

Psychodiagnostics of Criminal Motivation of Juvenile Delinquents

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Abstract—This article describes the results of assessing the validity and reliability of “Dominant Criminal Motive – DCM” method, as well as a psycho-diagnostic examination of juvenile delinquents and adolescents from a deprived background. Basic approaches (or methods) to investigate this problem are system approach and methods of mathematical statistics that allow developing and implementing the prevention and correction of criminal motivation. This article includes the results of a study on juveniles; basic concepts of criminal motivation were defined, along with the hierarchy of criminal motives. Materials of this article are of practical importance. Research materials can be used in the professional activities of crime investigators, specialists of social rehabilitation centers dealing with the problems of juvenile delinquents. These results can be applied in working with educators, psychologists and law enforcement officers for advisory and educational purposes. Reliability of research results, conclusions and recommendations is provided by research methodology and logic.

Keywords—*diagnostics, criminal motivation, motive, motivation, juveniles, criminality, prevention.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Changes taking place in different spheres of our social life are reflected in the behavior and crime rates of adolescents and youths. In this regard, finding of internal determinants that cause criminal behavior, analyzing the psychological structure of the motivational sphere of the personality of delinquents and timely comprehensive preventive work [1] becomes an urgent problem. Thus, in recent years, in connection with various social crises, great interest has arisen in the problem of deviant behavior; all of this requires a more detailed study of the causes, types, and dynamics of deviant behavior and various selection of effective measures for social control. Such measures as prevention, correction and rehabilitation, and many others can be applied [2]. It is worth saying that the relevance of this study is also due to the need to define dominant motives in the hierarchy of criminal motivation of juvenile delinquents. We should note that the basis of any state is its actual human potential which includes the number of people, their intellectual potential, industrial and spiritual culture, creating comfortable and safe social environment; therefore, it is closely associated with a significant reduction in crimes. In this regard, this article is aimed at defining the dominant motives of criminal motivation of juvenile delinquents as one of the foundations for the prevention of recidivism, using the psycho-diagnostic method by Yu. A. Malyushina. The problem of criminal

motives is considered both in psychological and pedagogical and in legal scientific literature.

Various behavioral strategies are considered in the works of A. Bandura, L. Berkowitz, D. Dollard, N. Miller and others. Determinants of deviant behavior of adolescents and youths are studied in the works of M. A. Alemaskin, S. A. Belicheva, K. E. Igoshev, Yu. A. Kleiberg, I. S. Kon, V. N. Kudryavtsev, E. V. Zmanovskaya [3], A. E. Lichko, A. V. Mudrik, etc.). The process of developing a motive of crime, its creation and realization in actual criminal acts was studied by V. G. Aseev, V. L. Vasiliev, Y. I. Gilinsky, A. I. Gorkova, I. N. Danshin, M. I. Enikeev, V. N. Kudryavtsev, G. G. Shikhantsov, R. B. Frankin, V. Kharazishvili; the problem of criminal motivation was investigated in the works of R. V. Ovcharova.

In foreign scientific literature, certain associations of delinquent behavior with pedagogical neglect were found (B. Garson, J. West, A. E. Kazdin, P. J. Frick; Friday Paul C., Xin Ren Elmar G. M., Potter C. C.), Hekkhauzen H. [4]

Criminal motives are motives that arise as a result of the emergence of a criminal need, and can be evident as a wish to commit various types of socially dangerous acts. It is also worth noting that a criminal need may represent a certain habit of systematically committing certain types of criminal acts, or arise as a result of a certain psychological mechanism [5].

O. S. Kirsanova believes that two processes that are involved in the formation of personal motivation should be taken into account: development of a unique structure of needs and acceptance by the individual of a value system that is typical for this structure. Consequently, if this need-based structure of personality corresponds to a certain system of values, then this personality will get successful social adaptation; and if doesn't correspond, then certain psychological discomfort may arise which will be evident in deviant behavior, and later in its extreme form, criminal behavior. [6]

We should mention that the motivation of criminal behavior and the personality of the delinquent are strongly interconnected. Personal traits of a criminal undoubtedly make an impact on the motivation of his behavior, and criminal motives being supported by criminal acts deform criminal identity.

