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**THE INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL REINTEGRATION  
ACTIVITIES WITH REGARD TO DETAINEES'  
BEHAVIORAL CHANGES**

**511.03 – SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**SUMMARY**

**PhD THESIS**

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The PhD thesis and the summary can be accessed at the Free International University of Moldova Library, on the ULIM webpage (<https://ulim.md/doctorat/sustinerea-tezelor-de-doctorat/>), and on the Agenția Națională de Asigurare a Calității în Educație și Cercetare (ANACEC) website (<https://www.anacec.md/ro>).

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## CONCEPTUAL REFERENCES OF THE THESIS

**The topicality and importance of the topic.** The penitentiary environment, unknown very clearly to public opinion, represents an institution organized to protect the community against all that is perceived as premeditated social danger, as defined by J. Dilulio<sup>1</sup>. Generally speaking, a penitentiary is also understood to mean a specially designed place of detention, involving special circumstances, special security and special rooms<sup>2</sup>. The social reintegration of prisoners refers to the process of preparation for release and return to the community, as well as practical support and help for the prisoner to lead a lawful life away from crime.

According to the social reintegration strategy, psychosocial reintegration programs<sup>3</sup> refer to the sequence of psychosocial approaches aimed at the social reintegration of prisoners. Reintegration programs are an important channel for influencing prisoners' behavior. These programs for the social reintegration of prisoners are most effective when they focus on the assessment/knowledge of prisoners<sup>4</sup>. The importance of participation in in-depth psychosocial reintegration programs leads to behavioral change during the execution of the sentence, if we consider the impact of these programs on human existence, more specifically, in the lives of prisoners.

Empirical research<sup>5</sup> conducted in the Romanian prison environment, as well as the analysis of the literature, highlight some gaps in studies on this topic, namely the influence of psychosocial reintegration activities on behavioral changes in prisoners. The argument behind these gaps is that studies conducted in this strict, controlled, and monitored environment require numerous approvals due to the need for multiple checks and permissions in order to conduct research. Another argument is that most of the research in this area is carried out by psychologists within the system, and is available in relatively small numbers to outsiders, which is also due to the level of confidentiality involved.

The thesis draws attention to the need to develop and implement a methodology for profiling the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that provides clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial programs so that, following their completion by detainees, behavioral changes can be observed.

The application of the methodology to create a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner<sup>6</sup> by clearly recommending psychosocial reintegration programs is designed as

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<sup>1</sup> DILULIO, J. Jr. *Governing Prisons – A Comparative Study of Correctional Management*. New York: Free Press, 1990. p 141. ISBN 0-02-907881-4

<sup>2</sup> MITROFAN, N., ZDRENGHEA, V., BUTOI, T. *Psihologie judiciară*. București: „Șansa” Srl Publishing House, 1994. 309 p. ISBN 973-725-152-0

<sup>3</sup> *Strategia națională de reintegrare socială a persoanelor private de libertate 2020 – 2024 - Anexa 14*. In: *Monitorul Oficial*, 2020, no. 494 from June 11. [quoted 18.11.2019]. Available: <http://www.monitoruljuridic.ro/act/strategie-na-ional-din-27-mai-2020-de-reintegrare-social-a-persoanelor-private-de-libertate-2020-2024-emitent-guvernul-226691.html>

<sup>4</sup> TRAVIS, J. But They All Come Back: Rethinking Prisoner Re-entry” (Versiune PDF) , *Sentence and Corrections*, no. 7, Washington (DC): US Department of Justice, 2000

<sup>5</sup> *Sondaj de opinie la nivelul persoanelor private de libertate din unitățile penitenciare - Raport de cercetare*. [quoted 10.04.2020]. Available: <https://ro.scribd.com/document/6163763/Cercetare-detinuti>.

<sup>6</sup> *Sondaj de opinie la nivelul persoanelor private de libertate din unitățile penitenciare - Raport de cercetare*. [quoted 10.04.2020]. Available: <https://ro.scribd.com/document/6163763/Cercetare-detinuti>.

a behavioral assessment tool. It is important to note that the discovery of dominant personality traits is a pillar of any program aimed at the social integration of prisoners, because individuals by their uniqueness react differently to certain tasks. Personality traits evolve throughout an individual's life, being constantly in contact with the social environment, providing opportunities for personality formation, and adaptive problems generated by imbibing frustrations, anxieties and aggression, and provide a harmful outline of the individual<sup>7</sup>. Accepted in recent years by most personologists is the personality assessment model where, at the top, there are five factors of the Big Five model, and at the bottom, there are various facets - traits measurable by assessment instruments<sup>8</sup>. The paper focuses on the implementation of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner based on the knowledge model.

**Degree of study of the research topic.** The issue of the prisoner's personality has been and continues to be widely studied by specialists in various fields such as legal sciences, sociology, psychology, medicine, and psychology. The first studies on the issue discussed in this paper were carried out at the end of the 19th century, beginning of the 20th century, and one of the first works on the subject is „The criminal man” by Cesare Lombroso<sup>9</sup>.

In the literature published internationally, especially in Western Europe and the USA, fundamental theoretical approaches and conclusive empirical research on the theme are found in the works of authors such as D. Clemer, S. Freud, D. Hopkins, O. Suchy, J. Pinatel, A. Adler, C. Jung, K. Leonard, S. L. Brown, P. Gendreau, C. Goggin, S. B. Bovin, G. Canepa, J Pinatel, E. Johanson, I. Selosse and co-workers, P. Coslin, M.J. Chandler and others, whose research has focused both on investigating prisoner behavior and the prison environment and on developing intervention programs.

Studies by renowned psychologists and sociologists G. Le Bon, S. Sighele, G. Tarde, E. Durkheim, R. K. Merton, M. Weber, L. Levy-Bruhl, etc. M. Reinhard, S. Moscovici convincingly prove the role of the social factor in determining criminal behavior. The relationship between the individual and society and the contribution of the latter to the formation of a criminal personality through learning is investigated by the psycho-sociologists E. Sutherland, T. Hirschi, M. B. Clinard, A. Bandura, W. Reckles, G. Patterson, G. Trasler, etc.

There is less research in Eastern Europe. Theoretical analyses and empirical research by Russian researchers have made a significant contribution to the study of various aspects of the personality of offenders: Iu. Antonean, P. Dageli, V. Vasiliev, Gh. Borzenkov, M. Enikeev, A. Dolgova, V. Kudreavțev, K. Yogosev, N. Kuznetsova. In the Republic of Moldova, we note studies with an important contribution in terms of theoretical-conceptual foundation and description of the manifestation of the personality of the offender such as those of researchers Gh. Gladchi, I. Ciobanu, V.. Bujor, M. Bîrgău, E.. Florea, O. Bejan, O. Rotaru, S. Rusnac, V. Troenco, M. Plămădeală, A. Nacu, etc. The personality of criminals has also been studied by Romanian scholars

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<sup>7</sup> MITROFAN, N., ZDRENGHEA, V., BUTOI, T. *Psihologie judiciară*. București: „Șansa” Srl Publishing House, 1994. 359 p. ISBN 973-725-152-0.

<sup>8</sup> COSTA, P T., MCCRAE, R.R, *Stability and change in personality assessment: the revised NEO Personality Inventory in the year 2000*, [quoted 8.01.2019]. Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/14190087\\_Stability\\_and\\_Change\\_in\\_Personality\\_Assessment\\_The\\_Revised\\_NEO\\_Personality\\_Inventory\\_in\\_the\\_Year\\_2000](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/14190087_Stability_and_Change_in_Personality_Assessment_The_Revised_NEO_Personality_Inventory_in_the_Year_2000).

<sup>9</sup> LOMBROSO, C. *Omul delicvent*. București: Măiastra Publishing House, 1992. 158 p. ISBN 9739501524

such as T. Amza, T. Pop, T. Butoi, N. Giurgiu, I. Buş, Gh. Mateuţ, R. Stănoiu, I. Oancea, Gh. Nistoreanu, V. Ursa, O. Pop, C. Păun, N. Mărgineanu, T. Medeanu, T. Bogdan, H. Oprean, S. Rădulescu, D. Banciu et al. T. Bogdan and collaborators.

In light of the above, the topic investigated by us is in line with the current concerns of researchers in Romania and abroad, having an interdisciplinary approach (both in relation to other psychological sciences: social-clinical psychology, legal psychology, personality psychology and other related disciplines - legal sociology, criminology, etc.) and applicative (the development of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner).

With reference to the factors investigated in the paper (aggressiveness, agreeableness, assertiveness, openness/rigidity, neuroticism) there are numerous studies that highlight their presence in the personality structure of prisoners. With regard to aggressiveness and its manifestation forms, we can mention the authors: Sutherland<sup>10</sup>, A. Bandura<sup>11</sup> and others; with reference to the dimensions of agreeableness and assertiveness, we mention the authors: L.R. Goldberg<sup>12</sup>; Costa and McCrae<sup>13</sup> and others. Neuroticism among prisoners has been studied by: McCullough, Bellah, Killpatrick and others; openness/rigidity by J.M. Digmann<sup>14</sup>, McCrae and Costa<sup>15</sup> and others.

Despite the large number of studies focused on the personality of offenders, both internationally and in Romania, there is a lack of complex theoretical and empirical studies both in the Republic of Moldova and in Romania, that would elucidate exhaustively *the personality of prisoners, the behavioral changes that occur in detainees following psychosocial reintegration programs, demonstrating their effectiveness, nor studies that would investigate the adaptation to the prison environment and the orientation of detainees towards one or another psychosocial assistance and reintegration program based on the psycho-behavioral profile of the detainee*. Thus, these findings outline the **problem of the present research**, which consists of formulating the answer to the following questions: *Are the psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs/activities carried out in prison effective in relation to the behavioral dimensions and, implicitly, to the personality of the prisoners? If the prisoner will be oriented to targeted psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs based on his psycho-behavioral profile, will positive changes in his behavior be observed during the execution of his sentence?*

**The aim of the present research** is to develop and experimentally validate a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of prisoners that will provide

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<sup>10</sup> SUTHERLAND, E. H. *Principles of Criminology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924, 611 p.

