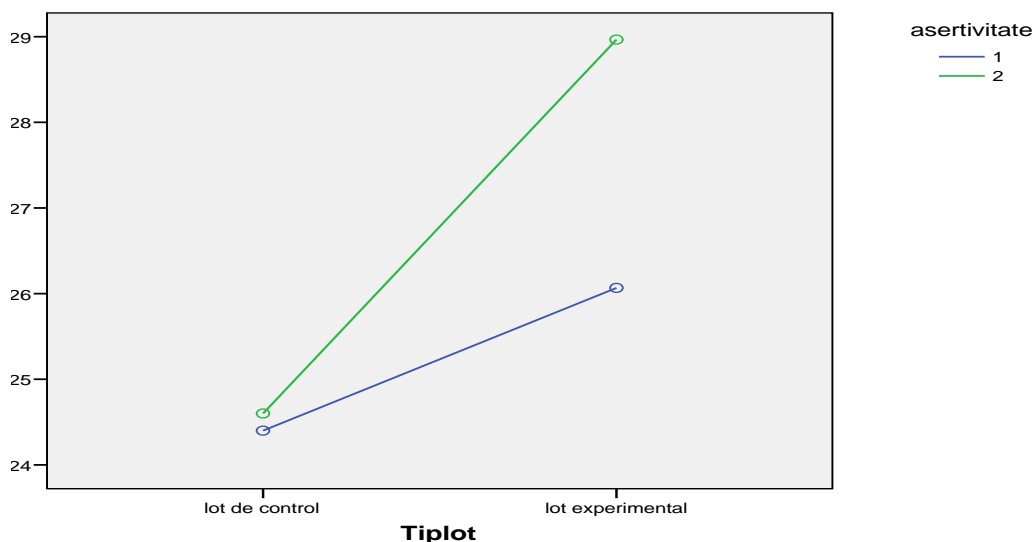


Figure no. 7.1.8. Graphical representation of the averages of the scores obtained by the patterns of participants for the variable assertiveness.

Based on the obtained results, significant improvements were noticed in case of the dimension investigated by the therapeutic program. In case of the participants in the experimental lot, regarding the dimension „openness”, a significant improvement is noticed, fact that supports the previous result regarding the efficiency of the therapeutic intervention upon the prisoners with an aggressive behavior. In case of the control lot, the level of this variable remains approximatively unchanged.

Similar results are also indicated in case of the dimensions „psychotism” and „agreeableness”.

In case of the dimension „criminality”, decreases are indicated not only in case of the participants in the intervention program, but also in case of the control lot.

At the „emotional stability” level an increase of its level is detected in case of those who participated in the intervention program. In case of the control lot the results between the two evaluations are approximatively similar.

The insignificant differences discovered in case of all the patterns indicate that the intervention program fails to induce significant modifications regarding the neuroticism level of the individuals.

Regarding the individuals` aggressiveness level, insignificant differences were discovered in case of all the patterns, fact that indicates that the intervention program fails to induce significant modifications. We consider that these results are a consequence of the fact that a certain level of aggressiveness is necessary for adapting and cohabiting in the penitentiary environment.

The significant differences obtained in case of all the independent variables, as well as their significant interaction suggest the fact that the therapeutic program proves efficiency for the increase of the prisoners' assertiveness level with an aggressive behavior.

7.2. Qualitative analysis

In the present study we wanted to see the modifications of the cognitive-behavioral dominants, that contribute to the realization of the criminal act, by implementing a specific therapeutic group. The program aimed at the cognitive-behavioral restructuring by increasing the tolerance to frustration, forming a positive self-image, the unconditioned self-acceptance and the acceptance of others, the development of habits for solving the problems and conflicts in an assertive manner.

Dominant aspects in the personal behavior like: social inadaptation, behavioral duplicity, intellectual and affective immaturity, emotive-acting instability, uncommon sensitiveness, low tolerance to frustration, inferiority complex, egocentrism are only a few aspects detected as precursory of the criminal act.

In the study made by us we analyzed these dominants in case of some persons that have already committed criminal deeds, most of them subsequent offenders, they being in the middle of the period of executing the punishment. During the first stage of the study we analyzed the behavioral dominants of all the prisoners, these being selected based on the type of committed infractions.

Due to its applicative efficiency and cultural adaptability we used the DECAS model for evaluating the pre-test and post-test personality traits, pointing out only three dimensions: openness, agreeableness and emotional stability. Taking into consideration both the experimental and the control groups, we can graphically present the traits and profile of the prisoners included in our study.

In case of the prisoners included in the study, during the initial stage of the study, we could notice a middle openness level, that indicates a quite well developed practical sense, oriented towards the implementation of the actions. The individual with a deflective personality, egocentric and rigid, tends to be resistant to change, sometimes with adapting difficulties, especially to the rules imposed of preset by others.