Here is an example: theft, sexual violent acts, acts of vandalism, hooliganism. Criminally significant motives can be generated by socially maladaptive needs which can hardly be – or even absolutely cannot be – satisfied in a lawful way. The following criminally significant motives are

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distinguished: 1) motives generated by hypertrophied immoral drives; a subject cannot provide their satisfaction in a lawful way, or, perhaps, their satisfaction is associated with a certain risk – alcoholism, drug addiction, addiction to gambling, to fights, debauchery, etc.; 2) motives generated by hypertrophied needs (claims) with demands that are inflated and do not correspond to individual ones; the claims of a given person are higher than his actual standard of living; 3) motives that are caused by the need for a certain release of stable emotional states of a subject; 4) motives that are evident as an acute negative feeling towards certain social subjects and objects, for example, values protected by the law; 5) motives generated by various frustrated needs in a socially alienated way of life, possibly personal needs, for example, grouping reaction or conformity 6) motives caused by inadequate assessment of living conditions.

Consequently, the range of criminal motives of adolescents is less than that of adult criminals. They have a specific motivation for self-assertion in a group, prestigious consumer interests, hostility to strangers, etc. Criminological classification of motives should help to find individual and social reasons of criminal behavior and, in this regard, to carry out preventive measures. One of the basic components of criminal motivation of juveniles is the motive of interpersonal communication, such as motives of personal hostility, offense, revenge, jealousy; other motives are also possible which are associated with the conflict between a delinquent and a victim. This group includes motives that are “abstracted” from direct relationships, for example, motives of self-assertion, superiority over others, violence against them, egocentrism, as well as demonstrative hooligan motives caused by ostentatious disregard for society and other people.

V. G. Aseev believes that motivation is “the driving force for human behavior that has an impact on all structural parts of personality: its focus, character, emotions, abilities, activities and mental processes.” According to V. N. Kudryavtseva, classification of motives is designed to: a) divide criminal motives into different groups for the reasons that cause them; b) contribute to a deep understanding of the characteristics of delinquent’s personality; c) provide an opportunity to analyze the dynamics of criminal motivation in a mass, nationwide aspect. B. V. Kharazishvili divides all motives of crimes into 2 groups: a) motives associated with ideological aspects (moral and political, religious), b) motives of a substantive nature (personal, depending on moods, affective, etc.)

I. N. Danshin developed a classification of motives taking into account the purpose and nature of criminal acts: motives for murder, hooliganism, theft of property and other crimes. According to P. S. Dagal, the motives of crimes can be divided into three groups: 1) socially dangerous (base), these include: anti-state, personal base, resulting from involvement in a religious sect; 2) socially neutral, such as offense; shame, pity, compassion, etc.; 3) socially useful motives. Criminogenic motivation is a dynamic process that is strongly related to all elements of criminal behavior. It arises in the following way: the problem is actualized, then the need is concretized, that is, a criminal motive is formed, due to a deformed legal consciousness, then ways to pursue the goal are selected, as well as forecasting possible results. The foregoing indicates the importance of timely conducting comprehensive psycho-diagnostic, prevention and disciplinary work to prevent the criminal behavior of minors.

In the prevention of motivational deformations, a number of areas can be distinguished: timely finding adolescents with deviations in behavior; study of reasons and conditions of these deviations; definition of disciplinary opportunities for influencing adolescents of “risk group”; work planning based on diagnosis and forecasting (defining tasks, content, forms and methods of psychological and pedagogical influence); organization of measures to prevent deviant behavior of adolescents, monitoring results of these measures; interaction of educational institutions, family and the public in performing all this work.

Thus, the role of motivation in the genesis of juvenile delinquency and its separate parameters (focus, needs, orientations, etc.) are considered as problematic area, however, the motivational sphere of juvenile delinquents as an integral part of personality which consists of interconnected and interdependent components is not investigated to a full extent. Thus, we can conclude that the question of diagnosing the motivational sphere of the personality of juvenile delinquents, the features of realization of criminal motivation remain poorly studied; no methods for correcting criminal motivation are developed. Consequently, the problem is the lack of a well-developed concept of the motivational sphere of juvenile delinquents as an integral psychological phenomenon and of a developed system for the motivational prevention for delinquent behavior of juveniles.

The purpose of empirical study: finding dominant criminal motive and making the profile of the criminal motivation of juvenile delinquents; developing a hierarchy of criminal motives, of motivational sphere of the personality of juvenile delinquents who have committed crimes of different body. It is possible to identify dominant criminal motive in the structure of the motivational sphere of the personality of a juvenile delinquent depending on a body of the crime on the basis of a specially developed psycho-diagnostic method.