<sup>11</sup> BANDURA, A., WALTERS, R.H. *Adolescent Aggression*. New York: Ronald Press, 1959. 475 p.

<sup>12</sup> GOLDBERG, L. R. *An Alternative "Description of Personality": The Big-Five Factor Structure*. In: *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1990, Vol. 59, No. 6, p.1216-1229.

<sup>13</sup> COSTA, P T., MCCRAE, R.R. *Inventarul de personalitate NEO revizuit (NEO PI-R) și inventarul cu cinci factori NEP (NEO-FFI): manual profesional*. Odessa: Psychological Assessment Resources, (PO Box 998, Odessa 33556) , 1992. 256 p.

<sup>14</sup> DIGMAN, J. M. *The curious history of the five-factor model*. In: *The five-factor model of personality: Theoretical perspectives*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 73(6), Dec 1997, 1246-1256 <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.6.1246>

<sup>15</sup> COSTA, P T., MCCRAE, R.R. *Stability and change in personality assessment: the revised NEO Personality Inventory in the year 2000*. [quoted 8.01.2019]. Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/14190087\\_Stability\\_and\\_Change\\_in\\_Personality\\_Assessment\\_The\\_Revised\\_NEO\\_Personality\\_Inventory\\_in\\_the\\_Year\\_2000](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/14190087_Stability_and_Change_in_Personality_Assessment_The_Revised_NEO_Personality_Inventory_in_the_Year_2000)

clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs so that, following their completion, positive behavioral changes can be observed during the execution of the sentence, which will subsequently constitute the premises for adaptation to the new social environment.

**The research objectives** set to achieve the goal were: (1) to analyze the theoretical-conceptual approaches existing in the scientific circuit in the field of research on the personality of the offender and the prisoner; (2) to identify, based on the literature, the effects of deprivation of liberty at the psychological level and behavioral changes; (3) to analyze the psychosocial programs carried out in the penitentiary and their role in changing the behavior of persons deprived of liberty during the execution of their sentence; (4) to carry out the experimental approach in order to ascertain the effectiveness of psychosocial reintegration programs in relation to the behavioral dimensions of persons deprived of liberty; (5) development and experimental validation of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that provides clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial programs, with a view to achieving behavioral changes in prisoners, after their completion.

The aim and objectives of the research led to the formulation of the following **research hypotheses** according to which *we assume that*:

1. Changes in the behavior of prisoners are not sufficiently evident following the completion of the psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs and activities carried out in the prison, and their resistance over time is short-lived in relation to the period of the sentence.

2. The application of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner will provide clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial assistance programs and activities, the completion of which will contribute to the achievement of behavioral changes in prisoners.

#### **Summary of research methodology and justification of research methods.**

The following **concepts and theories** constitute the basis of this research approach: the personality of the offender (C. Lombroso, G. Alport, G.H. Patterson, A. Bandura, S.L. Wrightsman, T. Amza, R. Stănoiu, G. Mateuț, J., B. Helfgott, T. Butoi, I. Buș); approaches to psychological consequences and behavioral changes as effects of deprivation of liberty (E. Goffman, D. Clemmer, N. Mitrofan, S. Watzke, S. Ullrich, A. Marneros, F. Sirotych, Ph. Zimbardo, C. Visser, D. Connell, D. Banciu, C. Dâmboeanu, M. Pușcaș); studies of the role of psychosocial programs in prisons on behavioral change in prisoners (A. Fox, C. Mosher, D. Phillips, M. Borzycki, T. Makkai, J. McGuire, E. Popa).

**The methodological support of the research** derives from the aim and objectives of the research and is materialized in theoretical methods such as analysis and synthesis of literature; hypothetical-inductive method for interpretation and explanation of the research results.

For the collection of factual material on personality dimensions, we applied the following empirical methods: The Big Five Inventory and the Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire to measure personality dimensions such as agreeableness, neuroticism, openness, assertiveness, conscientiousness, and aggressiveness. In order to obtain a wide range of data about the detainees we used the Demographic Data Inventory, which allowed us to collect data on personal criminal history and indicators

of deprivation of liberty; the PMSWEB computer application, with which we were able to obtain data on disciplinary offenses, rewards received, the behavior of the detainee, participation in programs and activities run by specialists, visits received, etc.; analysis of documents such as the personal file to study the indictment, aspects that the person deprived of liberty might omit during the interview. This method was also used to check and complete the obtained data through the other tools. Among the qualitative methods applied in the study, we mention the observation method, which allowed us to observe the natural behavioral manifestations of the prisoners and the way each subject interacts and manifests himself/herself in the prison. The unstructured psychological interview was applied with the aim of discovering the problems of the liberty-deprived people in order to help them, but also to obtain the necessary information to establish a psycho-diagnosis, and the Questionnaire for satisfaction evaluation with the effectiveness of psychosocial programs was applied with the aim of highlighting the importance and, at the same time, the effectiveness of psychosocial programs.

The statistical-mathematical methods were applied in order to obtain the relevant results in the experimental approach and were materialized in: T-Student parametric test for independent samples, T-Student parametric test for paired samples, Levene's test to assess the equality of variances for a variable calculated for two or more groups, ANOVA test that analyzes the differences between means when they are more than two and are calculated on groups of different subjects, Pearson correlation coefficient to assess the association between two quantitative variables and Kolmogorov-Smirnoff normality analysis test used to perform the normality estimation of the distribution.

**Thesis chapter summary, with focus on the investigations carried out and their necessity to achieve the aim and objectives of the research.** The thesis has 149 pages and consists of the following parts: an introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography (284 titles), 31 tables, 18 figures, and 10 appendices.

The **Introduction** presents the topicality and importance of the topic, the extent of the research topic with the presentation of previous research results on the chosen topic. It also focuses on the research problem, research aims and objectives, research hypotheses, summary of the research methodology and justification of the chosen research methods, and a summary of the thesis.

In **Chapter 1. Theoretical and methodological approaches to personality and behavioral changes of prisoners and social reintegration activities**, the concept of the personality of the offender, implicitly of the prisoner, is defined according to the views of local and foreign authors; the most important theoretical approaches to the criminal personality are analyzed in detail; the typology of the prisoner's personality is presented. The chapter also contains and presents psychological consequences and behavioral changes as effects of deprivation of liberty. In this context, it is analyzed the role of prison psychosocial programs in changing the behavior of prisoners.

In **Chapter 2. The experimental approach of the research on the influence of psychosocial reintegration activities on the behavioral changes of prisoners** is presented the experimental framework, the purpose, objectives, hypotheses that guided the experimental research, the sample design and data collection methods. The chapter contains the analysis of the experimental data with reference to the behavioral dimensions:



openness, agreeableness, neuroticism, aggressiveness and assertiveness of the inmates participating in the research in order to determine the influence of the psychosocial programs carried out in the prison. Also assessed here is the inmates' perception of the effectiveness of the psychological, social and educational assistance programs carried out in the penitentiary. The results of the observational study revealed that the psychosocial programs carried out in the prison environment produce some changes in the behavioral dimensions of the inmates, but these are not sufficiently evident as participation in such programs is determined by the rewards obtained and not by their real psychosocial needs. In this context, the results of the observational experiment led to the development of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that would provide clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs so that, after their completion, positive behavioral changes could be observed among participating prisoners during the execution of the sentence.

In **Chapter 3. Methodology of the Prisoner's Psycho-Behavioral Profiling** includes a description of the methodology of the development of the psycho-behavioral profiling program, the formative experiment, the purpose and hypotheses pursued, the objectives of the methodology of the prisoner's psycho-behavioral profiling, which provides clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial programs to achieve behavioral changes in prisoners, following their completion, the resources involved, the target group, and the way of working. This chapter presents and analyses the results that confirm the hypotheses at this stage of the research. The effectiveness of the methodology of creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner is shown by statistical comparisons of the data in several ways: intra-group and inter-group with the control group, as well as by comparing the retest data at the post-intervention stage of the results of prisoners who participated in the psychosocial programs, following the methodology of creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, with the results of prisoners who did not undergo the program.

The overall **conclusions and recommendations** summarize the scientific results obtained, correlating the dimensions presented in the theme, hypotheses, aim and objectives of the research. At the same time, personal contributions are presented, specified in the novelty and originality of the thesis, the theoretical significance and applicative value of the research, the limitations of the results obtained, as well as recommendations for ensuring the continuity of the programs.

