Professional Deformation Features of the Federal Penitentiary Service’ Employees

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Abstract. The specifics of the activities of employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service leave a significant imprint on the professionally important qualities of employees, because activities are accompanied by increased extremeness, responsibility, unpredictability, and danger. A great influence on them is exerted by interaction with offenders, performance of official duties along with excessive mental and physical stress. Therefore, every year the topic of professional deformations is becoming increasingly relevant. The article describes the features of the severity of types of professional deformation of employees of the federal penitentiary service in comparison with employees of police officers and bailiffs. The study used the following classification of types of professional personality deformation: authoritarianism, professional aggression, over-control, behavioral transfer (manifestation of role transfer syndrome), irresponsibility or learned helplessness, conservatism and anxiety. The study involved 25 employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service, 48 employees investigating and solving crimes of the internal affairs bodies, and 40 employees of the Federal Bailiff Service. The study used methods such as questionnaires and psychological testing, as well as statistical methods: descriptive statistics, cluster analysis and multivariate analysis of variance. To identify types of professional personality deformation, the author’s questionnaire was used. As a result of the study, it was found that for the employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service the most characteristic are over-control and conservatism as types of professional deformations. Authoritarianism, over-control, conservatism are common professional deformations among law enforcement officials.

Introduction

When mastering a professional role, it is impossible to avoid changes in the structure of personality. Immersion in the profession is accompanied by personality changes, in which, on the one hand, the subject of labor develops positively, for example, through strengthening professional qualities, and on the other hand, sharpening these traits, when exposed to groups of various external factors, can cause a violation of the integrity of the professional personality [1]. A person engaged in professional activities develops a stereotype of behavior caused by the characteristics of his work, which may adversely affect his relations with the outside world [2].

According to the Order of the Ministry of Justice of Russia dated 12.12.2005 No. 238 “On approval of the Instructions for organizing the activities of the psychological service of the penitentiary system”, in order to increase the efficiency of work, psychologists carry out psychological work measures aimed at relieving the nervous and emotional stress of employees, ensuring restoration of working capacity and reducing fatigue, as well as increasing the functional capabilities of the body, resistance to the influence of stress factors and reducing negative consequences. Psychological correction is also carried out, psychological support for experiencing
difficult life situations, prevention of suicidal incidents, prevention of professional deformation of personality and deviant forms of behavior.

Today, there are diverse approaches to understanding the essence of professional deformation [3-6], its types [7-9], factors affecting its occurrence, as well as its consequences [5-6]. In addition, preventive programs have been developed [10-11]. Moreover, there is no unity in the definitions of this concept and in a number of works [6, 12-16] professional deformation is equated with such concepts as “burnout”, “degradation” and "destruction". Deformation in the scientific literature is more often associated with negative, destructive consequences and aspects [11, 17] but a number of researchers [18-20] raise the question of a constructive, positive effect on the personality of professional deformation. There is also a lack of tools to identify the severity of professional deformation.

The specifics of the activities of employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service leave a significant imprint on the professionally important qualities of employees, because activities are accompanied by increased extremeness, responsibility, unpredictability, and danger. A great influence on them is exerted by interaction with offenders, performance of official duties along with excessive mental and physical stress. Therefore, every year the topic of professional deformations is becoming increasingly relevant.

The purpose of the study is to identify features of the severity of professional deformation types of employees of the federal penitentiary service in comparison with employees of the police officers and the federal bailiff service.

Research hypotheses:

For employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service, the most characteristic types of professional deformations are over-control and professional aggression.

Over-control and anxiety are common professional deformations for employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service, internal affairs bodies, and the federal bailiff service.

Research Results and Discussion

Materials and Research Methods

In our study, we relied on the classification of types of professional deformations that we developed earlier that was developed for employees of internal affairs bodies, whose methodological basis was the concept of professional destruction E.F. Zeer [8]. Since the activities of both the federal penitentiary service and the police officers are characterized by everyday work with the contingent of convicts, exposure to danger during the service, mental overload, the specific environment in which professional activity is carried out, and a high level of emotional stress, we consider it possible to apply this classification and for employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service. The following types of professional deformations were included in the classification: authoritarianism, conservatism, behavioral transfer, over-control, professional aggression, anxiety and irresponsibility (learned helplessness).

The study samples:

—25 employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service of the city of Arkhangelsk, Russia, of which 21 are men and 4 women aged 23 to 46 years (average age 35.3 years); with an experience of 2 to 25 (average length of service 11.7).

—48 employees investigating and solving crimes of the police officers of the city of Arkhangelsk, Russia, of which 39 men and 9 women aged 26 to 49 years (average age 36.3 years); with an experience of 1 to 26 years (average length of service: 12.2 years).

