

Personal profile of the armed penal staff in places of detention

Ganishina I.S.
Academy of FPS of Russia,
Ryazan, Russia.

e-mail: irinaganishina@yandex.ru

Fedoseeva L.N.
Academy of FPS of Russia,
Ryazan, Russia.

e-mail: n-fedoseewa@yandex.ru

Suchkova I.V.
Academy of FPS of Russia,
Ryazan, Russia

e-mail: shira78@mail.ru

Kirillova T.V.
Research Institute of FPS
of Russia,
Moscow, Russia.

e-mail: tatiana-kirillova@rambler.ru

Pashukov S.A.
Ryazan Institute (branch) of Moscow
Polytechnic University, Ryazan, Russia.
e-mail: pashukov52@mail.ru

Abstract—the significance of the study is determined by the specific activities of the FPS security units, which guard the boundaries of correctional institutions.

The use of physical force, special means and firearms makes particular demands on the personal profile of an armed penal employee serving in places of detention.

Analysis of the scientific literature proves that the personal profile of a security officer has not been sufficiently studied. Yet, the necessity to justify the professional and psychological selection of these specialists on a scientific basis is extremely high, for the prisoners' health and safety largely depends on solving the problem.

Keywords—convicts, techniques, psychological protection, psychological assistance, psychocorrection.

I. INTRODUCTION

The significance of the study is determined by the specific activities of the FPS (Federal penitentiary service) security units, which guard the boundaries of correctional institutions. Every year, the accused, the suspects and the convicts escape from prison, hence it is necessary to more carefully select the armed employees of the security departments. The main function of these units is to ensure the isolation from society of the accused, suspects, and convicts as well as to create conditions for effective execution of criminal penalties, for correction and re-socialization. The use of physical force, special means and firearms makes particular demands on the personal profile of an armed employee of the penal system (hereafter – PS).

Analysis of the scientific literature proves that the personal profile of a security officer has not been sufficiently studied. Yet, the necessity to justify the professional and psychological selection of these specialists on a scientific basis is extremely high, for the prisoners' health and safety largely depends on solving the problem.

The objective of the study is to build up a personal profile of the armed penal employees serving in places of detention.

Methods: observation, survey, testing, experiment, mathematical and statistical data analysis (factorial analysis, correlation analysis, Mann-Whitney U-test).

Techniques: Cattell's sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF-A), L.N. Sobchik's individual typological inventory, Freiburg Personality Inventory (FPI-B).

II. THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE RESEARCH

Since the activities of the PS security departments involve carrying firearms when on guard, the employees should meet the following requirements: 1) to ensure the inviolability of the correctional institutions' boundaries and to prevent illegal activities of prisoners; 2) to make operational decisions under time constraints; 3) to stay mobilized for a long time in the conditions of fatigue, monotony and upset of circadian rhythms. Challenging and stressful conditions of service of the PS security department employees make particular demands on their personal profile.

According to the Big Russian encyclopedic dictionary, a personal profile is a set of basic, typical individual psychological traits that characterize a profession [1].

In psychological literature, this notion is defined as a hierarchical sequence of a personality's constituent features [2], a source of information about various aspects of a personality [3].

Thanks to the research of prison psychologists, we can distinguish the basic personal characteristics of the PS security department employees and justify the choice of methods to study their personal profile.

A. I. Ushatkov considered motivation and emotional regulation to be the principal characteristics of the penal staff performing their tasks being armed [4]. R. V. Puzyrevsky notes the importance of such personal qualities as intelligence, and self-esteem [5]. A. M. Kiselev

distinguishes individual strength of the nervous system and the ability of self-regulation [6]. I. S. Doroshenko identifies the need for communication and the ability to maintain long-term contacts, discretion [7].

A vast majority of authors (O. V. Starikova [8], E. V. Ovcharova [9], V. E. Petrov, A.V. Kokurin) believe adaptability to be a most essential professionally significant feature of security department employees. The scientists consider adaptation to be a condition of professional activities, the basic indicators of which are anxiety, individualism, demonstrativeness, instability of emotions, practicality, involvement in work. According to Kokurin A.V., Petrov V. E. such personal characteristics as aggression, risk taking, proneness to conflict and rigidity are the restraining factors that impede successful operation of security units [10].

III. METHODS OF ORGANIZATION AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In order to identify the personality profile of the armed employees serving in places of detention, we carried out an empirical research in the FPS units on the Primorye territory in the period from 2015 to 2018.

As a result of observing the employees on guard duty to protect high-security facilities, we found out that most employees are disciplined and physically vigorous, they know their duty regulations and are competent with handling the weapons. Their psychoemotional state is stable. The employees' interactions are aimed at solving professional problems.