## **PHD THESIS CONTENTS**

Chapter 1 (**Theoretical-methodological approaches to personality and behavioral changes of detained persons and social reintegration activities**) justifies the choice of the research topic. An extensive literature convincingly reveals research efforts in this field toward the deepest and most comprehensive understanding of antisocial behavior in prisoners. Personality refers to important and relatively stable aspects of behavior. The personality of the offender is a rather complex criminological concept that encompasses two notions: the psycho-social notion and the legal-criminal notion

of the prisoner. In literature, views on the personality of the prisoner vary widely<sup>16,17,18</sup>. Criminologists define the person involved in the judicial act as that set of bio-psycho-social personal traits<sup>19</sup>, stable and characteristic of the person who commits a crime provided for by criminal law<sup>20</sup> or who participates as a perpetrator, accomplice or instigator"<sup>21</sup>. There are many theories concerning the formation of the criminal personality: non-psychological theories, such as the theory of biological, innate factors described by C. Lombroso<sup>22</sup>, the theory of heredity developed by C. Goring, the constitutional theory of E. Kretschmer, the sociological theories of E. Durkheim, R. Merton, the economic theories determined by the studies of R. Gafalo, D. Gordon<sup>23</sup> or the psychological theories, which hold supremacy in criminology (psychoanalytic theories starting with S. Freud<sup>24</sup>, A. Adler on the inferiority complex<sup>25</sup>; psychosocial theories with the theories of psychosocial control proposed by T. Hirschi, of restraint or self-control of W. Reckless, of psychosocial learning of E. Sutherland<sup>26</sup> and social learning developed by Patterson, A. Bandura<sup>27</sup> or the labeling theory of H. Becker).

We can say that all these theories on the formation of the criminal personality reveal a complex course of research and the influence of various cultural or social trends. The timeliness of this theoretical excursion is represented by the observation that a complex analysis from the perspective of multiple theories on criminal personality can lead to favorable results in the process of psychosocial reintegration of prisoners. We can conclude, in the light of the above, that *the personality of the offender is made up of a series of personal components (biological, psychological and social), integrated into a system unsuited to the social one, values, deviant norms of society that determine antisocial behavior.*

As the prison environment affects the whole personality of the prisoner, we will refer to the psychological consequences of deprivation of liberty and the behavioral changes that result from it. On entering prison, people are strangers to each other, their only identity is that of a prisoner. It is known that every prisoner experiences the prison environment in a dramatic way, due to the limited space for movement, the restricted contact with the outside world and the organization of every prisoner's time. They are forced to live in physical and moral promiscuity with people of different ages, ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, with people convicted of different crimes, offenses, and prison backgrounds, with no opportunity other than to get to know them through their

<sup>16</sup> STĂNOIU, R. M. *Criminologie*. vol. I. București: Oscar Print, 1995, p.121. ISBN 978-606-673-680-0

<sup>17</sup> MATEUȚ, G. *Tratat de procedură penală*. Vol I. București: C. H. Beck, 2006. 816 p. ISBN 978-973-115-155-7

<sup>18</sup> AMZA, T. *Criminologie teoretică. Teorii reprezentative și politică criminologică*. București: Lumina-Lex Publishing House, 2000. p. 88. ISBN 973-758-136-5

<sup>19</sup> MATEUȚ, G. *Tratat de procedură penală*. Vol I. București: C. H. Beck, 2006. 816 p. ISBN 978-973-115-155-7.

<sup>20</sup> STĂNOIU, R. M. *Criminologie*. vol. I. București: Oscar Print, 1995. p.121. ISBN 978-606-673-680-0.

<sup>21</sup> AMZA, T. *Criminologie teoretică. Teorii reprezentative și politică criminologică*. București: Lumina-Lex Publishing House, 2000. p. 88. ISBN 973-758-136-5.

<sup>22</sup> LOMBROSO, C. *Omul delicvent*. București: Măiastra Publishing House, 1992. 158 p. ISBN 9739501524

<sup>23</sup> Apud MITROFAN, N., ZDRENGHEA, V., BUTOI, T. *Psihologie judiciară*. București: „Șansa” Srl Publishing House, 1994.p 28. ISBN 973-725-152-0

<sup>24</sup> FREUD, S. *Introducere în Psihanaliză*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1990.p 29. ISBN 973-30-1103-7

<sup>25</sup> ADLER, A. *Cunoașterea omului*. București: Litera Publishing House, 2019. 304 p. ISBN 978-606-33-3775-8

<sup>26</sup> SUTHERLAND, E. H. *Principles of Criminology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924, 611 p

<sup>27</sup> BANDURA, A. *Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency*. In: American Psychologist, 1982, no. 37(2), p 23

crimes and convictions. *The shock of incarceration*, together with the *prison subculture*, has a great influence on the life and behavior of the prisoner, who forms a new vision of himself and develops a survival strategy, eventually sharing the other inmates' conceptions of life in prison and of the outside world. Regardless of the personality type, the prisoner is not a passive being; he/she is in constant interaction with those around, developing different types of behavior towards the other prisoners and the prison staff, relationships that can be cooperative, conflictual, sympathetic, antipathetic, indifferent, with more or less serious facets<sup>28</sup>. *Adaptation to imprisonment* creates habits of action and thought that can be dysfunctional in the period after imprisonment.

However, the psychological effects of imprisonment vary from individual to individual and are often reversible. Not everyone who is incarcerated is psychologically damaged, but few people are completely unharmed or with health unaffected by the prison experience. Prison shuts down prisoners' connection to the outside world and holds them back from forming new relationships or maintaining the relationships they already have with family and friends. The acute restriction of individual freedom, banal relationships, lack of information, authoritarian regime, closed environment, dependence on staff, rigorous controls and monotonous activities are all felt by the prisoner as attacks on his integrity as a being.

Each individual comes to prison with a specific universe, sometimes full of contradictions, and frustrations as a result of anti-social behavior or the commission of a crime. Many are socially maladjusted, refractory, and incapable of integrating the rules of social coexistence, while others are of dubious morality, with an incarcerated past<sup>29</sup>. Deprivation of liberty leads to disturbances in the individual's personality caused by the new environment in which he/she enters, which leads to *depersonalization of the individual*<sup>30</sup>; Erving Goffman believes that there is also a repersonalization of the prisoner, which he/she acquires during the execution of the sentence. It can be said that deprivation of liberty has a profound effect on personality, with the prisoner adopting different behaviors from the ones manifested in freedom. Prison life neutralizes privacy, with others witnessing all of one's actions. In this case, the relationships between prisoners are important and often heterogeneous. The prisoner is exposed to an authoritarian regime, a closed environment, and monotonous activities, individual freedom is restricted, and all this damages his/her human side<sup>31</sup>.

Prisoners' behavior is natural, adaptive, but the conditions to which they adapt are artificial, so that pathological reactions can occur, such as dependence on the institutional structure, which constrains freedom and autonomy over choices and decisions<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> MITROFAN, N., ZDRENGHEA, V., BUTOI, T. *Psihologie judiciară*. București: „Șansa” Srl Publishing House, 1994 p 110. ISBN 973-725-152-0

<sup>29</sup> MITROFAN, N., ZDRENGHEA, V., BUTOI, T. *Psihologie judiciară*. București: „Șansa” Srl Publishing House, 1994 p 110. ISBN 973-725-152-0

<sup>30</sup> POPA, E. *The Impact on the Individual's Personality as Perceived by the Prison Psychologist*. In: *Lucrările Simpozionului internațional Educație prin sănătate*, 2019, Vol. IV, p. 76-80. ISBN 978-606-94756-6-9

<sup>31</sup> *Fenomene psihosociale ale mediului privativ de libertate*. In: LEGEA AZ. [quoted 8.01.2019]. Available: <https://legeaz.net/dictionar-juridic/fenomene-psihosociale-inchisoare>

<sup>32</sup> POPA, E. *Comportamentul deținuților în mediul penitenciar*. In: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale dedicate aniversării de 20 de ani de la fondarea Facultății Științifice și ale Educației*.

Another phenomenon in the series of ways of adapting to the prison environment was described a few decades ago by the Canadian criminologist D. Clemmer<sup>33</sup>, who reported on "socialization", the prisoner's culture whereby the prisoner comes to adopt the same views as peers regarding the prison environment and the outside world. Aggressive behavior is a common practice in the prison environment. We believe that the extent of these manifestations in inmates in a prison environment differs depending on education, culture, mentality, the inmate's perception of the risk and seriousness of the criminal act, the involvement of the authorities in preventing and punishing the crime, the age and gender of the individual, personality factors, previous lifestyle, the style acquired in prison, environmental factors, as well as the inmate's attitude towards this process. In prisoners, aggression occurs either in frustrating situations or when they commit violent offenses. Aggression and violence cannot be separated from other personality traits of the offender. Thus, aggression is closely linked not only to intolerance of frustration, but also to the exacerbated force of polarised urges in the domination pleasure. By identifying the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner after his assessment and participation in psychosocial programs, we can achieve emotional stability and a reduction of aggressive manifestations for prisoners.

The educational function in the prison environment is fulfilled by a continuous process of getting to know the prisoner. The obtained data must be constantly monitored and enriched so that the re-education strategy drawn up can be reoriented in the light of new developments. Knowledge of the prisoner must be interdisciplinary, using psychological, psycho-sociological, medical and legal methods, etc. The data obtained must cover as broad a range as possible of the prisoner's delinquent development, his behavior in detention and the factors that shape his subsequent development. The work of getting to know the prisoner ends with a multidisciplinary assessment process, which highlights both the positive aspects of his personality and the negative aspects with the measures (methods) that need to be changed, as well as the possibilities of the prisoner's effective participation in his own re-education. The analysis of the psychosocial programs carried out in the penitentiary and their role in changing the behavior of prisoners during the execution of their sentence highlights the lack of analyses/studies on the effectiveness of the social reintegration programs on the behavioral changes occurred on prisoners since no visible and lasting behavioral changes are observed in the absence of establishing and creating a psycho-behavioral profile. Behavioral changes are not sufficiently evident as participation in such programs is determined by the rewards obtained and not by the real psychosocial needs of the prisoners. The analysis of the psychosocial programs carried out in prisons and their role in changing the behavior of prisoners during the execution of their sentence concludes that the success of any participation in psychosocial reintegration programs is conditioned by the knowledge and multidimensional establishment of the prisoner's personality. Following the analysis of the specialized literature, we have formulated the following **research problem** which derives from the contradiction that reveals the *insufficiency of the study of behavioral changes occurring in detainees following psychosocial reintegration programs, on the*

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Chişinău, 5-6 decembrie, 2019. Chişinău: ULIM ("Print-Caro" Publishing House), 2020, p. 223-236. ISBN 978-9975-3371-7-5

<sup>33</sup> CLEMMER, D. *The prison community*. Boston: Christopher, 1940. 367 p

*one hand, and the need for a methodology to guide the detainee towards individualized and well-targeted psychosocial assistance programs, on the other hand.*

In order to solve the given problem, the following **research directions** have been outlined:

a) To ascertain the effectiveness of psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs and activities in relation to the behavioral and implicit personality dimensions of persons deprived of their liberty;

b) To develop and experimentally validate a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner on the basis of which to offer well-targeted psychosocial assistance programs, so as to achieve real behavioral changes after their completion.