Agreeableness points out the way a person interlinks and tries to determine social harmony. In case of our subjects, an independent competitive spirit is observed; combative, he likes to come in front, but is, at the same time, cynic and suspicious towards others, arrogant, egotist, excessively oriented towards actions detrimental to relationships, easily becoming a part in arguments. Included in the detention environment, the subject rather express egocentrism and suspicion. Skeptic, the convicted is rather competitive, his cooperation ability being stimulated rather by behavioral modification techniques applied to the detention rules, than by an impulse of inner organization. Insensible, impatient, he manifests arrogance and cynicism, especially towards the roommates, but sometimes also towards the authorities.

From an emotional point of view, stability is a trait associated with emotional maturity. Distinction is made between calm persons, with self-trust, that handle stress and those who are vulnerable and emotionally labile, that are easily discouraged or irritated by problems. From this point of view, the average obtained from the subjects included in the study reflects a middle level to low level of the emotional stability. So, the prisoner has the tendency to be irritable, hostile and anxious, impulsive and insecure. Indifferent and tactless in relationships with the others, it is very difficult for him to appreciate others` needs or to realistically estimate the problems and the behavioral consequences.

Frustration is felt at the affective-cognitive level as a crisis state and results in disapproving behaviors, fact frequently observed in case of prisoners. Being included in group relationships by the detention environment, frequent potential conflicting situations appear, especially in case of those who are emotionally unstable, moments when they tend to lose self-control.

These results obtained during the pre-test phase are in accordance with the personality analyses made in other studies. According to Pinatel (1962), there are more characteristics that determine certain people to resort to criminal deeds, ant these features build "the central nucleus of the criminal personality". We may speak here about: egocentrism, lability, aggressiveness, affective indifference. The subsequent offenders prove social inadaptation, egocentrism, immaturity, excessive orientation towards certain ways of social gratification (money, sex etc.), impulsiveness and affective indifference, aggressiveness, skepticism, inner states of tension and conflict, the deformed perception of reality, difficulty to evaluate and present himself.

After participating in the therapeutic program, the subjects from the experimental lot registered modifications regarding all the three dimensions aimed in the study, in relation with the proper development level, but also in relation with the control group. During the post-test phase, a greater openness of the subjects towards new, courage in sustaining the ideas, interest for action were observed.

If initially, the prisoners manifested a rebel and non-conformist behavior, being preoccupied with their own theories and being rigid in applying or creating new adaptation or interlinking strategies, after the therapeutic program they have become more open, less susceptible, more empathic and creative. At the same time, we may say that after the exercises included in the program they summoned up courage for creating positive adaptive strategies for the problematic situations that appear in the penitentiary, in the everyday life.

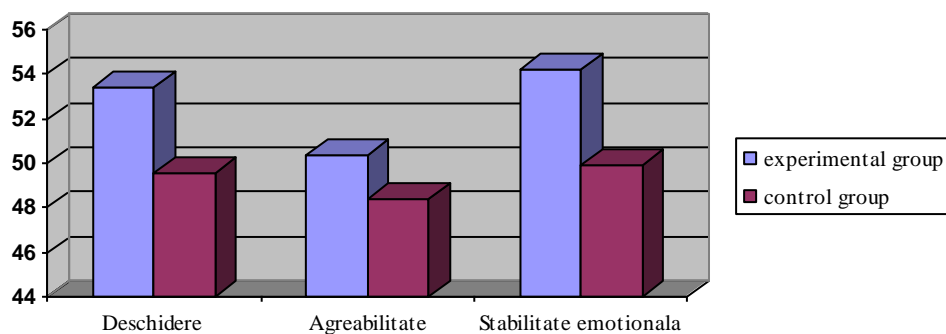


Figure no. 7.2. 9. Personality factors from the DECAS scale at the end of the therapeutic program for the subjects of the two lots.

The sensitiveness towards one's own feelings, difficulty in their acknowledgment and expression led to a small diminution of the adaptation problems and to an increase of the ability to face the conflicts that initially appeared between the prisoners. At the same time, a greater flexibility and emotional stability in stressful situations were noticed. But, the subjects remain quite rigid when it comes to their own system of values, unpredictable and slightly without empathy. They are still noisy and eccentric and some prisoners from the experimental lot remain theatrical and ironic. These modifications, regarding the openness to new, are relevant also in relation with the control group, whose characteristics remained stable, during the post-test, in comparison with the initial phase of the evaluation.

Agreeableness is considered by the authors of the DECAS model as the factor that has the greatest impact upon the quality of the interpersonal relationships. In case of the subjects from the experimental lot, statistically significant modifications appear in the group, pre-test - post-test.

