

Features of the formation of socio-psychological attitudes of personality among terrorists

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Abstract. The results of an experimental study of the features of the formation of socio-psychological attitudes in the motivational-need-to-required sphere using the example of a sample of respondents detained by law enforcement agencies of the Chechen Republic for committing crimes of a terrorist nature are analyzed in the article. The experiment was conducted on the basis of the Republican Psychoneurological Dispensary, where criminals detained for terrorist activities at different periods of time underwent a forensic psychiatric examination as part of investigative actions, during which their socio-psychological status was also studied. A total of 32 criminals detained for committing crimes of a terrorist nature were examined, the average age was 27 ± 5 . Individuals of youthful age (average age 24 ± 6) in the amount of 31 people were selected as a reference group for comparative analysis. An analysis of the results of the experiment showed that terrorists, compared with law-abiding citizens, have lower values for the formation of socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivational-need sphere, which determines the orientation of the individual to the process, result, work, freedom and power. At the same time, in the motivational-required sphere of terrorists, despite their asocial orientation, socio-psychological attitudes towards altruism (possibly of a selective nature) and freedom prevail, while personal attitudes that determine the orientation towards selfishness and money are less formed.

Keywords: terrorist, attitudes, personality.

1 Introduction

The problem of terrorism and extremism over the past decades has become the most acute for all modern mankind in connection with the monstrous and inhuman crimes committed by adherents of the ideology of terror in various parts of the world. According to some

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researchers, the growth of terrorist activity of individuals, groups and organizations is associated with the aggravation of the socio-economic agenda in many countries of the world and the growing sense of confessional, racial and socio-economic injustice in society [1]. Consequently, the resulting social dissatisfaction often leads to the search for an “enemy” [2] and the manifestation of xenophobic and nationalistic attitudes in relation to the characteristics of the external appearance of another person [3] or a group of people.

Therefore, all this becomes the basis for social tension, mobilization and activation of certain sections of society that adhere to marginal utopian views (political, religious, cultural), and even the radicalization of certain groups of citizens [4-11], who share the ideology of violent confrontation with society and the state for the right to possess resources and power. As well as the ability to impose their own political will and ideology on the majority of the population in a particular country, while realizing the latent aggressive-sadistic inclinations of the individual, including by committing extremist and terrorist crimes [1, 2, 12-14].

At the same time, an important role, along with the deterioration of the socio-political situation and economic situation in society, is also played by the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual, in particular in the motivational-disability sphere, which, intertwined with the psychological and psychopathological problems of the individual (characterized by mental instability and increased conformity) [15, 16] can contribute to the formation of aggressive-sadistic tendencies realized through terrorist activities. In this regard, according to some researchers, it is impossible to speak unambiguously about the abnormality of persons committed to the ideology of violence and terror, as well as the presence of certain personal dispositions associated with an extremist or terrorist orientation of a person [17, 18].

All this makes the study of the problem of extremism and terrorism extremely difficult, since a huge number of factors (social, economic, political, ideological, personal, etc.) potentially influencing the formation of an extremist and terrorist orientation of a person [19, 20] require studying and consideration. Concurrently, in order to solve this problem, it is proposed to develop new approaches (integrative) and a broader theory explaining the nature of this phenomenon and, accordingly, continuing theoretical and empirical research devoted to the study of the socio-psychological and individual-personal aspects of the terrorist orientation of the individual as an integral element of the social system [7, 21].

An important direction for research is the study of individual-personal mechanisms that transform the environment around the personality and modify the personality itself. In this regard, socio-psychological attitudes in the motivational-required sphere contain moral principles and moral guidelines that determine the compliance of the individual with social requirements and largely determine the social activity and behavior of a person [22].

2 Methods

Based on the foregoing, an experimental study of the features of the formation of socio-psychological attitudes in the motivational-need sphere of persons involved in the commission of crimes of a terrorist nature on the territory of the Chechen Republic (CR) was conducted.