In the context of the above, **the aim of the research** was focused on the study of behavioral and implicit personality changes of the inmates, which occurred after the completion of psychosocial reintegration programs, as well as the development and experimental validation of a methodology to create a psycho-behavioral profile of the inmates based on which to offer them well-targeted psychosocial assistance programs, so as to obtain real behavioral changes after their completion.

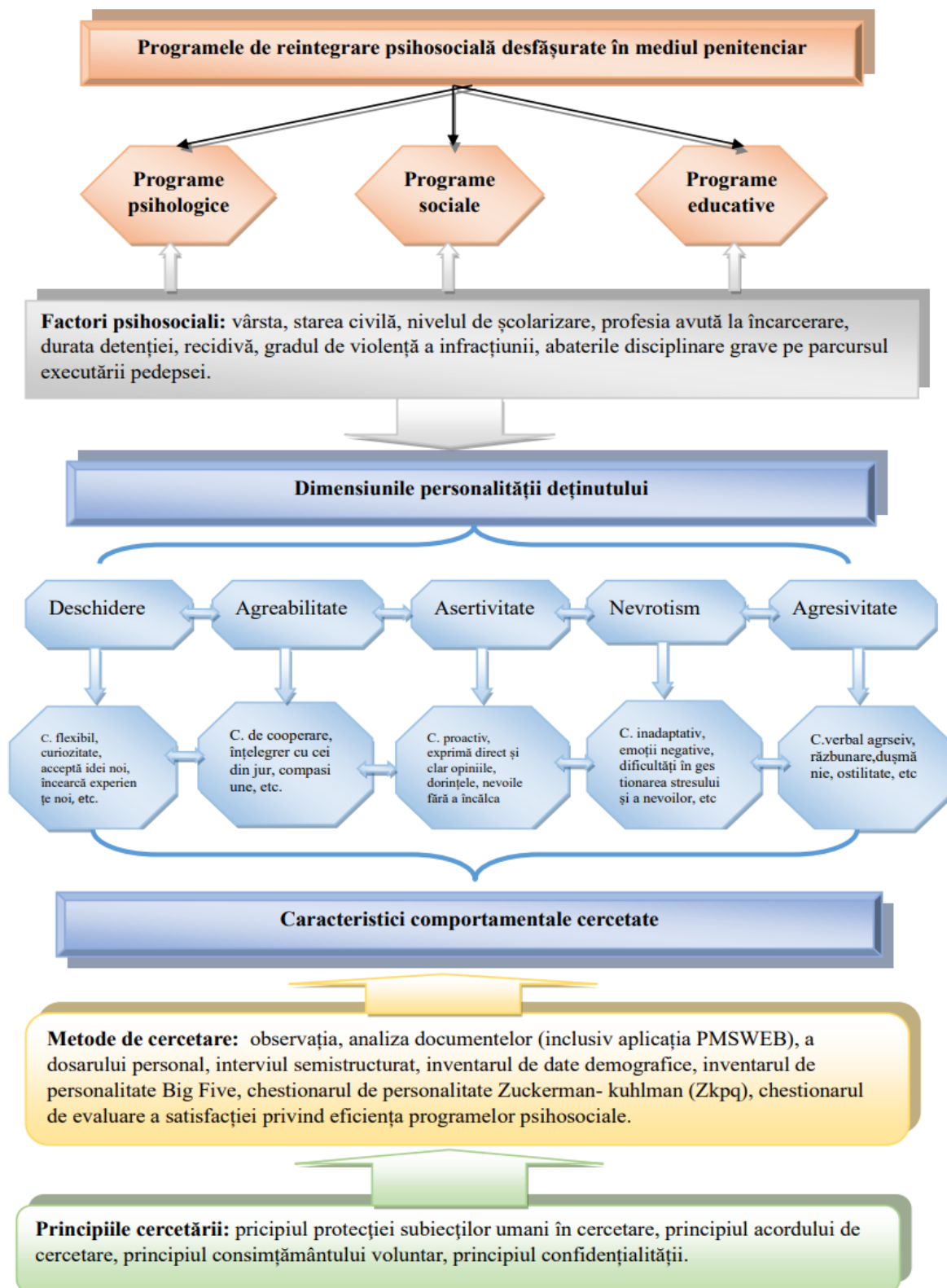
**Chapter 2 (Experimental design of research on the influence of psychosocial reintegration activities on behavioral changes in detainees)** This research brings together a wide range of methods and tools based on reliable and relevant data from various sources. In accordance with the covered categories of variables, the following methods were used to collect data: observation, document analysis (including PMSWEB application), personal file analysis, semi-structured interview, demographic data inventory, Big Five Personality Inventory, ©plus Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire (Zkpq), Psychosocial Program Effectiveness Satisfaction Assessment Questionnaire. The author developed a model for researching the effectiveness of social reintegration activities in relation to behavioral changes in detainees which guided the experimental research.

**The aim of the experiment at the observation level** was to assess the influence of psychosocial reintegration activities on the behavioral changes that occurred in prisoners during the execution of their custodial sentence.

**The objectives of the research** aimed at achieving the goal were: (1) to constitute the sample of the study by random selection of the inmates, taking into account the commission of violent crimes, disciplinary offenses during the execution of the custodial sentence and participation in psychosocial programs conducted in prison; (2) to measure behavioral dimensions such as openness, agreeableness, neuroticism, aggressiveness and assertiveness in inmates selected to participate in the research; (3) to determine the influence of psychosocial programs conducted in the penitentiary on the aforementioned behavioral dimensions by comparing the results of inmates who benefited and inmates who did not benefit from such programs; (4) to observe the correlation between personality traits and age, length of detention or recidivism in inmates.

**Hypotheses of the experiment:** (1) We hypothesized that inmates who participated in psychosocial programs would exhibit higher levels of openness, agreeableness, and assertiveness following psychosocial programs compared to their pre-program levels of openness, agreeableness, and assertiveness as well as compared to inmates who did not benefit from such programs. (2) We assumed that inmates who participated in psychosocial programs would have lower levels of neuroticism and

aggression following participation in psychosocial programs compared to their pre-participation levels of neuroticism and aggression, as well as compared to inmates who did not participate in such programs.



**Fig. 1. Research model of the effectiveness of social reintegration activities in relation to behavioral changes in detainees [made of the author]**

**Sample design and description of the survey sample:** The sample of 120 inmates from Galați and Tichilești Penitentiaries was constituted and described. All prisoners committed violent offenses and were in prison. The sample was stratified into two groups according to the criteria of disciplinary offenses during the execution of the custodial sentence and participation in psychosocial programs. Subsequently, the selection of inmates within the two strata was random and voluntary in order not to influence the results of the study and to make the research sample representative. The experimental group - consisted of 60 prisoners who had committed violent crimes and disciplinary offenses while serving a custodial sentence and who participated in psychosocial programs. Control group - consisting of 60 prisoners who committed violent offenses (without disciplinary offenses during their sentence) and who did not participate in psychosocial programs.

The **variables** targeted in the research were: Independent variables: violent offending, disciplinary misconduct while serving a custodial sentence, inclusion in psychosocial programs, age, duration of imprisonment and recidivism. Dependent variables: level of assertiveness, level of aggressiveness, level of openness, level of neuroticism, level of agreeableness.

The **results of the research** have created a profile of the prisoner: male, aged between 21 and 60 - adult, medium level of education (high school), married, recidivist, the crime committed is violent (murder), the length of detention is average (between 7.1 and 13 years). From the psychological perspective, we can state that the prisoner, upon entering the penitentiary, shows verbal aggressiveness, impulsive actions, non-confrontation, direct hostility, low level of emotional stability - neurosis, lack of assertiveness and openness, suspiciousness, cynical, resistance to change, are not able to express their point of view and interests without anxiety, without denying those of others, are not empathetic and do not cooperate with roommates or staff in the institution. The restrictions imposed by the prison environment and the resulting psychological consequences stimulate intellectual, moral-volitional, emotional activation and lead the prisoner towards searching for solutions to problems that arise and ways of self-affirmation and restoration of his/her well-being.

The effectiveness of psychosocial reintegration programs, as shown in Table 1, correlates with increased agreeableness and decreased aggression and neuroticism in the prisoners who attended them. Also, compared to the group of subjects who did not take part in social integration programs offered by the prison system, those in the experimental group obtained statistically significant scores on the agreeableness and neuroticism variables.

The lack of significant differences in the variables of openness and assertiveness indicates the need for a longer period of time for prisoners to develop these qualities. Other aspects can also be taken into account when running such a program, such as the prisoner's background, level of education, etc., variables that were not the subject of this study.