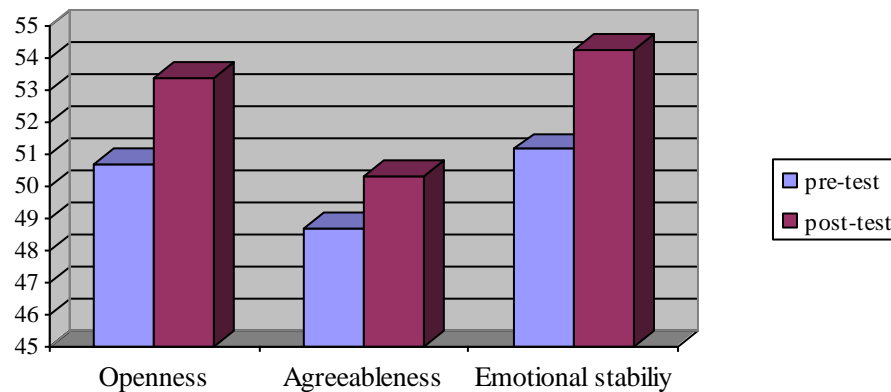


Figure no. 7.2.10. Pre-test - post-test comparisons in case of the experimental group.

Before beginning the therapeutic program, the prisoners were individualist, less confident in others, with a high competitive spirit. Centered on their own persons, oriented towards the direct attainment of their own objectives to the detriment of the collective ones, with the help of the therapeutic program they succeed in discovering the efficiency of teamwork and the importance and efficiency of collaboration.

The therapeutic program managed to determine modifications at the level of this dimension, meaning the subjects' ability to resolve collective tasks, to collaborate for attaining collective goals. The development of the cooperation ability and tolerance towards others was intended, objectives that were attained at the group level.

Analyzing the data we observed that the positive modifications were also obtained in the scores registered in case of the control lot. These phenomenon may be explained by the contamination or inter-influencing process. Being always in contact to one another, the prisoners who participated in the program applied the constructive strategies that they got familiarized with and that they exercised during the therapeutic sessions and imposed an efficient communication manner during the conflicting situations.

Regarding the emotional stability, as foreseen and observed in the previous studies, during the initial phase, we observed a tendency to neuroticism, a higher intensity of anger and frustration and a high frequency of their manifestation, verbally and behaviorally expressed towards the others or the self.

If, initially, the subjects were manifesting irritability and hostility, impulsiveness and vulnerability, the results obtained after the therapeutic program indicated a reduction of their frequency and intensity. So, we may say that, in case of the experimental group, the self-awareness expressed through the answers given to the items that reflect the inferiority feeling increased. Irascible and temperamental during the initial phase, with intense manifestations of fury and frustration, through the exercises and the disputations during the therapy, the control capacity and rationally thinking increases.

The modifications of this factor could not be remarked also by the reduction of the behaviors of self-mutilation or the reduction of the social inadequate behaviors. The fear that the others will criticize them and the fear of a negative evaluation becomes less frequent in the prisoners` answers, during the post-test, fact that indicates an increase of the awareness of their own value, of the self-awareness.

The scores obtained during the post-test indicate a level of the emotional equilibrium slightly above the average, fact that may be expressed by a reduction of the impulsiveness, of the vulnerability feeling, a flexibility increase, a reduction of the frequency and the intensity of the feeling of fury and an increase of the tolerance to frustration. These modifications regarding the emotional stability is seen not only in comparison with the initial level, but also compared with the control level.

Further we monitored the modifications obtained for the personality dominants also using the EPQ-R scale, not only by comparisons within the group, but also between the groups, pointing out the scales: psychotism, criminality and neuroticism.

Psychotism, as a dimension of the personality, reflects the presence of a certain toughness in thinking, a disregard of the others, criminality, a secondary scale of th instrument, measures psychotic features, that ignore the physical or psychological welfare of the others and the probability of a violent, aggressive behavior and the neuroticism scale regards the emotional stability.

According to the analyses of the obtained results in case of the psychotism scale, we may describe the law breakers included in the study as being solitary and indifferent to people, persons with adaptation and social integration difficulties, incapable of complex feelings. One may observe, in case of prisoners, a lack of empathic abilities, difficulty in understanding others needs and pains. The emotional instability is a part of the disorder states of the law breakers` sensitiveness that is characterized by: lack of an affective autonomy, the insufficient development of the affective self-control, the weak development of superior emotions and feelings, especially the moral ones etc. All these lead to the lack of the ability of an adequate self-evaluation and evaluation, the lack of objectivity towards the others.

Participating in the intervention program that aimed the modification of the irrational cognition and the behavioral modification, the prisoners also presented some modifications of their attitude towards the others in their reference to and interlinking with the others, namely their interest for cooperation and collaboration increased to the detriment of hostility. The therapeutic program that the subjects from the experimental lot participated in included exercises that aimed the development of a realistic image and the development of the ability to unconditionally accept themselves and the others. The prisoners practiced

and developed their efficient interlinking abilities with the others through the rules imposed by the group activity, the role-plays contributing to the development of some new strategies of solving some conflicting situations, as well as to the development of the empathic competences. The exercises for identifying the strong and weak points have contributed to the development of the realistic self-appreciation ability, but not to the awareness of the fact that each person has limits, but also potential.

