

## The Psychological Consequences of the Prison Environment on the Personality of the Young Detainee

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**Abstract:** We all consider youth to be one of the most significant periods of life. We are energetic, we have ongoing projects, hard work, confidence and time. Youth is representative, it guides us in projecting further developments, it makes us happy or sad, it raises questions or gives us answers. The predominant transformations occur in the sphere of personality. Young people manifest consciously and often in a controlled way, as certain temperamental types, develop and diversify their skills (based on their own inclinations and interests), stabilize at the level of character traits, manifest intelligently and creatively. The child is the most valuable asset, both for the family and for society, due to the fact that the child of the present will become the adult of the future. Thus, his emotional, social and physical development has a direct effect on the adults they will transform into. The need to invest in the development of children from an early age is essential, due to the fact that their emotional evolution must be harmonious for them to become balanced adults, without major emotional slippage. “The adolescent’s desire to be unique is greatly exacerbated by taking the form of the need for singularity, isolation, the young man being exclusively concerned with his own person (...)” (Golu, Verza, Zlate M, page 158, (1991).

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In the process of personality formation there are several stages, which do not involve continuous evolutions, there will be jumps, stagnation but also involutions, they do not have a linear development in time. “Adolescence is the most sensitive and mobile period of physical, mental and social evolution of the young man, this changing not only from one year to another, not only from one month to another, but even from one day to another and, which is important, changes not only one or the other of the

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components of the personality, but the whole personality, the whole conduct” (Golu, Verza, Zlate, 1991, p. 161).

We correlate the personality of the young adult with: movement, energy and dynamism; impatience, high aspirations;

great dreams, manifestation of skills and creativity at maximum levels, with future projects, optimism, self-confidence and others but also generosity, honor, nonconformism, justice, but also the desire to benefit and live in comfort; but we also notice the rebellious, omniscient, and egocentric child, with a certain dose of irresponsibility, stubbornness, but also vulnerability, who considers that everything belongs to him, is full of exaltation and curiosity, adventurous.

At this stage, the acquisitions of personality from adolescence are enriched, and in terms of self-identity, the sub-identities are defined more and more clearly: professional; marital and socio-cultural (Bonchis, 2000, p. 212).

It is the period when both the critical attitude towards parents and the ambivalence towards the family are accentuated (ambivalence that began during puberty and is manifested by the concomitant desire for independence from parents and the desire to be understood, supported and helped whenever need). The desire for independence can create tensions in the family, the adolescent feeling incomprehensible. The intensity of tensions and conflicts also depends on the adolescent but also on the attitude of the parents. Sometimes, parental styles with negative effects are manifested in families in which one or more of their functions are not achieved, these families are disorganized and some fall apart. The style of family education is a construct that captures the variations (especially normal) of parental experiences of socializing and controlling children in family life. Based on the recognition of the educational style adopted by parents, ie the process of influence they exercise, or in general adults who deal with the care and education of children in the family, we can anticipate the child's development, we can intervene in preventing negative influences that may affect normal development of the child. Criminal behavior is a syndrome of a disturbance (decompensation) of the structured field of the young person's personality. Disruption of personality structuring mechanisms occurs through the operational convergence of psychophysiological processes determined by a multitude of factors. R. Rascanu in “Neuropsychophysiology of deviance in adolescents and young people” distinguishes certain phenomena-symptoms such as: instability, irascibility, impulsivity, tendency to alter the truth (lie), conscious theft,

pathology, flight and vagrancy, school failure, alcoholism, addiction drugs, begging, sexual deviance, homicide, suicide and suicide attempt.

Processes, as formulas for information processing, caused by factors of different ranks, such as: intrapsychic and relational conflict, psycho-affective trauma, structural and functional cognitive-cultural and educational deprivation, distortion of moral and social values, and neuropsychic pathology. Following the relational deficiencies in the primary group, the young person may have certain distortions specific to the delinquent personality. Among them we list: distortions in the affective sphere, the feeling of abandonment, dysfunctions regarding the strategies for resolving conflict states, distortions in the self-assessment process, reduction of the resistance threshold to frustration, disturbances in the sphere of sexual relations, distortions in the cognitive-intellectual sphere. crisis of consciousness and representation of reality.

Neurological research shows that children's early experiences, the relationships they form with parents and their first learning experiences, self-esteem, school, social pressures strongly and decisively influence their further development.