To achieve the goal of the study and to confirm or refute its hypothesis, research objectives were defined: 1. to develop and to test a questionnaire aimed at finding dominant criminal motive, 2. to define dominant motives in the structure of the motivational sphere of the personality of a juvenile delinquent depending on the body of a crime.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the principles of a system-activity approach (V. A. Gansen, B. F. Lomov, A. N. Leontyev, S. L. Rubinstein), determinism (A. G. Asmolov, S. L. Rubinstein); principles of legal psychology (A. M. Stolyarenko); deviant approaches (Ya. I. Gilinsky, Yu. A. Kleiberg, Yu. Yu. Komlev, T. A. Khagurov). (V. L. Vasiliev, M. I. Enikeev, M. M. Kochenov, M. I. Maryin, A. R. Ratinov, O. D. Sitkovskaya, A. M. Stolyarenko, L. B. Filonov, Yu. V. Chufarovskiy, G. G. Shikhantsov [7].) Certain principles of criminology and criminal law.

The purpose is to assess the reliability and validity of the psycho-diagnostic method.

Several scientific methods that complement each other were used for this work: studying theoretical sources on the legal and psychological problems of crimes by juvenile delinquents; psycho-diagnostic methods for finding correlations with developed DCM method and confirmation of reliability and validity of this method; psycho-diagnostic methods: “Value orientations” by M. Rokich; “Feelings

profile in relationships” by L. Kulikov; “Diagnostics of the motivational structure of personality” by V.E. Milman; subjective assessment of interpersonal relations by S.V. Dukhnovsky; “Questionnaire of interpersonal relations” by Schutz; “Indicator of coping strategies” by D. Amir Khan; “Life Style Index” by Plutchik-Kellerman-Conte; projective TAT (Thematic Apperceptive Test) technique; Motivational Induction method (MIM) by J. Nutten [8]; “Dominant Criminal Motive” method.

Using methods of mathematical statistics (Mann-Whitney U-test, Student T-test, Pearson correlation coefficient (Pearson’s r) and others.

To achieve this purpose and to confirm the hypothesis, a study of juveniles was conducted. Educational institutions (schools, colleges) where a psycho-diagnostic study of adolescents of risk group for their involvement in criminal organizations was conducted became the base of this study. The total number of students who underwent psycho-diagnostic examination in educational institutions where adolescents of risk group in terms of involvement in criminal organization were found was 3,400. Sampling by age: 14-17 years.

III. RESULTS

Classifications of motives by G.G. Shikhantsov and M.I. Enikeev are the theoretical and methodological basis of this study. This methodology contains statements that characterize criminal and criminogenic motivation for the criminal behavior of juveniles, in accordance with the theoretical justification of their content.

Stimulus material included 53 statements; 6 scales were correspondingly defined:

Scale 1 – immoral motive; scale 2 – aggressive motive; scale 3 – emotional motive; scale 4 – frustration motive; scale 5 – self-assertion motives; scale 6 – playing motives.

Then the total amount of raw points is calculated on each scale in accordance with the key. Interpretation of obtained results: maximal amount of points obtained as a result of investigation were converted in stanines. Stanines 0-1 – no motive; stanines 2-3 – a low severity motive; stanines 4-6 – an average severity motive (tendency); stanines 7-9 – a high severity motive (stable criminal motive).

The result is making criminal motivation profile for juvenile delinquents and interpretation of these data. Thus, juveniles with a stable criminal motive, with a tendency to commit a crime were found.

Total number of students with a stable criminal motive was 472 people (13.8%).

Among them, dominant criminal motives are the following: a motive generated by immoral hypertrophied needs, motive of self-assertion, aggressive motive.

508 individuals (14.9%) with a tendency to criminal activity were found. This method was tested for theoretical and content validity, criterial validity, retest reliability.

Theoretical validity of “Dominant Criminal Motive” proprietary methodology was determined by the correspondence of the parameters of studied qualities to the parameters obtained by tested methods. We also examined juveniles who were suspected of committing various crimes. The sample included 540 people, among them 210 girls (38.9%) and 330 boys (61.1%). We divided them into 3 groups taking into account the subjective incentives of criminal behavior and its motives according to the classification of Yu.M. Antonyan [9] “Suspected of committing violent, mercenary-violent, mercenary crimes”. Group 1 – juveniles suspected of committing violent crimes (Articles 105, 111, 116, 117, 119, 131, 132 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation): 180 individuals. Group 2 – juveniles suspected of committing mercenary-violent crimes (Articles 161, 162, 163, item “c”, Part 2, Article 166 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation): 180 individuals with intended unlawful impact on the body of another person against his will as the second typical motive of crime. Group 3 – juveniles suspected of committing mercenary crimes (Articles 158, 159, 164, 165, 166 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation): 180 individuals. Mercenary motive is the desire to receive any benefits, a thirst for enrichment. The sample is representative.