On the basis of the survey [11] it has been found out that most employees have chosen serving with weapons as their professional activity as a result of personal self-determination, as well as following the recommendations of their relatives or friends serving in the PS. All staff members express their willingness to serve. Staff members serving with weapons differentiate the notions of "service with weapons" and "the use of weapons"; the greater part of respondents would like to avoid the use of weapons in the line of duty.

As part of the study conducted among the security department employees of five correctional institutions of the Primorsky territory, 161 persons were tested. To define the personal profile, a set of techniques was used: L.N. Sobchik's individual typological inventory, Cattell's sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF-A), Freiburg Personality Inventory (FPI-B).

We also conducted an experimental study with an experimental and a control group. The experimental group was represented by the security department employees, the control group involved employees from other departments and services: the personnel department, the office, organizational and analytical groups, etc. To define the personal profile of the armed employees, we carried out mathematical and statistical data analysis making use of factorial analysis, correlation analysis, Mann-Whitney U-test.

L.N. Sobchik's individual typological inventory method has revealed that all the indicators of the armed employees are within the average range. The typical profile of the employee's personality is characterized by greater introversion, limited circle of communication. Personality

indicators reflect the stability of opinion, categorical manner, confidence in taking the right decision.

Using the Cattell's sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF-A) it has been found out that armed employees are characterized by lesser tension, self-confidence, judgment, visible emotional stability, maturity, working efficiency, dependence on a significant social environment.

According to the method of Freiburg Personality Inventory (FPI-B), the armed employees have the following distinctive psychological features: the lowest rates of emotional lability have been stated, which reflects high self-control, and stable temper. Spontaneous aggression, neurosis, irritability are expressed to a moderate degree. The most significant for the sample is the scale of "balance", which has maximum values and reflects such personal features as resistance to stress, optimism, activity.

In the course of the factorial analysis, five important factors determining the personal profile of armed employees were specified:

1st factor – "the prevailing mental state": moderate openness, sincerity, tendency to caution, controlling one's expression of feelings while preserving emotional sensibility, constraint in establishing contacts. Greater sensitivity to danger, the ability to withstand emotional stress are manifest. The characteristic features are self-confidence, generally built on external evaluation; poor performance can lower the level of satisfaction and composure;

2nd factor – "social orientation" is determined by the indicators of low leadership potential, which is expressed in the reluctance to take responsibility for the others, individualism, combined with a focus on a significant group and its values. The characteristic features are moderate sociability and proneness to conflict, dependence on social environment;

3rd factor – "behavioral factor" reflects such personal characteristics as perseverance in achieving the goal, severity and cruelty in relation to others, rigidity of thinking, expressed in the predominance of practical and realistic attitudes towards working duties and other activities. Striving for leadership is insignificant; critical attitude to what is happening is likely. The tendency towards self-reliance is combined with the need to share the group's values and goals.

4th factor – "communicative factor" is characterized by the following indicators: higher irritability against the background of lower sociability; closeness and introversion of thinking, a certain tendency to compromise solutions, which is accounted for by inflexibility and rigidity of internal settings;

5 factor – "mobility of psychodynamic systems" includes the indicators of lowered neuroticism, moderate lability and mobility of nervous processes. Dominating are the indicators of reactive aggression that takes place as a response to external incentive.

The correlation analysis made it possible to elaborate the personal profile of the armed employees. We have established direct stable correlations between the indicators of dependence on the significant environment and individuality, which sometimes has its own original and subjective opinion ($r=0.936$). Conformity indicators are in

direct correlation with compromise ($r=0.928$) and sociability ($r=0,858$). The condition of the sample conformity is the parameter of dependence, their correlation has a high value ($r=0.923$). The correlation has been established between proneness to conflict and individuality, which are based on the indicators of aggression and introversion ($r=0.910$). The overall adaptive potential has stable direct links with the courage index ($r=0.902$) and the reverse correlation with relaxation ($r=-0.873$).

In order to clarify the profile features of the armed employees, we carried out an experiment. Thirty three armed employees of security units taking part in the experiment were included in the experimental group. The control group included thirty three employees from other services (the office, organizational and analytical groups, the personnel department), whose job did not involve carrying firearms. Psychodiagnostic tools for the experiment were similar to those used previously.

The results obtained using the method of "Individual typological inventory" (L. N. Sobchik), make it possible to suggest, that both groups (EG – experimental group, CG – control group) have a similar average personality profile.

The representatives of both samples need not to draw much attention to solving problems, the tendency to aggravation is lowered. Adequate flexibility of behavior and the ability to act effectively in various working situations are noted. The characteristic features are emotional expressiveness, relaxed responses, the tendency to self-assertiveness, adaptability and independence. The ability to orientate in rapidly changing situations is pronounced. Stability, balance of thoughts and actions are combined with an average level of tendency to leadership in interpersonal behavior. The need for communication is not expressed. In the experimental group, the signs of extroverted personality are less pronounced, the indicators of aggression and conformity are reduced. The results are shown in Figure 1.