—40 employees of the bailiffs of the city of Arkhangelsk, Russia, including 9 men and 31 women aged 24 to 59 years (average age 34.8 years); with an experience of 1 to 27 years (average length of service: 8.2 years).

The study used methods of quantitative data analysis - questioning.

Author's questionnaire on the study of types of professional deformation, characteristics of

The questionnaire included three sections:
A) General information about the subjects (age, gender, marital status, level of education, position, rank, length of service);
B) Issues aimed at identifying the severity of professional deformation
C) Aimed at self-assessment of the effectiveness of professional activity (on a seven-point scale).

The statistical processing of empirical research data was carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 23.00 statistical package (license agreement No. Z125-3301-14). Descriptive statistics, cluster analysis, multivariate analysis of variance, and regression analysis were used for statistical data processing.

**Research Results**

We have carried out a description of the severity of each of the seven studied types of deformation. The severity was estimated as a percentage of the share of the maximum possible score for the type of deformation in each of the examined. Medians, as measures of central trends, interquartile ranges, as well as the nature of the distribution in variables are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of deformation</th>
<th>Federal Penitentiary Service</th>
<th>Police officers</th>
<th>Federal Bailiff Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First quartile</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Third Quartile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
<td>50,0</td>
<td>54,2</td>
<td>58,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional aggression</td>
<td>41,7</td>
<td>45,8</td>
<td>50,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over control</td>
<td>56,3</td>
<td>68,8</td>
<td>81,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Transfer</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>16,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatism</td>
<td>56,3</td>
<td>62,5</td>
<td>68,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned helplessness</td>
<td>29,2</td>
<td>41,7</td>
<td>54,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>25,0</td>
<td>31,3</td>
<td>37,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on table 1 it can be seen that authoritarianism and professional aggression in most employees are expressed within the normal range. Relatively higher than others, over-control and conservatism are manifested, which is due to the specifics of their official activity, in the performance of which it is necessary to restrain your feelings and impeccably follow the instructions.

Lower values are obtained by parameters of anxiety and irresponsibility. This may be due to the fact that employees have a high individual responsibility for the results of their work, therefore excessive anxiety and manifestations of learned helplessness can lead to a sharp decrease in the effectiveness of activities and result in disciplinary sanctions.

Further, using multivariate analysis of variance, we compared the severity of the types of deformations in representatives of three groups. According to multivariate tests (Pillaya’s Trail 0.210, F = 1.268 at p <0.001), statistically significant differences are observed in the severity of types of professional deformation among representatives of various law enforcement agencies; authoritarianism, professional aggression, conservatism, and anxiety are observed in terms of parameters; we will consider them later analysis.
Figure 1. The severity of the professional deformation types among the employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service in comparison with employees of the police officers and bailiff.

According to Figure 1, it can be seen that the authoritarianism rate for employees of the federal penitentiary service is lower than that of employees of police officers and court bailiffs. The values of professional aggression for all law enforcement officers are expressed below the average level, for employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service this indicator is greater than that of bailiffs, but less than that of employees of internal affairs bodies. Perhaps the employees of the police officers have the highest rates of professional aggression, since the staff involved in the investigation and solving of crimes participated in the sample, a higher level of aggression is required for this profession than for employees performing a preventive function.

Conservative values for employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service are more pronounced than for employees of the police officers and the Federal Penitentiary Service. It can be assumed that this is due to the fact that the activities of employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service are based on established professional technologies, methods, tactics, and tactics of carrying out activities than those of other law enforcement agencies.

The indicators of anxiety among employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service have the lowest values, it can be assumed that this is due to the fact that employees of the police officers and bailiffs often have to make decisions related to the fate of other people, while the employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service only provide punishment already convicted.

The Results Discussion

The types of professional deformation of the employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service Service studied in this study have a scientific justification in other studies. A.I. Bogatyrev notes that during professional deformation in penal colony employees, under the influence of various factors, one can detect manifestations of self-interest, aggression, affective psychosis, agitation, loss of self-control, cruelty, hostility, violence, inability to answer for one’s actions, mental decline, mental disorders, psychopathies from alcohol abuse, increased conflict [22]. In the works of Zudaev A.K. and Badonova A.M. the authors' opinion indicates that one of the manifestations of the professional deviation of the penitentiary system employees is also aggressiveness [23].

The results of this study can be used by a psychologist to build interaction with the heads of departments, as well as with the employees themselves, to eliminate or minimize factors that contribute to the development of professional deformation and reduce the effectiveness of professional activity.

Conclusion

According to the results of this study, it was found that the types of professional deformation, such as over-control and conservatism, are most typical for employees of the federal punishment service. Over-control and conservatism are common types of professional deformation among law enforcement officials.
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References