IV. DISCUSSION

To prove the reliability of this method, repeated testing of the same subjects was carried out using a questionnaire. There were 4 weeks between the first and the second testing; 4 months between the first and the third testing; in 6 months.

Content validity assessed by the method of group expert evaluations. This group included 8 experts: 5 Candidates of Sciences and 3 acting law enforcement officers. All experts were acquainted with the theoretical basis of the method. The experts were asked to evaluate the content of each statement for compliance with its specific methodology scale using a three-point scale (3 points – the statement fully corresponds to the scale, 2 points – the statement partially corresponds to the scale, 1 point – the statement does not correspond to the scale). Statistical verification of the concordance of the consistency of experts was carried out by the method of expert estimates. Consistency of expert opinion was assessed using Kendall coefficient. The value of Kendall concordance coefficient was found according to the following formula:

$$W = \frac{12S}{n^2(m^3 - m)}$$

, where m is the number of examination objects, S is the sum of squared deviations of all rank estimates of each examination object from the average value; n is the number of experts. Therefore, concordance coefficient is 0.127, in the range $0 < W < 1$, what allows concluding that, based on the results of expert evaluation, all the statements in this method passed the test for content validity. Thus, we can talk about validity and reliability of the developed “Dominant Criminal Motive” questionnaire. Correlations of this proprietary methodology with the parameters of other psycho-diagnostic techniques were revealed.

Results of the study of delinquents are shown in the table 1.

TABLE I. RESULTS OF THE STUDY USING “DOMINATING CRIMINAL MOTIVE” METHOD

Type of criminal motive	Average values		
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Immoral motive	7.52±1.04 m=0.07	7.4±0.4 m=0.03	7.5±0.9 m=0.07
Aggressive motive	12.53±1.02 ^b m=0.08	12.6±0.9 m=0.06	5.12±1.2 ^b m=0.09
Emotional motive	3.67±0.65 ^b m=0.04	5.79±0.58 ^a m=0.04	5.31±0.5 ^b m=0.03
Frustration motive	1.92±0.72 ^b m=0.04	4.36±0.8 ^b m=0.06	3.34±0.47 m=0.03
Self-assertion motive	3.44±0.5 ^b m=0.03	4.9±0.6 m=0.04	7.21±0.5 ^b m=0.04
Playing motive	1.37±0.4 ^b m=0.03	4.6±0.04 ^b m=0.04	4.92±0.6 ^b m=0.06

^a. Significance level at $p \leq 0.05$

^b. Significance level at $p \leq 0.01$

Group 1 – juveniles suspected of committing violent crimes. Prevailing motive of criminal motivation is aggressive motive and immoral motive. As a result of emerging aggression and a low level of legal awareness, the following needs prevail: asocial physical aggression, destruction, negativity towards others, asocial autonomy, some signs of dominance, need for recognition and self-assertion by means of other people, need to satisfy sexual needs. They are dominated by “hedonic feelings”, i.e. they strive to satisfy arising pleasure needs. An “aggressiveness” parameter is prevailing in these delinquents.

Group 2 – juveniles suspected of committing mercenary-violent crimes. Prevailing criminal motives are aggressive, immoral, emotional and self-assertion motives. In order to assert themselves and relieve emotional stress, adolescents or young people commit unlawful acts against others – causing harm to health, theft of property, sometimes just to get rid of negative emotions.

Group 3 – juveniles suspected of committing mercenary crimes. Prevailing criminal motives are immoral and self-assertion motive. Representatives of this group have dominant asthenic emotions, so, they often feel fear, anxiety, dissatisfaction with themselves, a certain tension, a sense of bewilderment. Conflict behavior was evident as a result of tense situations that cause an increase in negative trends in the development of personality. This can be evident in the uncertainty of the level of claims, increased shyness and simultaneous aggressiveness, propensity towards conflict, tendency to take extreme positions and points of view that can provoke a certain kind of criminal actions. Differences in a significance level of $p \leq 0.05$ were found: for aggressive motive between groups 2 and 3, for frustration motive between groups 1 and 2, for self-assertion motive between groups 1 and 3, for emotional motive between groups 1 and 3, for aggressive motive between groups 1 and 2.

Analysis of these results revealed that a focus on themselves and vigorous activity directed at other people are dominant for juveniles suspected of violent crimes; they are distinguished by the presence of immoral personality attitudes. In those suspected of committing mercenary-violent crimes, self-orientation and self-realization of themselves as criminal persons are dominant which is performed through the prism of asocial attitudes and ideas.