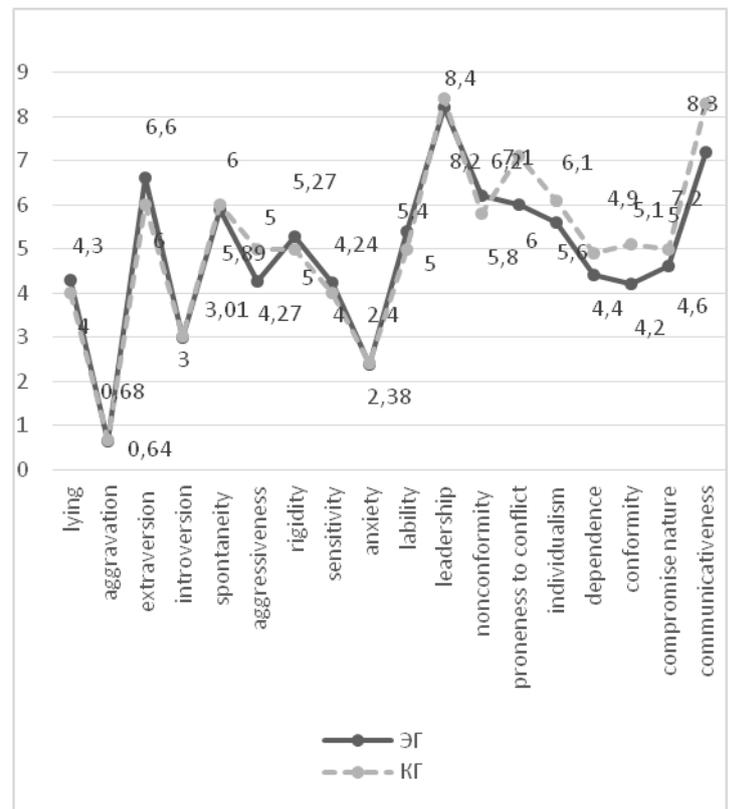


Figure 1 – Comparative analysis of the results of the experimental and control groups using the method of "Individual-typological inventory" (L. N. Sobchik.)

The indicators obtained by using R. B. Cattell's sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF-A) demonstrate low tension, marked dependence on the significant environment, low suspiciousness, willingness to take risk and greater activity combined with emotional stability and high self-control in both groups (EG and CG) (Figure 2).

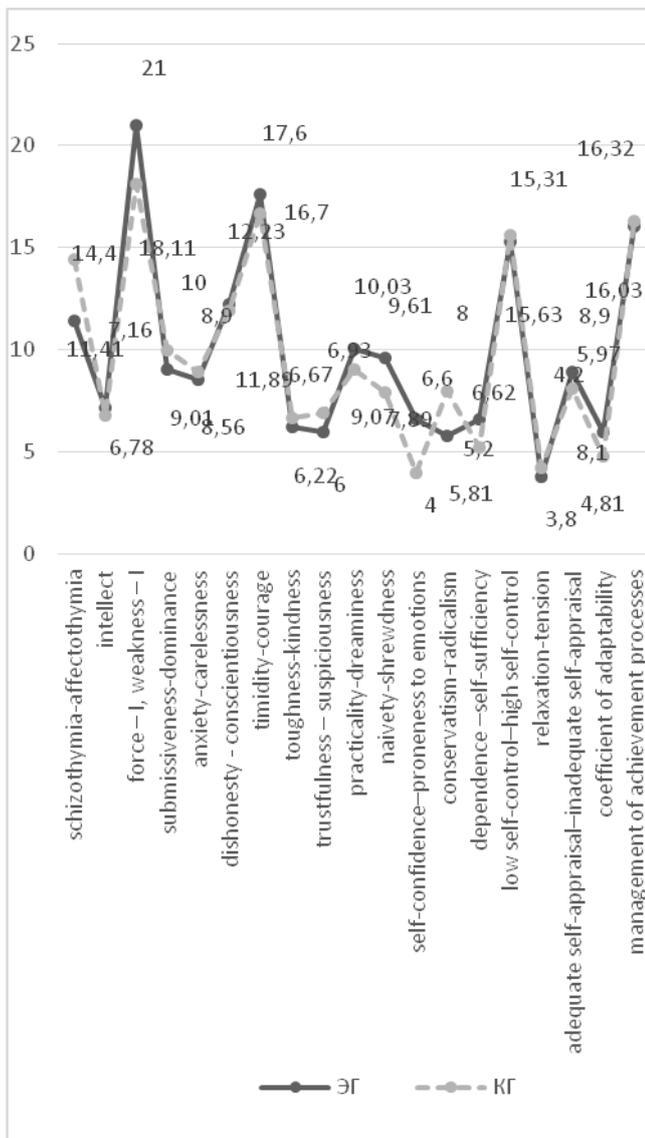


Figure 2 – Comparative analysis of experimental and control group results by R. B. Kettell's "Multifactor personal technique" (16 PF-A)