The comparison of personality traits across different age groups, a subsidiary approach to the statistical analysis described above, indicates that there are no significant differences in personality dimensions according to the age of the inmates. As regards the relationship between recidivism and the personality traits studied in the research, it should be noted that recidivism is not influenced by the latter, but by the length of detention, which may produce certain changes in the assertiveness and agreeableness

dimensions. We consider such results important with regard to the relationship with inmates in the prison environment, as this aspect denotes the activation of adaptive coping mechanisms to the duration of detention and deprivation of liberty.

**Table 1. T-test for independent samples on the variables openness, agreeableness, assertiveness, aggressiveness and nervousness (control group, experimental group at the first test and experimental retest group)**

Variables	Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Significance threshold
Openness	Grup Control group	60	1.93	.821	.193
	Experimental group	60	2.13	.853	
	Experimental retest group	60	2.20	.917	.681
Agreeableness	Control group	60	1.87	.724	.003
	Experimental group	60	2.27	.733	
	Experimental retest group	60	2.65	.659	.003
Assertiveness	Control group	60	1.90	1.020	.420
	Experimental group	60	1.77	.767	
	Experimental retest group	60	1.80	.917	.829
Aggressiveness	Control group	60	2.40	.494	.714
	Experimental group	60	2.43	.500	.000
	Experimental retest group	60	1.43	.722	
Neuroticism	Control group	60	1.97	.882	.000
	Experimental group	60	2.53	.676	
	Experimental retest group	60	2.00	.902	.000

The results of the observational study revealed that psychosocial programs in the prison environment, in the short term, do produce some changes in the behavioral dimensions of prisoners, but these are not sufficiently evident as participation in such programs is determined by the rewards obtained and not by their real psychosocial needs, which would make prisoners more involved and responsible for their own transformation.

*In order to establish effective ways of working with prisoners, it is necessary to have a close knowledge of their dominant personality traits, to identify as accurately as possible the causes of their antisocial behavior and the lifestyle of each prisoner, because only then can we apply an individualized intervention. For these reasons, it is necessary to develop and implement a methodology for drawing up a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, which would highlight these traits and, based on them, provide clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial assistance and reintegration programs.*

**Chapter 3 (Methodology of prisoner psycho-behavioral profiling and psycho-educational intervention)** presents the methodology of prisoner psycho-behavioral profiling and psycho-educational intervention, involved resources, target group, program duration, program location, working methods and techniques, and evaluation. Emphasis is placed on getting to know the prisoner.

The rationale for developing the methodology for creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, in a broad sense, derives, on the one hand, from the existence of a diversity of personality typologies in prison, and, on the other hand, at the level of



correctional facilities; the recommendation of correctional programs is based on the results of multidisciplinary assessment and on a thorough knowledge of the personality of prisoners. The need for a psychology to draw up a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner is also supported by other researchers in the field<sup>34, 35, 36, 37</sup>, who recognise that only by having a thorough knowledge of the prisoner's personality and needs can problems of adaptation to the environment be identified, changes in behavior be measured and behavior be predicted after release. In a narrow sense, the rationale for developing the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner derives from the results of the present research.

In developing the methodology for creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, we were guided by three theoretical models that allow for an effective assessment and treatment of prisoners: the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, developed by D.A. Andrews and J. Bonta, which represents three principles of effective assessment and corrective intervention, referred to by the authors as Risk, Need and Responsivity<sup>38</sup>; the Good Lives Model (GLM), which promotes the building of strengths, skills and abilities, co-developed by T.Ward C.A. Stewart, W.L. Marshall, D.R. Laws and which advocates change that involves a "holistic reconstruction of the self"<sup>39</sup>; and the Risk-Need-Reactivity-Integrity Model (RNR-I), developed by J. Looman and J. Abracen<sup>40</sup>, which incorporates, in a revised RNR-based perspective, the therapeutic alliance and changing needs of offender populations.

**Research aim for the formative experiment:** to develop and experimentally validate a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that would provide clear guidelines for recommending psychosocial programs in order to achieve behavioral changes in prisoners once the respective programs are completed.

*The aim of the formative experiment generates the following general hypothesis for this part of the research: We assume that the completion of recommended psychosocial reintegration programs, following the methodology for creating a psychosocial profile of the inmate, will lead to behavioral changes in the inmates.*

**The research objectives for this approach were:** (1) to develop the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the inmate, based on the need to know the personality traits of inmates with anti-social behavior; (2) to establish the psycho-behavioral profile of the inmate in order to establish more effective methods of

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<sup>34</sup> DIȚA, M., VÎRLAN, M. Problematika psihosocială a mediului penitenciar și efectele psihosociale ale privării de libertate. In: *Vector European*, 2019, no. 3, pp. 130-134. ISSN 2345-1106.

<sup>35</sup> RACU, A. Studiu „Individualizarea executării pedepsei penale privative de libertate: realități și perspective”. Chișinău, 2015. p.24 [quoted 18.04.2023]. Available [http://justice.gov.md/public/files/file/reforma\\_sectorul\\_justitiei/pilonstudiul/studiu\\_final\\_22.04.2015\\_act\\_6.5.8.p.1\\_dip.pdf](http://justice.gov.md/public/files/file/reforma_sectorul_justitiei/pilonstudiul/studiu_final_22.04.2015_act_6.5.8.p.1_dip.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> CARP, S. Efectele mediului penitenciar asupra minorilor condamnați. In: *Probleme interdisciplinare în materia prevenirii și combaterii criminalității juvenile la etapa contemporană*, October 5, 2007, Chișinău. Chișinău: Academia Ștefan cel Mare, Fundația Hanns Seidel (Germania), 2007, p.12. ISBN 978-9975-930-36-9.

<sup>37</sup> FLORIAN, G. *Fenomenologie penitenciară*. București: Oscar-Print Publishing House, 2003. p. 206. ISBN 973-83338-95-6.

<sup>38</sup> Apud LOOMAN, J., ABRACEN, J. The Risk Need Responsivity Model of Offender Rehabilitation: Is There Really a Need For a Paradigm Shift? In: *International Journal of Behavioral Consultation and Therapy*, 2013, vol.8, no.3-4, p.30-36 [quoted 14.04.2023] Available [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277630411The\\_Risk\\_Need\\_Responsivity\\_Model\\_of\\_Offender\\_Rehabilitation\\_Is\\_There\\_Really\\_a\\_Need\\_For\\_a\\_Paradigm\\_Shift](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277630411The_Risk_Need_Responsivity_Model_of_Offender_Rehabilitation_Is_There_Really_a_Need_For_a_Paradigm_Shift)

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, p. 32

<sup>40</sup> LOOMAN, J., ABRACEN, J. *Treatment of High-Risk Sexual Offenders: An Integrated Approach*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015. 288 p. ISBN: 978-1-118-98016-3

intervention and inclusion in various psychosocial programs that would effectively contribute to their behavioral change; (3) determining the effectiveness of the methodology for creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner and monitoring the sustainability of the effects of the participants' psychosocial program; (4) formulating conclusions and recommendations based on the results.

### **Research hypotheses:**

1. It was assumed that inmates who will participate in psychosocial programs, after going through the methodology of creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, will show a higher level of *agreeableness (will be more empathetic, attentive to the needs of others, understanding)* compared to inmates who have not been subjected to the methodology.

2. It was assumed that prisoners in psychosocial programs, after going through the methodology of creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, will show a lower level of *aggressiveness (they will be more tolerant of other prisoners, more cooperative, more supportive, more balanced behaviorally)* compared to prisoners who did not undergo the methodology.

3. It was assumed that prisoners who will participate in the psychosocial programs, after going through the methodology of creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, will show a higher level of *conscientiousness (will be more respectful, more responsible)* compared to prisoners who have not undergone the methodology.

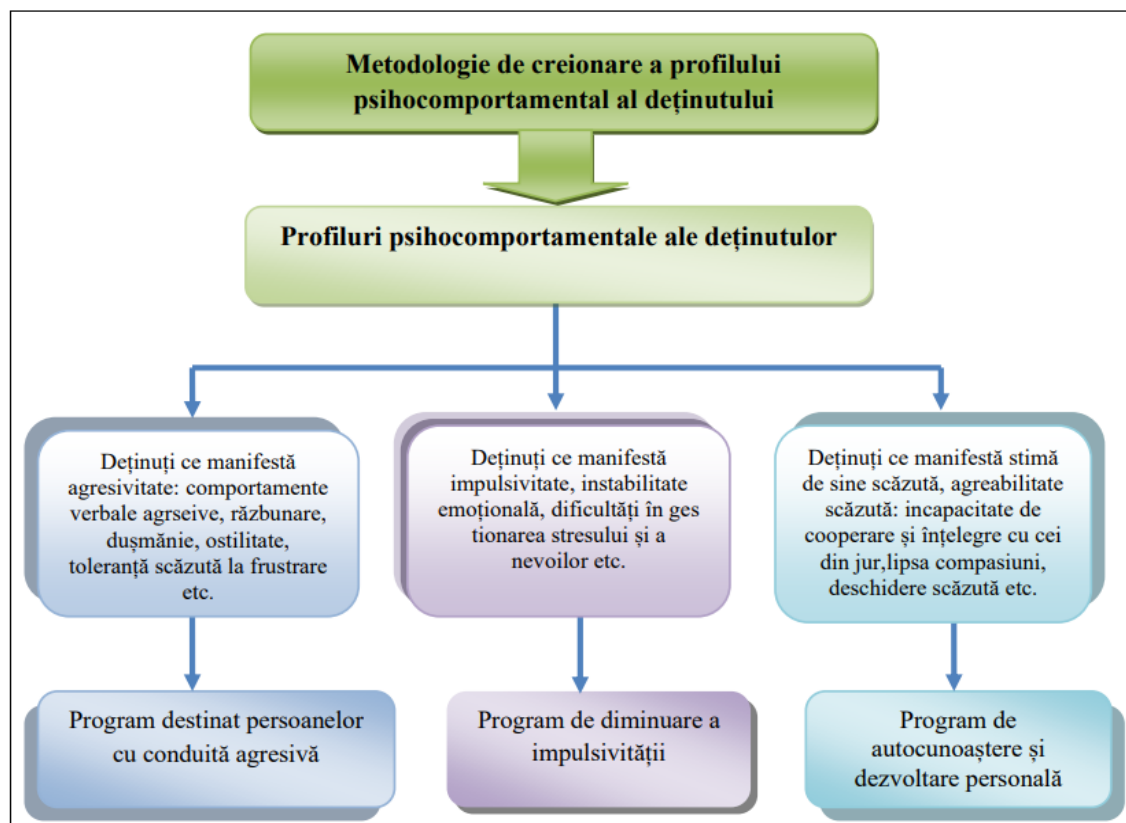
**Variables:** *The independent variable* used in this study is the methodology of the prisoner's psychobehavioral profiling and psychoeducational intervention. Dependent variables are represented by behavioral dimensions such as agreeableness, aggressiveness and conscientiousness of inmates selected for the research.