Juveniles suspected of committing mercenary crimes are dominated by motivation associated with the desire to possess

certain material values, self-orientation; contacts with other people are necessary to meet their needs.

Here is an example of a profile of the criminal motivations of a juvenile (Figure 1).

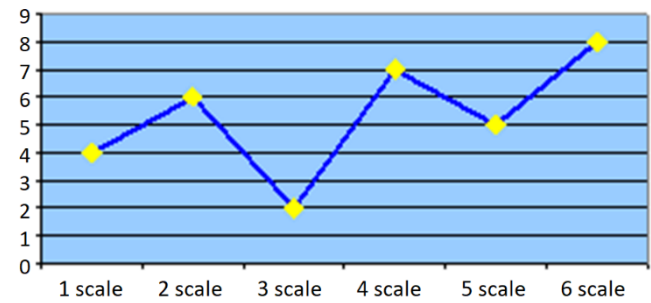


Fig. 1. Profile of the criminal motivation of a juvenile delinquent.

Thus, we can conclude that this juvenile has a high severity self-assertion motive (stable criminal motive) – 8 stanine, a high severity frustration motive – 7 stanine, tendency towards aggressive motive – 6 stanine, tendency towards playing motive – 5 stanine, tendency towards immoral motive – 4 stanine, no evidence for emotional motive – 2 stanine.

Consequently, this teenager can commit a crime with the aim of asserting himself before his peers, under the influence of a certain frustration. This teenager can commit crimes as a result of aggression. The juvenile has no established legal consciousness, so he also has an immoral motive.

V. PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Research materials can be used in the professional activities of crime investigators, juvenile inspectors, in social and rehabilitation centers when working with juvenile delinquents. They can also be applied by educators, psychologists for various advisory and educational purposes. “Dominant Criminal Motive” method can be used both in individual work with juvenile delinquents and for monitoring the state of criminality or defining adolescents with tendency towards committing a crime.

VI. SUGGESTIONS AND RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTATION

This study does not cover all aspects of the development of motivational sphere of the personality of juvenile delinquents. Its further research can be continued in a sex and age aspect. This will allow tracking dynamics of the development of criminal motivation and its differences among representatives of different sex and age. Detailed studies can be performed to reveal psychological mechanisms of motivation development. This method can be implemented in the practical activities of police officers, teachers, psychologists of educational institutions in order to prevent repetition of crimes by juveniles. It is also possible to develop a projective method that will help to define the type of juveniles and their criminal motives. Results of this study were used in the courses “Psychology of deviant behavior”, “Psychological and pedagogical technologies of working with children and adolescents”, “Legal psychology”, “Prison psychology”, “Juvenile legal psychology”.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This study allows us to draw the following conclusions. The proposed “Dominant Criminal Motive (DCM)” psycho-diagnostic method was developed taking into account actual

scientific ideas and is based on the principles of a system-structural approach, unity of personality, consciousness and activity, unity of theory, experiment and practice.

Delinquents may be characterized by inappropriate behavioral reactions. Constant psycho-traumatic situations, stresses, conflicts, blocking of actual needs, etc. lead to the dominance of negative emotional experience and emotional imbalance.

Consequently, in cases of criminal motivation, the interaction of a destructive personality, a destructive legal consciousness, destabilizing emotional states and destructive actions of juvenile delinquents arises.

Thus, it was defined that common thing in the structure of juvenile delinquent's criminal motivation is its psychological content (needs for comfort, social status, affect; disvalues; intolerance, intransigence, aggressiveness, offense, no sense of guilt, low self-control) and presence of criminal motives (frustration, self-assertion, playing, emotional, immoral). There is also a specific psychological content depending on the body of crime (physical aggression, suspicion, insensitivity, compensatory behavior – in rapists; the need for material wealth and comfort, confidence, discipline, rigidity, verbal aggression – in mercenaries; and the need for material wealth, offense, irritability, anxiety, tension, physical and verbal aggression – in mercenary-violent ones). They are characterized by a certain hierarchy of criminal motives (aggressive and immoral motive in the first group; aggressive, self-assertion, immoral and emotional motives in the second group; and immoral and self-assertion motives in the third group).

This new approach made it possible to diagnose the motivation of criminal behavior of juvenile delinquents and to construct a profile of the criminal motivation of juvenile delinquents. That will allow taking into account a

differentiated and individual approach to the personality of a juvenile delinquent and provides high-quality and effective diagnosis of criminal motivation; after studying it, it is possible to develop a corresponding preventive program.

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