Applying the Cattell's sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF-A), statistically significant differences between the experimental and control samples were found out (u-Mann-Whitney test was used), which made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1) on the scale "schizothymia-affectothymia", the employees of the experimental groups revealed statistically significant differences, pointing to the reserve, detachment, selectivity in communication, and caution in establishing contacts (u=2276, p≤ 0,003);

2) on the scale "weakness-I – force-I" the results obtained indicate that the armed employees are characterized by greater emotional stability, self-control, emotional maturity, composure and consistency of interests (u= 2384, p≤0.005);

3) on the scale "conservatism-radicalism" the revealed significant differences make it possible to draw the conclusion that the prevailing features in the profile of the experimental group are conservatism, conventionalism,

strict selectivity in social contacts, focus on practice, doubts about new principles and ideas (u=2354, p≤0.004);

4) significant differences between the two samples on the scale "self-confidence-pronensity to feel guilty" (u=2413, p≤0.008) have been established. The findings indicate that such indicators as sensitivity to other people's evaluation, anxiety, belief in their intuition prevail in the personal profile of employees of the experimental group.

According to the method of "Freiburg personality questionnaire" (FPI-B) the employees who participated in the study (EG and CG) are characterized by the following features: emotional balance, perseverance, high stress threshold; low level of spontaneous aggression and cautiousness of behavior; even emotional background, tendencies to lower mood and pessimistic assessment of their capabilities; stability of emotional state, high level of balance; the ability to sustain pressure and high stress resistance (Figure 3).

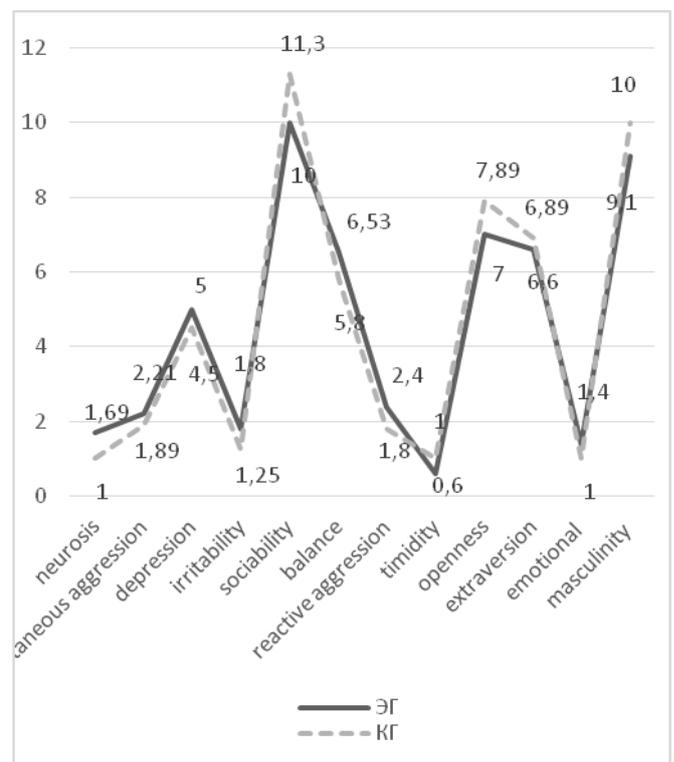


Figure 3 - Comparative analysis of the results of the experimental and control groups using the method "Freiburg personality inventory" (FPI-B)

The employees of the experimental group are characterized by lower indicators of openness and willingness to communicate, more pronounced indicators of irritability, spontaneous and reactive aggression, which reflects the ability to take aggressive measures in situations requiring situational and rapid response.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results obtained made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. In contrast to the control group, the employees of the experimental group are characterized by conservatism,

conventionalism, strong selectivity in social contacts, orientation to action, doubts about new principles and ideas;

2. The profile of an armed employee reveals more visible indicators of reserve, detachment, alienation, and incredulity as compared to the control group. The sphere of social contacts is characterized by lesser sociability, signs of rigidity, selectivity in communication;

3. The most significant differences have been found out on the "Force-I" factor indicating that an armed employee is typically characterized by greater emotional stability, self-control, emotional maturity, composure and consistency in interests;

4. Another professional characteristic of an armed employee is a high level of efficiency coupled with practicality and realism.

Consequently, the analysis of empirical and experimental studies made it possible to identify the features that distinguish the personal profile of an armed employee. The meaningful points of the profile obtained are concentrated around the prevailing psychological state; the peculiarities of psychodynamic processes, specific functioning of behavioral and communicative spheres, as well as the nature of social interactions.

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