**The research sample:** 86 prisoners participated in the present research and were divided as follows: the *experimental group*, initially made up of 26 prisoners who had committed violent offenses and disciplinary offenses while serving their prison sentence, who had initially benefited from a program to develop the prisoner's psycho-behavioral profile and who had participated in psychosocial programs. The *control group* was the group of prisoners (60 prisoners) who formed the experimental group in the initial stage of the research.

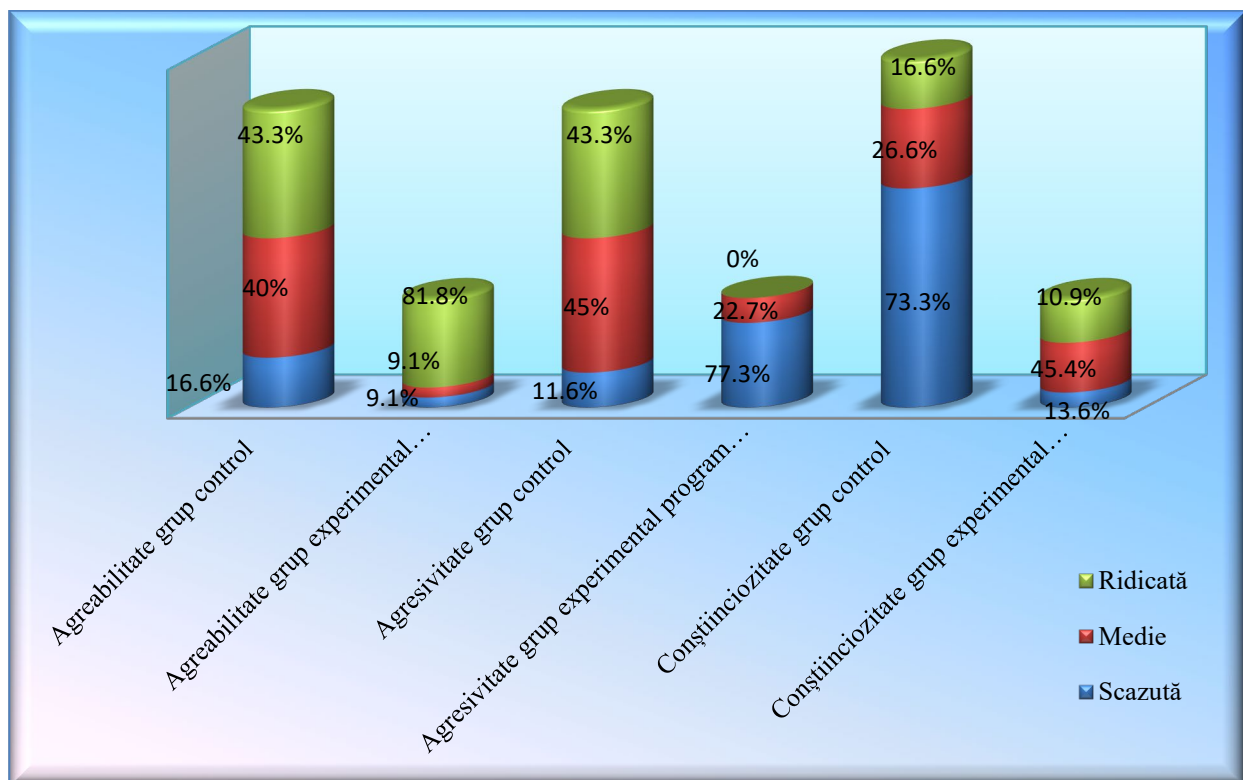
Following the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the detainees, resulted in the following ***psycho-behavioral profiles*** of the detainees (who formed the experimental group at the given stage of the research): (1) *aggressive detainees (68.18%)* - inmates showing low agreeableness, low frustration tolerance, aggressiveness: aggressive verbal behaviors, revenge, spite, hostility, etc.; (2) *impulsive inmates (22.72%)* - inmates showing impulsiveness, emotional instability, difficulties in managing stress and needs, etc., and (3) *empathy-deprived inmates (9.09%)* - inmates showing low self-esteem, low agreeableness: inability to cooperate and understand others, lack of compassion, low openness, etc. Based on the identified psycho-behavioral profiles, inmates were referred to rehabilitative programs:

After some of the inmates (the experimental group) were included in the psycho-behavioral profiling program and psycho-educational intervention, research was conducted to highlight some dominant personality traits, namely agreeableness, aggressiveness, and conscientiousness. The first step was the collection and statistical processing

of the experimental data using the paired and independent samples t-test. In order to highlight the results as clearly as possible, they have been condensed in Figure 3.



**Fig. 2. Programs recommended after going through the methodology of creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner [by the author].**



**Fig. 3. Agreeableness, aggressiveness, and conscientiousness dimensions in the control and experimental groups**

The statistical situation imposed on the variable agreeableness is that statistically significant differences were obtained, which implies that inmates internalize the awareness of showing compassion to others, expressing their point of view, seeking support from others, striving to be fair and honest in their dealings with others, and accepting that there are people different from themselves that they must tolerate.

Regarding the aggressiveness variable, it is shown that following the methodology, the inmates in the experimental group obtained much lower aggressiveness scores compared to the control group. The inmates in the experimental group showed a better capacity of self-control, being detached in certain tense moments, they showed a better capacity of self-control assertive behavior and some pro-social attitudes. A low level of aggression may also signal a lack of worry, a contentment with one's life.

The fact that the prisoners recorded a higher level of conscientiousness after going through the program shows that they have learned to be more respectful, more organized, more meticulous, non-aggressive, more persistent in acquiring information that leads to observable behavioral changes.

The results of the study demonstrated that the structure and theme of the methodology for creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner allows a prisoner to clearly establish the psychosocial program or programs to be followed in order to produce positive behavioral changes during the execution of the sentence.

The elaboration of the methodology for creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner through the obtained results means that the present research can be seen as a first step towards demonstrating the effectiveness of the methodology implementation. It is important to mention that the discovery of dominant personality traits is a pillar of any program that aims to socially integrate prisoners because the individual, by his uniqueness, reacts differently to certain tasks. Guiding prisoners to a particular program, which may include psychological counseling, can be more effective if it is based on dominant personality traits.

The research objectives were achieved and the hypotheses were confirmed, the results showing a reduction in aggressiveness, in neuroticism, and concomitantly with a reduction in the anxiety tendencies that mediate it and an increase in unconditional acceptance of the self. These results were evidenced in the post-test experimental situations in the experimental group compared to the control group. Our research data are consistent with other studies<sup>41</sup> demonstrating the role of personality traits in the effectiveness of psychosocial recovery programs. Based on their relationship to coping strategies, for example, more targeted and effective psychological programs and interventions can be recommended, which in turn will improve inmates' abilities to cope with stress. In terms of agreeableness, most studies<sup>42</sup> have found a significant positive correlation between this personality trait and social support-seeking and cognitive restructuring.

Participation in such psychosocial group programs, beyond increasing self-esteem and reducing aggressive tendencies, has multiple advantages. Participants

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<sup>41</sup> LESZKO, M., IWANSKI, R., JARZEBINSKA, A. The relationship between personality traits and coping styles among first-time and recurrent prisoners in Poland. In: *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2019, vol.10. [quoted 4.08.2021]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02969>.

<sup>42</sup> PENLEY, J.A., TOMAKA, J. Asocieri dintre cei cinci mari, răspunsuri emoționale și gestionarea stresului acut. In: *Personalitate și diferențe individuale*, 2020, no.32, pp. 1215–1228. [accessed 4.08.2021]. Available: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(01\)00087-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(01)00087-3).

develop communication, coping and problem-solving skills, build healthy relationships, become more supportive and improve their life in the prison environment, gaining a new perspective for the future, as well as readjusting to society after serving their sentence and engaging in a professional activity that is suited to their personal skills.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study on the influence of psychosocial reintegration activities on behavioral changes in persons deprived of their liberty produced the following scientific results:

1. The analysis of the psychosocial programs carried out in prisons and their role in changing the behavior of prisoners during the execution of their sentence concludes that the success of any participation in psychosocial reintegration programs is conditional on the creation of a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner in order to observe visible and lasting behavioral changes during the execution of the custodial sentence. As a general result, the analysis of the prisoners' personalities<sup>43</sup> has generated the identification of personality traits such as aggressiveness, agreeableness, neuroticism, assertiveness and openness that influence adaptation to the prison environment, including the completion of psychosocial reintegration programs<sup>44</sup>.