Regarding the neuroticism, the scale points out the emotional equilibration ability, the ability to control the intensity of the emotions. The prisoners' analysis from the initial phase reflected a middle to low level of the ability to control the emotions. Anxious and worried, with emotional oscillations, with intense, powerful and sometimes explosive emotional manifestations, the prisoners may frequently face difficulties when coming back to a normal state, to an emotional equilibrium. The difficulty to reach emotional equilibrium may bring problems of adaptation to the environment, making him react irrationally and sometime rigid. The scores obtained by the subjects indicate the presence of some pessimist preoccupations, the fear that the things will not work as expected, fact that indicates an inflexibility in thinking and reduced abilities to adapt to new and unexpected situations. The emotional instability guesses an insufficient affective maturity, the individual being the servant of influences and suggestions.

The therapeutic program intends to reach a lower level of neuroticism, especially in case of the subjects included in the experimental group. So, the exercises suggested within the therapeutic program aimed the enrichment of the emotional vocabulary, the diversification of the emotional palette, the development of the awareness ability and the control of the intensity of the emotions. The therapeutic discussions allowed the share of the emotions, the determination and understanding of the feelings felt in certain situations by themselves and by the others.

The criminality scale from the questionnaire developed by Eysenck (1959) reflects the tendency to impinge upon the values and norms, psychotic features, that ignore the physical or psychological welfare of the others and the possibility of a violent or potentially aggressive behavior. The authors bespeak the fact that the persons with low scores on this scale are balanced and stable persons, from an emotional point of view, without neurotic tendencies and especially emotionally balanced. These persons also keep the social norms and have values that could be seen as conventional.

The scores obtained by the subjects during the initial phase indicate a middle to high level of criminality. According to the description of the scale, we may ascertain that the persons who obtained big scores on this scale have a clear tendency to break the social norms, the values officially seen as social norms. These persons have a series of personality traits and dispositions that make them ignore the wishes, needs, right or welfare of the others. They also have different symptoms usually associated with emotional and psychic instabilities, like anxiety, guilt, nervousness, insomnia, fluctuating emotional states. It is possible that these persons also have the feeling of being persecuted or aggrieved by the others and it is possible for them to react thoughtless, instable and unequal to real or imaginary injustices. In other words, they tend to distort reality, to interpret the events in accordance with rigid and irrational cognitive

schemata. We may ascertain that the results registered during the initial phase are in accordance with the studies made so far and with the results obtained by the evaluation with the DECAS scale.

Although we speak about persons that are in detention for breaking the social norms, the subjects included in this study registered middle levels during the initial phase and, in the final one, at the end of the therapeutic program, this indicator was only a little bit smaller, not only in the experimental group, but also in the control one. The criminality factor is a complex personality dimension, a factor that directly correlates with other personality traits, including psychotism and neuroticism. The modification that appears is small related to the pattern of the scale, but the specific of the population should be also studied, and namely persons with deviant behavior. We should consider that the subjects included in the study are subsequent offenders, prisoners with serious social integration problems, that were not successful in this process and that, sometimes, also in the detention state, manifest the tendency to break the preset rules, sometimes using physical or verbal aggressiveness towards themselves or the others.

The belief that this trait will suddenly or radically change by participating in only one therapeutic program would be unrealistic. Although, the modifications that appear within the group may indicate the fact that the law breakers that participated in the therapy have become more observant of the rights of others, more forwarded to accept that the others also have rights and liberties, that a moment's pleasure with long-term consequences could be postponed in the favor of a long-term satisfaction, as well as a positive attitude towards the social rules, at least at the level of the declarations.

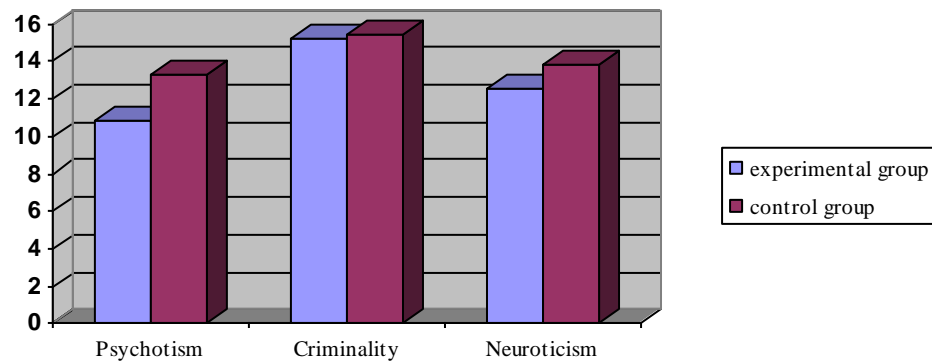


Figure no. 7.2.12. The results obtained from the comparisons between the two groups at the end of the therapeutic program.

Interestingly, a positive modification was observed in case of the control group. This thing may be explained by the contagion phenomenon, caused by the cohabitation imposed by detention.

One may ascertain that the manifestation of the aggressiveness is also a sign of the presence of the inferiority complex, a dissimulation of it. Paradoxically, the desire to show the superiority towards others is caused by the fact that the person in question underestimates itself. Demeaning or being aggressive with others, these people try to bring the others to their own level, having the proclivity to build a distorted self-image and doing their best to show themselves tougher than they really are.