The psychological consequences regarding the impact of deprivation of liberty on the personality of the young detainee, in the prison environment, become in most cases dramatic, stimulating different behaviors from those in the non-prison environment. Deprivation of liberty implies a major change in the existence of the detainee, because the personality of the young detainee deprived of liberty will be affected by the frustrations caused by the detention in the penitentiary.

The personality and behavior of young detainees can be described in terms of delinquency and expressed through aggression, adversity, emotional lability, social maladaptation, duplicity, emotional instability, frustration, inappropriate language, emotional indifference chosen based on the specifics of the detention regime analyzed. In the monograph *Perfecting the school in an era of change*, D. Hopkins, M. Ainscow and M. West, notice that due to the school footprint, the individual becomes manipulable, oriented towards a certain path that can take a negative or positive turn. "In this context, the school is the institution that sums up positive factors, but also negative ones" (Hopkins; Ainscow & West, 1998).

Influenced by major transformations that occur both physically and mentally, young people tend to define their identity both through the imaginary world they create and through the harshness of sequences whose actors are, involuntarily or not, living.

them with maximum intensity. Age, lack of life experience, lack of parents, anger they have against them in certain situations, lack of education, misunderstood freedom, ignorance of the law, shyness, vulnerability, media influence, the environment in which they develop, are factors that predispose to the violation of the norms, having detrimental consequences on the development of the young person's personality. The consideration of cognitive styles as an explanatory factor results in the acceptance that in order to solve a problem of a social nature in the sense of being socially acceptable, not only the ability to elaborate and put into practice the solution is indispensable, but also the ability and the desire to invest effort to apply it in a certain situation. One of the studies conducted by Pont (1995) indicates that individuals with tendencies towards aggressive behaviors do not show deficits in the ability to generate solutions, they prefer certain types of solutions. This preference could be related to the presence of certain cognitive styles.

Cognitive styles, already outlined in adolescence, have a decisive contribution in understanding the processes that lead to the emergence of antisocial behaviors.

Dodge and Newman (1991), in Reine, (1993) reported data that validate the hypothesis that aggressive children tend to use fewer environmental stimuli to mediate their own behavior, probably coding less for such stimuli. These data lead to the formulation of a hypothesis regarding the connection between field independence, as a stylistic dimension, and aggressive behavior, starting from the assumption that those with a style characterized by field independence would encode less clues from the environment.

Vernon, apud (Gardner, 1966) "highlights a link between the mechanisms of defense and coping and the poles of the equalizer-differentiator cognitive dimension." Equalizers would tend to use repression, while differentiators tend more toward aggressive behavior.

The personality trait can be known as "any pattern of behavior (chains of reactions), common and lasting, which arises in a variety of situations in which the individual is placed" (Chaplin, 1985). The potential candidate for personality status, from previous stages, begins to become a personality. Although becoming a personality is a continuous process, with multiple transformations and transformations, with jumps, moments of stagnation or regression, during this period the personality begins to take shape, individualizes, acquires some orientations. There is a widening of the reporting horizon, the establishment of one's own philosophy of life, the previous egocentrism is overcome, the network of roles and statutes is gradually multiplied.

We notice that the manifestation of aggressive behaviors is a common practice especially in prison. We consider that the share of these manifestations in young detainees in prison differs, depending on education, culture, mentality, the perception of the detainee regarding the risk and seriousness of the crime, the way the authorities are involved in prevention and sanction the deed, age and sex of the individual involved in the crime, personality factors, previous lifestyle, style acquired in prison, environmental factors, but also the attitude of detainees towards this process. Aggression occurs in the offender either in frustrating situations or when he commits crimes through violence. 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 polarized needs in the pleasure of dominating.

The etiology of aggression is currently being debated worldwide in numerous scientific meetings, there are three explanatory models of this type of deviant behavior. The first model is the biological one focused on the notion of instinct, the second, the psychophysiological one is based on the notion of frustration and aggression interpreted as a response to frustration, and the third, socio-cultural, is based on the notion of learning is determined by interpersonal relationships.

Deviant behavior is a specific, individualized manifestation of the incarcerated prisoner to the frustrations he endures in interacting with the demands of the environment. It manifests itself as a maladaptation to the life of detention, we notice the installation of a conflicting state between the detainee and the prison environment: roommates, staff, on the one hand, lack of family, and himself himself, on the other hand.

Knowing the predictors that facilitate the emergence of aggressive behavior in human activity can be a broad approach to the aggressive behaviors of young offenders in prison and can develop strategies, recommendations that can help potential victims, in order to increase awareness, responsibility and development self-control and reduce the number of cases of anger and aggression in prison.

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