2. From the literature we have been able to identify the effects of deprivation of liberty at the psychological and psychosocial level and behavioral changes such as the incarceration shock, depersonalization, imprisonment phenomenon, aggressive and violent reactions, frustration, stress, and psychotic syndrome. The prison environment has certain key characteristics that generate personality change: separation from family, closed environment with strict rules and regulations to follow, dependence on staff, overcrowding, duration of detention, aggressive behavior, prison subculture, lack of information about the world outside the prison (about family, friends, society, etc.), and lack of privacy.

3. Prisoners' behavior<sup>45</sup> changes as they develop certain institutionalized personality traits such as distrust of others, difficulty engaging in relationships and the weight with which they make certain decisions. By referring to the Big Five Model, it can be seen that the change in prisoners' behavior is due to a low level of neuroticism or a high level of emotional stability combined with extraversion and low agreeableness. This model of how prisoner's personality changes is not an ideal pattern. As a prisoner becomes adapted to the prison environment, he/she remains emotionally detached, more socially withdrawn and less ready to adapt to life after release. Life in prison, in the absence of social reintegration programs in line with dominant personality traits, leads to personality changes that hinder a person's rehabilitation and reintegration<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> POPA, E. Studiu: Influența activităților de reintegrare psihosocială asupra schimbărilor comportamentale survenite la persoanele deținute. In: *Revista Institutului Național al Justiției, Științe juridice*, 2022, vol. 14, no.3, pp. 48-53, ISSN 1857-2405.

<sup>44</sup> POPA, E. The Impact on the Individual's Personality as Perceived by the Prison Psychologist. In: *Lucrarile Simpozionului internațional Educație prin sănătate*, 2019, vol. IV, pp. 76-80. ISBN 978-606-94756-6-9.

<sup>45</sup> POPA, E. Comportamentul deținuților în mediul penitenciar. In: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale dedicate aniversării de 20 de ani de la fondarea Facultății Științifice și ale Educației. Chișinău, 5-6 decembrie, 2019*. Chișinău: ULIM (Tipogr. "Print-Caro"), 2020, pp 223-236. ISBN 978-9975-3371-7-5.

<sup>46</sup> POPA, E. Partea nevăzută a mediului penitenciar. In: *Revista de practică penitenciară*, 2019, no. 2, pp. 57-64. ISSN: 2668-0696.

4. The influence of prison programs on the prisoners' behavioral dimensions can be summarised by showing the dominant personality traits that contribute to changes in prisoners' behavior. The implemented psychosocial programs aim to increase tolerance to frustration, reduce the number of violent manifestations in prison, provide information about one's own personality, favouring the process of self-discovery and self-evaluation through openness, agreeableness and assertiveness<sup>47</sup>. In accordance with the views expressed in the literature and the results of the practical research<sup>48</sup>, it was found that the effects of the programs may depend on the characteristics and typology of the prisoners and the detention conditions, as shown by the research results in Chapter 3.

5. The observational study that examined the effectiveness of the psychosocial reintegration programs established statistical differences in the openness, neuroticism, agreeableness, aggressiveness and assertiveness variables in the experimental group during the test and retest period. The research data<sup>49</sup> show that the completion of psychosocial reintegration programs leads to positive behavioral changes, which shows that the personality of a prisoner can be guided to the point where inmates can become self-controlled, able to discern situations so as to avoid certain moments of conflict. Maintaining the dimensions of openness and assertiveness before testing and after re-testing means that inmates need to be tested after a longer period after undergoing a psychosocial reintegration program, as each piece of information designed to fine-tune inmates' personalities requires a longer period of sedimentation before it can be appropriated<sup>50</sup>. Statistical analysis of age and recidivism of inmates correlated with personality traits demonstrates that there are no significant differences in the variables tracked, but if we refer to the length of detention, changes can occur in the dimensions of assertiveness and agreeableness.

6. The results obtained at the assessment stage served as a basis for the development of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, the content and structure of which allowed the prisoner to be able to establish clearly and correctly, according to the dominant personality traits, the psychosocial program or programs to be followed to ensure behavioral changes<sup>51</sup>. The effectiveness of the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner was demonstrated by comparing the post-intervention retest results of prisoners who participated in the psychosocial programs following the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner with the results of prisoners who did not undergo this methodology. The methodology demonstrated its effectiveness through lower scores on the aggressiveness variable and increased levels of cooperation and friendliness, as well as

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<sup>47</sup> POPA, E. The Role of Psychosocial Programs Carried out in the Penitentiary Environment. In: *New Trends in Psychology*, 2019, no. 2, pp. 57-64. ISSN: 2668-0696.

<sup>48</sup> POPA, E. Studiu: Influența activităților de reintegrare psihosocială asupra schimbărilor comportamentale survenite la persoanele deținute. In: *Revista Institutului Național al Justiției, Științe juridice*, 2022, vol. 14, no.3, pp. 48-53. ISSN 1857-2405.

<sup>49</sup> Idem.

<sup>50</sup> POPA, E. Comportamentul deținuților în mediul penitenciar. In: *Materialele Conferinței Științifice Internaționale dedicate aniversării de 20 de ani de la fondarea Facultății Științifice și ale Educației. Chișinău, 5-6 decembrie, 2019*. Chișinău: ULIM (Tipogr. "Print-Caro"), 2020, pp 223-236. ISBN 978-9975-3371-7-5.

<sup>51</sup> POPA, E., IURCHEVICI, Iu. Psychodiagnosis Program for Persons Deprived of Liberty. In: *Journal of Danubian Studies and Research*, 2020, vol. I, pp. 548-561. ISSN 2284 – 5224.

internalizing inmates' awareness of showing compassion towards others, expressing their views, being more respectful and showing self-control. Due to the characteristics and dynamics of the prison environment, we are not always able to establish complete reintegration programs; there are always times when the person deprived of liberty is transferred to another prison for judicial business, for the execution of the sentence deprived of liberty or even for a change of execution regime.

The scientific results obtained led to the achievement of the proposed research goals and objectives and, consequently, the important ***scientific problem was solved***: the determination of the behavioral changes that occurred in the persons deprived of liberty following the psychosocial reintegration programs and, implicitly, of their effectiveness, which were the basis for the elaboration and experimental validation of a methodology for the creation of a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoners based on which well-targeted psychosocial assistance was offered with visible repercussions on their behavior during the execution of the sentence.

**The scientific novelty of the results.** For the first time in Romania, it has been developed a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, which identifies the personality traits of prisoners that facilitate adaptation to the prison environment and, consequently, to the outside environment; it demonstrates the dependence of the effectiveness of the psychosocial programs followed by prisoners on the most accurate creation of their psycho-behavioral profile, highlighting as accurately as possible the causes that determined their antisocial behavior.

**The theoretical value of the research** consists in presenting the association between personality and antisocial behavior, in relation to the social, educational and cultural environment. The psychosocial particularities revealed the uniqueness of each participant and a psycho-behavioral profile regarding the possibility of social reintegration. The theoretical explanatory models used in the work contributed to the development of a methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that contributes to the psychosocial reintegration of detainees.

The applied value of the research lies in the fact that the results form the basis of a practice guide by developing, implementing and validating the methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of prisoners in order to establish effective ways of working with them and achieve behavioral changes.

The methodology of creating the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner represents an opportunity for psychologists in penitentiary units in Romania, for scientific researchers in the research of penitentiary phenomenology, as well as to *guide the prisoner toward well-targeted psychosocial assistance programs, based on his psycho-behavioral profile*.

**Implementation of scientific results.** The results were presented and discussed within the Social Reintegration sector of Galati Penitentiary and used in the professional work of the specialists in the office. Some of the results have been included in scientific communications in conferences, both in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova, as well as in 5 scientific papers published in journals and volumes. Some of the theoretical aspects and research results have been presented and discussed at national and international scientific events, the most significant of which are: (1) Scientific conference with international participation on the occasion of the 27th anniversary of the founding of ULIM,

Chisinau, 16-18.10. 2019, (2) International Scientific Conference at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, ULIM, Chisinau, 5-6 December, 2019, (3) International Conference Health through Education, 5th Edition, Bacau, from 11-12-13.06. 2020, (4) International Scientific Conference of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, ULIM, Chisinau, 3-4 December, 2020, (5) National Conference with international participation Theoretical landmarks and good practices in psychology - 1st Edition, Danubius University from 7.04 - 11.04.2021, Galati, (6) National Symposium with international participation Kreatikon: creativity-formation-performance "Creativity and innovation - prerequisites for excellence in education", 16th edition, Iasi, Romania, 1-2.04.2021, (7) International scientific conference, "Psychological Assistance at the contemporary stage: realities and perspectives", 3rd edition, Balti, Republic of Moldova, 21 October 2022.

Conclusions of theoretical investigations and results of applied research have been presented in scientific papers (10 articles), of which 5 articles have been published in journals with reviewers and 5 in volumes with materials published in Romania and Moldova.

**Self-assessment of research limitations.** The research has certain limitations in the extension of the results due to the average number of inmates that was used, 120, 60 participants each for both the experimental and control groups. Therefore, our conclusions can only be generalised with caution for an average segment of prisoners, namely the study participants. The present research is cross-sectional and the assessments, psychometric measurements were carried out over a short period of time, approximately one year (the interval between the two periods of conducting the specialist practice), and indicate the current state of the researched group.