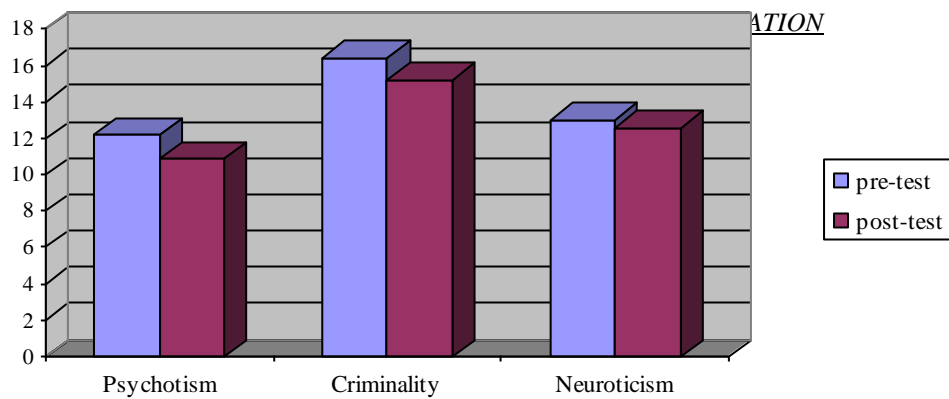


Figure no. 7.2.13. The modifications obtained by the experimental group in the pre-test and post-test when evaluating the personality factors with the EPQ-R scale.

Most of the times aggressiveness appears as an effect of frustration, the inability to face the difference between reality and the level of fulfillment of one's own wishes. This situation may be represented based on a mathematical formula: the desired thing - reality and the energy of the aggressiveness. In other words, the greater the distance between "dream" and reality is, the deeper the self-dissatisfaction, respectively the aggressiveness will be.

Although the behavioral modification is made by recompenses and punishment and the aggressive behavior was sanctioned by conviction, the mechanisms that generate the aggressiveness do not modify only through the deprivation of freedom. While the living environment is delimited according to genus, the surviving instinct frequently externalizes, especially in case of men, through aggressive manifestations especially in case of persons who do not have the ability to find different strategies for solving problems.

Most of the times, the prisoners become aggressive when they see a conflicting situation as the result of an unjustified subjective attribution act of a malevolent intention. The belief that they will not cope with injustice, that they will not bear it and it is their duty to deal out justice, accompanied by emotional limits, become an excuse and motivation for their own actions.

In case of prisoners, frustration appears when he is deprived of some rights, recompenses, satisfactions that he considers that he should take credit for or when in the way for obtaining these rights certain obstacles intercede. Frustration is felt at the cognitive-affective level as a state that blocks the ability to react rationally (Buş, 1997).

The detention environment, according to its nature, implies the contraction of the actioning area. Within a group of male prisoners, each has to confront with the intentions of others. The reactions to this situation may be active, aggressive, but also passive or assertive. Assertiveness is a desirable behavior that allows the individual to solve conflicts without becoming aggressive, in a rational convincing manner and without aggressiveness. This implies a certain level of self-control, but also self-knowledge, the increase of the ability to acknowledge and respect the rights of others, empathy, creativity in solving the social problems. The activities of the therapeutic program aimed at the development of these competences: the decrease of the frequency of aggressive answers and the development of the assertive competences.

If, at the beginning, those with a low tolerance to frustration had the tendency to lose their self-control on the spot acting chaotically, inconstantly, aggressively and sometimes self-aggressively, an

increase of the ability to react different and often assertive in frustrating or conflicting situations was observed. The intensity of the emotions activated in conflicting or frustrating situations is determined by the signification given to the conflicting and frustrating factors through the evaluation and interpretation process by each individual. The way of interpreting the reality may be changed through cognitive techniques also used by us in the therapeutic program.

Beyond the previous experiences, climate or homelike environment, the social context that determined the criminal act or lead to the condition of prisoner, the rational thinking may be changed dependent on each person`s motivation for change. The exercises used in the therapeutic program and the homeworks were a provocation for each member of the therapeutic group and, of course, determined the activation of some defensive mechanisms, while this kind of therapy determines the development of a new manner of interpreting reality, very little alike the one used until now.

The therapeutic program aimed at the development of the autonomy habits, the ability to assume decisional responsibilities and to assertively answer the provocations, taking into consideration the long-term positive consequences. The results obtained after analyzing the data of this study reveals that an openness and emotional stability increase attracts an assertive behavior more frequently manifested and the negative modifications of the criminal and psychotism dimensions, namely their decrease, correlates with the aggressiveness manifestation with a reduced frequency. These results are in accordance with the studies related to the factors that determine aggressiveness.

The development of self-confidence, of a positive attitude towards one`s own person and the self-appreciation and the appreciation of others, through exercises of cognitive restructuring, have contributed to the development of the ability to reject the implication in aggressive actions.

The tendency to fight for the satisfaction of the short-term needs, without regarding the consequences, is so deep-routed in the prisoner`s structure, that the behavioral modification will maintain only through the recurrence of some specific therapeutic programs. The formation and development of moral reasoning, the reshaping of the personality for the social reinsertion needs a consequent and lasting process of cognitive restructuring, of personal development, increase of the educational level of the prisoners and the facing of the limits imposed by the penitentiary environment.