The results of the theoretical-experimental study allow us to formulate **practical recommendations** for the psychosocial reintegration activities of prisoners:

1. The authorities should instill in prisoners the idea that their time in prison should not be seen as a disadvantage, but as an opportunity to change their psycho-affective and social behavior. Therefore, continuity of programs must be ensured when the person deprived of liberty is transferred to another prison for judicial business, for the execution of the sentence deprived of liberty.

2. The need to allocate resources in order to modify some characteristics of the physical, organizational environment of interpersonal relations in prison (each psychologist must have a psychological office, tests, personality questionnaires purchased by the prison, therapeutic cabinets for art therapy, occupational therapy, etc.).

3. We believe that the "Methodology for creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner" has proved its usefulness, highlighting a number of aspects that were only suspected but never studied in detail. Its application in a larger number of prisons, to a larger number of participants, taking into account the fact that only 1-2 specialists are needed, that a small number of teaching materials are necessary, combined with the occupation of the prisoners' free time, correlated with the decrease of aggressive manifestations, of the state of frustration and with the possibility for the prisoners to be rewarded, would have beneficial effects in the behavioral change of the prisoners in Romanian prisons.

4. We suggest that the methodology of creating a psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner should be taken up and used by psychologists in Romanian prisons in order to favour the effective adaptation of prisoners, reducing aggressiveness and strengthening self-confidence by focusing on their personality traits.



5. In order to prevent behavioral-deviant contagion, we propose the creation of special wards for non-violent offenders and minors, completely different from those in maximum security or closed prisons.

The complexity of this research requires further scientific research, which can be initiated in the following directions:

- The effectiveness of psychosocial reintegration programs in the post-detention period
- Scientific research on the educational, psychological, social and therapeutic needs of prisoners after release
- A comparative study between high-risk prisoners in maximum security and in prison
- Research on the factors that condition the implementation of effective prison programs.

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## ANNOTATION

**Popa Ecaterina, The influence of psychosocial reintegration activities related to behavioral changes on detainees. Doctoral thesis in psychology, Chisinau, 2023**

**Thesis structure:** introduction, four chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography of 284 titles and 11 annexes. The volume of the thesis is 134 (up to Bibliography) pages of basic text, including 31 tables and 18 figures. The obtained results are published in 5 scientific papers.

**Keywords:** *psychosocial reintegration activities, agreeableness, assertiveness, aggressiveness, behavior, openness, neuroticism, inmates, program for drawing up the psychobehavioral profile of the inmate and psychoeducational intervention, personality traits*

**Field of study:** psychology

**The aim of the paper:** The aim of the work is to study the changes in the behavior of the prisoners, which occurred as a result of going through the psychosocial reintegration programs, and to develop and experimentally validate a methodology in order to create a psychobehavioral profile of the prisoners on the basis of which to offer them well-targeted psychosocial assistance programs, so as to obtain real behavioral changes following their completion.

**The objectives of the paper:** the analysis of the existing theoretical-conceptual approaches in the scientific circuit in the field of research regarding the personality of the criminal and the prisoner; the identification, from the specialized literature, of the effects of deprivation of liberty at a psychological level and behavioral changes; the analysis of the psychosocial programs carried out in the penitentiary and their role in changing the behavior of persons deprived of liberty during the execution of the sentence; carrying out the experimental approach in order to ascertain the effectiveness of psychosocial reintegration programs related to the behavioral dimensions of persons deprived of liberty; the development and experimental validation of a methodology for drawing up the psycho-behavioral profile of the detainee that would provide clear directions for recommending psychosocial programs, in order to obtain some behavioral changes by persons deprived of liberty, following their completion.

**The scientific novelty and originality** of the obtained results consists in the development and implementation of a methodology for drawing up the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner, for the first time in the Romanian penitentiary system, by identifying their dominant personality traits that facilitate adaptation to the penitentiary environment and, consequently, to the external environment; demonstrates the dependence of the effectiveness of the psychosocial programs completed by the inmates on the most correct configuration of their psychobehavioral profile, and the possibility of the behavioral change of the inmates through the development and implementation of the training approach was validated.

**The results obtained that contribute to the solution of the important scientific problem** consist in determining the behavioral changes that have occurred in persons deprived of their liberty following the completion of psychosocial reintegration programs and implicitly their efficiency, facts that formed the basis for the development and experimental validation of a profile penciling methodology psycho-behavioral of the prisoners, on the basis of which well-targeted psychosocial assistance was offered with visible repercussions on their behavior during the execution of the sentence.

**The theoretical significance of the work** consists in presenting the association of personality with antisocial behavior, related to the social, educational and cultural environment. The psychosocial peculiarities highlighted the uniqueness of each participant and a psychobehavioral profile regarding the possibility of social reintegration. The explanatory theoretical models used in the work contributed to the realization of a methodology for drawing up the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner that contributes to the psychosocial reintegration of the prisoners.

**The applicative value of the work** consists in the fact that the obtained results form the basis of a good practice guide, by elaborating, implementing and validating the methodology of penciling the psycho-behavioral profile of the prisoner in order to establish effective ways of working with them in order to achieve behavioral changes by persons deprived of liberty, following their course.

**Implementation of scientific results.** The work represents an important indicator in the activity of specialists from the penitentiary system in Romania who work with persons deprived of liberty. The thesis constitutes a substantial contribution for scientific researchers in the field of penitentiary phenomenology.



## ADNOTARE

### **Popa Ecaterina, Influența activităților de reintegrare psihosocială raportată la schimbările comportamentale survenite asupra persoanelor deținute. Teză de doctor în psihologie, Chișinău, 2023**

**Structura tezei:** introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 284 de titluri și 11 anexe. Volumul tezei este de 134 (până la Bibliografie) pagini de text de bază, inclusiv 31 tabele și 18 figuri. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 5 lucrări științifice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *activități de reintegrare psihosocială, agreabilitate, asertivitate, agresivitate comportament, deschidere, nevrozism, persoane deținute, metodologie de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental al deținutului și intervenție psihoeducațional, trăsături de personalitate*

#### **Domeniul de studiu: psihologie**

**Scopul lucrării.** Scopul lucrării constă în studierea modificărilor de comportament și implicit de personalitate a deținuților, survenite în urma parcurgerii programelor de reintegrare psihosocială, precum și elaborarea și validarea experimentală a unei metodologii în vederea creionării unui profil psihocomportamental al deținuților în baza căruia să li se ofere acestora programe de asistență psihosocială bine ținute, astfel încât să se obțină modificări comportamentale reale în urma parcurgerii acestora.

**Obiectivele lucrării:** analiza abordărilor teoretico-conceptuale existente în circuitul științific din domeniu de cercetare cu privire la personalitatea infractorului și a deținutului; identificarea, din literatură de specialitate, a efectelor privării de libertate la nivel psihologic și a schimbărilor comportamentale; analiza programelor psihosociale desfășurate în penitenciar și a rolului acestora asupra schimbării comportamentului persoanelor private de libertate pe perioada executării pedepsei; realizarea demersului experimental în vederea constatării eficienței programelor de reintegrare psihosocială raportate la dimensiunile comportamentale ale persoanelor private de libertate; elaborarea și validarea experimentală a unei metodologii de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental al deținutului care să ofere direcții clare de recomandare a programelor psihosociale, în vederea obținerii unor modificări comportamentale de către persoanele private de libertate, în urma parcurgerii acestora.

**Noutatea și originalitatea științifică** a rezultatelor obținute constă în elaborarea și implementarea unei metodologii de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental al deținutului, pentru prima dată în sistemul penitenciar din România, prin identificarea trăsăturilor de personalitate dominante ale acestora care facilitează adaptarea la mediul penitenciar și, în consecință, la mediul exterior; demonstrează dependența eficienței programelor psihosociale parcurse de deținuți de configurarea cât mai corectă a profilului psihocomportamental al acestora și a fost validată posibilitatea schimbării comportamentale ale deținuților prin elaborarea și implementarea demersului formativ.

**Rezultatele obținute care contribuie la soluționarea problemei științifice importante** constau în determinarea modificărilor comportamentale survenite asupra persoanelor private de libertate în urma parcurgerii programelor de reintegrare psihosocială și implicit a eficienței acestora, fapte ce au constituit bază pentru elaborarea și validarea experimentală a unei metodologii de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental al deținuților în baza căruia s-a oferit asistență psihosocială bine ținută cu repercursiuni vizibile asupra comportamentului acestora pe perioada executării pedepsei.

**Semnificația teoretică** a lucrării constă în prezentarea asocierii personalității cu comportamentul antisocial, raportată la mediul social, educațional și cultural. Particularitățile psihosociale au evidențiat unicitatea fiecărui participant și un profil psihocomportamental cu privire la posibilitatea de a se reintegra din punct de vedere social. Modelele teoretice explicative utilizate în cadrul lucrării au contribuit la realizarea unei metodologii de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental al deținutului care contribuie la reintegrarea psihosocială a persoanelor deținute.

**Valoarea aplicativă** a lucrării constă în faptul că rezultatele obținute pun baza unui ghid de bune practici, prin elaborarea implementarea și validarea metodologiei de stabilire a profilului psihocomportamental a deținutului pentru a stabili moduri de abordare eficiente în lucrul cu aceștia în vederea obținerii unor schimbări comportamentale de către persoanele private de libertate, în urma parcurgerii acestora.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice.** Lucrarea reprezintă un indicator important în activitatea specialiștilor din sistemul penitenciar din România care lucrează cu persoanele private de libertate. Teza constituie o contribuție substanțială pentru cercetătorii științifici din domeniul fenomenologiei penitenciare.

**POPA, ECATERINA**

**THE INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES WITH REGARD TO DETAINEES' BEHAVIORAL CHANGES**

**511.03 – SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Psychology PhD thesis summary

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