The modifications resulting from the application of the therapeutic program, the implication of the prisoners in exercises, discussions and role-plays, have determined positive modifications in their personality structure, overall, in case of those included in the study and led to the modifications of their behavior, namely the increase of the assertive behavior. The increase of the emotional stability, self-control ability, a greater openness towards the others and their needs, combined with compensation strategies, have determined the motivation for participating in the therapy, the reduction of some aggressive manifestations and the increase of the assertive abilities.

PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITS, FURTHER ACTIONING DIRECTIONS

Regarding the exploring nature of the study, the intention was to make a step forward in discovering the types, sources, effects of the variables that influence the adaptation, accommodation to the penitentiary environment. The next step might highlight the impact of these variables upon the effort of reducing the injuriousness in the penitentiary environment.

The efficiency of the program was examined through more means. During the first phase were compared the initial results of the participators in the program with those of a control lot, with similar features, that implied no intervention. Due to the innovative intercession, a limited evaluation of the progresses that took place during the study was made, using only a small number of means that allowed us to make a quantitative evaluation. Concrete aspects like: number of aggressions / self-aggressions that the participators in the study were implicated in, number of incident reports made to them, number of mutilations from other detention rooms because of some personal reasons, number of recompenses awarded to the participators, number of educational activities they participated in were observed.

Regarding these aspects, we observed that the emotional and social isolation level decreased, the actions committed with violence by the participators in the study, materialized in the number of incident reports, decreased, the number of mutilations from one room to another because of personal reasons decreased, recompenses for a constant positive attitude were awarded and the implication in educational activities.

While the study was made within two penitentiaries, the increase of the pattern was limited to the prisoners` participation rate (were included a number of 64 prisoners, that executed some penalties of deprivation of freedom for committing some violent infractions or who committed serious disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom). This happened because the used instruments had to be applied on some subjects with a minimum educational level - middle school. Due to this fact, other comparisons based on some penological criteria (execution system of the penalty of deprivation of freedom, the duration of the penalty of deprivation of freedom, age - minors, old people were excluded -, sex, participation in different programs and educational activities) were not made. The used pattern does not include women; we expect a qualitative difference in their adaptation problem, because of the complexity of the social roles that they have, especially in the family relations.

We must also keep in mind that the present study was made during a profound structural reform of the penitentiary environment (entering into force of the new law for executing the penalties and of the measures disposed by the judicial organs during the penal trial, the profiling of the penitentiary units according to their execution system, modification of the provisions of the Minister of Justice for granting rights to the prisoners, the imminent modification of the Penal Code etc.).

Another limit is the fact that in the Romanian penitentiaries there is no set of programs that could be unitary, coherently applied and that could provide continuity. The moment a person deprived of freedom is transferred in another penitentiary for judicial businesses or for executing the penalty of deprivation of freedom, he/she can not further participate in the programs or activities that he/she was involved in, and the psychologist`s / social assistant`s / sociologist`s work is aimless.

The active participation of the prisoners in therapeutic programs and educational activities that aim the decrease of the aggressiveness and injuriousness in the penitentiary environment is also reduced due to illiteracy, that means around 17%.

A further actioning direction should aim at the way of filling a gap between the results of the research and its concrete applications at an individual and organizational level, at the development and implementation of some programs that should lead to the increase of the life quality in detention. So, the psychologist`s difficult assignment to convince about the necessity of allotting resources for modifying some features of the physical, organizational environment, of the interpersonal relationships in the penitentiary is acknowledged.

The tendency to fight for the satisfaction of the short-term needs, without regarding the consequences, is so deep-routed in the prisoner`s structure, that the behavioral modification will maintain only through the recurrence of some specific therapeutic programs. The formation and development of moral reasoning, the reshaping of the personality for the social reinsertion needs a consequent and lasting process of cognitive restructuring, of personal development, increase of the educational level of the prisoners and the facing of the limits imposed by the penitentiary environment.

Although the increase of the number of subsequent offenders deprived of freedom influences the penitentiary environment, the psycho-educational intervention should be intensified, so the individuals convicted in the first instance, non-subsequent offenders, should not access the behaviors specific to the penitentiary, and especially those that propagate the aggressive and self-aggressive behaviors. For preventing the behavioral-deviant contagion, we suggest the grounding of some special sections for non-subsequent offenders and minors, others than those existing in the penitentiaries with maximum safety regime or closed regime.

The increase of the possibilities of social-professional reintegration of the persons deprived of freedom could be possible through the intensified application of the socio-educational programs and the programs centered on professional formation or the development of some competences for reintegration after release in the community.

But, in the next years, we expect an increase of the efficiency of the correctional, socio-educational and psychotherapeutic services, directly proportional to the degree of the European funds accession for education and research in detention, request replenished with a reform of the personnel, namely its rejuvenation and its intense professionalization.

We consider that "The therapeutic program for the reduction of the aggressive behavior" has proved its utility, highlighting a series of aspects that were only suspected, but never studied in detail. Its application in a bigger number of penitentiaries, on a bigger number of prisoners, regarding the fact that 2-3 specialists are enough, that a small number of didactic materials is necessary, combined with the occupation of the prisoners` free time, correlated with the decrease of the aggressive manifestations and with the possibility of the persons deprived of freedom to be compensated, it would have a positive effect in diminishing the aggressive behaviors in the Romanian penitentiaries.

CONCLUSIONS

Starting from the fact that the evaluation of the consequences that may result from losing the control over the individual behavior, without neglecting the effects over the group behavior, especially in the restrictive environment represented by the penitentiary, we have considered opportune the investigations that regard the increase of the individual self-control abilities, approaching simple groups, but not simplistic.

The preoccupation concepts, positive expectations and respect should appear in all the penitentiary institutions. These values should be facilitated and encouraged by the managers at all levels, through a strategic planning, attempts and efforts to configure positive attitudes in case of the persons deprived of freedom and the personnel. Without such a vision, the penitentiary institutions present real dangers for the mental and physical health of the persons deprived of freedom and of the personnel.

In the present study we observed the modifications of the personality traits, that contribute to the realization of the criminal act, by implementing a specific therapeutic program. The program aimed at the cognitive-behavioral restructuring by increasing the tolerance to frustration, forming a positive self-image, the unconditioned self-acceptance and the acceptance of others, the development of habits for solving the problems and conflicts in an assertive manner.

The studies made so far indicate the fact that any criminal act is based on destructive behaviors that are caused by some adaptation difficulties, but also by the influence and formation within disintegrated and disordered families, where violence and aggressiveness were the main shaping elements of the child's and adolescent's personality.

In the milieus where physical force predominates, tolerance is considered a weakness and the weak and lonely one always gets a lesson from the strong ones. Participating together with the group in committing some violent infractions, from earlier ages every day, often due to alcohol and drugs consumption, in time, the physical and verbal violence gets a real expression means, a living manner, a reflex, an automatism. This leads to the formation of an erroneous image about the social and moral values, law breakers live with the impression that by setting their own rules they can easily get successful and the trust in their own forces is developed on an instable and unrealistic base. Courage becomes an expression of insensitiveness and indifference, the positive self-image hiding selfishness and lack of empathy, the social relations being based on lie, evasion and rigid strategies for solving problems.

Personality traits like: social inadaptation, behavioral duplicity, intellectual and affective immaturity, emotive-acting instability, uncommon sensitiveness, low tolerance to frustration, inferiority complex, egocentrism are only a few personality traits detected as precursory of the criminal act.

Theoretically, the study succinctly approaches the main researches related to aggressiveness, in general, and to aggressiveness in the penitentiary environment, in particular. Although the inland literature is deficient, we tried to render, as exactly as possible, the aspects related to the aggressiveness in the

penitentiary environment. Due to the fact that until 2006, the moment the law no. 275, regarding the execution of the penalties and the measures disposed by the judicial organs during the penal trial, entered into force, and the penitentiary environment was a closed one, multiple myths related to the cohabitation in the penitentiary were created, but coherent researches were never made. Certain studies were made in more penitentiaries, but no common strategy for the study of the violent manifestations that take place within the penitentiaries was developed. By the theoretical approach of the phenomenon we tried to observe and comprehensively relate the actual level of knowledge, identifying the incongruent and convergent points.

The present work tries to synthesize the studies applied in penitentiaries and suggests a systematic and coherent application of some therapeutic programs for decreasing the aggressive behaviors in all the Romanian penitentiaries.

Methodologically, we aimed at the examination of some instruments, by their application on subjects from the Romanian penitentiaries. We observed that the violent law breakers present a high level of the cognitive and emotional defense patterns. Many times they evaluate themselves negatively and globally, they label themselves "bad people, inferior or inefficient", they expect their lives to be full of failures and dangers. We notice that the aggressive manifestations grow up because of a low tolerance to frustration, a low self-esteem, the existence of a profound antisocial attitudinal system, accompanied by impulsiveness and aggressiveness, the search for power and control being desired out of the wish of an immediate gratification, negative thinking models and fear of involvement in affective relations.

The modifications resulting from the application of the therapeutic program, the implication of the prisoners in exercises, discussions and role-plays, have determined positive modifications in their personality structure, overall, in case of those included in the study and led to the modification of their behavior, namely the decrease of the aggressive and self-aggressive manifestations. The increase of the emotional stability, self-control ability, a greater openness towards the others and their needs, combined with compensation strategies, have determined the motivation for participating in the therapy, the reduction of the aggressive manifestations and the increase of the assertive abilities. We noticed that the group therapy, that needs no more than 2 specialists, combined with the occupation of the prisoners' spare time, correlated with the decrease of the aggressive manifestations, related to costs - benefits, makes the application of the therapeutic programs for decreasing the aggressive behaviors in the Romanian penitentiaries, on a large scale, plausible and desirable.

By analyzing the programs presented by literature and studying the obtained results after the application of the therapeutic program D.C.A., we noticed that the group therapy, aiming to reduce the relapse and the aggressive behaviors, is efficient in case of the aimed prisoners. We discovered that after forming the groups and knowing their members, they have become vehement critics of those who continued to manifest aggressive behaviors during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom. We may assert that, in this context, the role of the leader of the therapeutic program is to identify and create those "triggers" that should get the therapeutic forces of the group going.

CONCLUSIONS

The family and friendship relationships are important supportive sources that should be facilitated. Although incarceration imposes certain constraints regarding the visits, the right to correspondence and petitioning, the regular telephone calls, the relationships with the members of the family or friends should be kept as normal as possible. The bonds between penitentiaries and the outside society (for example, through volunteers that are members of organizations that offer social, educational, religious, professional help or help the prisoners spend their spare time or even bringing public in the prisons) should be encouraged and facilitated as much as possible.

The obtained data show that the existence of social support (visits made by the prisoners' family, friends, the participation in educative activities and psycho-social assistance) strongly and directly influences the reduction of the aggressive manifestations and the disciplinary deviations during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom. So, the prisoners that are periodically visited by their families, friends, actively participate in educative activities and psycho-social assistance, that have productive activities, are rarely aggressive and commit no serious disciplinary deviations. The prisoners who receive no visits or only sporadic visits, those who do not enjoy the support of their families and friends, those who participate only sporadically and without interest in the educative activities and psycho-social assistance, are more inclined to manifest violence and commit serious disciplinary deviations. These all bring other negative consequences: their access to sport, educative activities, work is restricted, the visits of their family members / friends are forbidden for 1 to 3 months, fact that intensifies tension and dissatisfaction.

After applying the questionnaires, the obtained data reveals the fact that the prisoners need to know that they are safe also in the penitentiary, not to be menaced by violent acts. On the other hand, they need a certain freedom of movement that is limited exactly due to the infractions committed with violence (rape, robbery, bodily injury, murder etc.) or the serious disciplinary deviations committed during the execution of the penalty of deprivation of freedom. For this reason they have to find an activity that should occupy their time, help them rehabilitate after committing the deeds that they have been convicted for. So, some of them become painters, others sculptors or small masters. Those who participated in educative activities and psycho-social assistance or have artistic qualities may write articles for the magazine of the penitentiary, others become actors, successfully performing in famous plays or their own plays. So, an emotional feedback is obtained, thing that helps the prisoners easily get beyond the restrictions of the penitentiary environment.

We observed that the young prisoners more often appeal to self-injuries, while, generally, they have a lower tolerance to the frustrations that arise in the penitentiary environment. The higher the intelligence and educational level of the prisoners becomes, the lower the frequency of self-injuries is.

In other words, the lack of cigarettes and the impossibility to borrow some frequently motivate self-injuries. The number of those who have a good financial situation and appeal to violent acts is extremely reduced and these happen only by accident, due to reasons that have to do with their families.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a direct connection between the personnel's leading style and the number of prisoners with self-injuries: the rigid and restrictive style, as well as a minimum implication in the life of the group that delivers the most prisoners who cause themselves injuries. It was noticed that the personnel more frequently cede to the requests of the prisoners who self-mutilated themselves, when they were convicted for minor infractions without a repetitive character.

The educative courses and the courses for crafts and physical education as well play a major role in the improvement of self-respect and the prisoners' preparation for release. These have important effects for reducing trauma and depressions, the access to art proved to be of major impact on the increase of self-respect and trust, it facilitates relaxation, improves sleeping, increases the energy and attenuates the anger of knowing that they are conducted by others by applying some strict rules.

Working places and classrooms may offer an environment where the prisoners may be kept busy and where they can have fun during a temporary mental "escape" from the stress of incarceration.

By participating in educative activities and psycho-social assistance, the prisoners are helped to develop parental qualities, for preventing their transformation into abusive or careless parents - important factors of the psychic diseases or of the criminal behavior.

The spiritual and religious beliefs may significantly contribute to the psychic welfare, as well as to the reduction of the aggressive manifestations. The personnel has to respect the prisoners' religious beliefs and facilitate their exercise and the development of their spiritual aspirations.

The intimacy in the penitentiaries is very limited due to the configuration of the buildings destined for the prisoners' accommodation (big rooms and small rooms - cells). Although they wish to extend the surface and the air volume allotted for each prisoner, according to the European norms, serious difficulties are met because of the lack of the necessary funds for renovating the existent spaces or for building new penitentiaries. Certain occasions may be used for obtaining a private personal space. When necessary (for example, during the medical examination) the prisoners will be separately examined, each at a time, and, if possible, not in the presence of a member of the personnel of the penitentiary. Confidentiality may be and must be respected.

On the other hand, the lack of intimacy is compensated by the relaxation of the penitentiary treatment, resulting from the application of the provisions of Law no. 275/2006, regarding the execution of the penalties and measures disposed by the judicial organs during the penal trial.

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