As part of the study, 32 terrorists the average age of which was 27 ± 5 , detained by the law enforcement agencies of the Chechen Republic and undergoing a forensic psychiatric examination on the basis of the Republican Psychoneurological Dispensary (experimental group) were examined. 31 young individuals, the mean age of which 24 ± 6 were randomly selected as a reference group for comparative analysis.

Statistical significance of differences between the experimental and reference samples was determined using the T-test of paired samples and the Mann-Whitney U-test.

Diagnostic methods: Potemkina's clinical demographic map and a method for diagnosing the socio-psychological attitudes of a person in the motivational-need sphere (the questionnaire consists of two parts, the first part defines the most important feature for a person: altruism or selfishness, a process or a result, the second is aimed at assessing the significance freedom or power, maintenance of work or money).

3 Results

As a result of a comparative analysis of the indicators of the severity of socio-psychological attitudes of a person in the motivational-need sphere of a sample of terrorists and persons from the control sample, it was reliably revealed that terrorists have the following attitudes less formed: process orientation, result orientation, work orientation, freedom orientation and power orientation ($p \leq 0.05$).

Additionally, a comparative analysis of the parameters of the severity of socio-psychological attitudes of terrorists and persons from the control group, carried out using the criterion for comparing paired samples, made it possible to identify differences with a low probability of statistical error ($p \leq 0.05$) in almost all attitudes, except for constructs – orientation to process/result of terrorists (see Fig. 1).

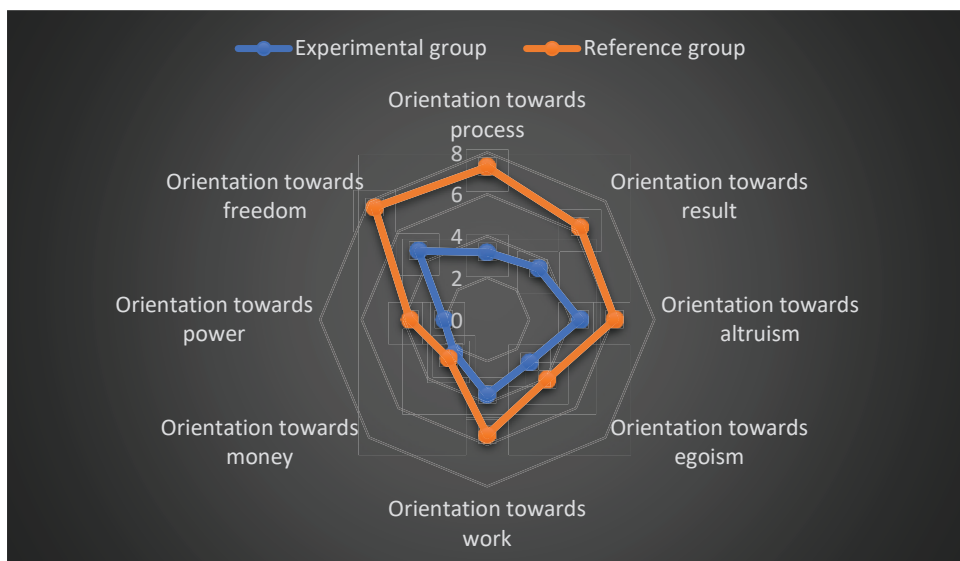


Fig. 1. Pairwise comparison of the mean values of the severity of socio-psychological attitudes in the experimental ($n=32$) and reference ($n=31$) groups.

As a result of a comparative analysis, the group of terrorists revealed statistically significant differences in three pairs, each of which includes certain socio-psychological attitudes of the individual. According to the revealed values, the most pronounced among terrorists in the motivational-need sphere turned out to be personal orientations towards altruism, labor and freedom. In contrast to the group of terrorists, the individuals from the reference sample showed significant differences in all four pairs, while the most pronounced in the control group were, like the terrorists, orientations towards altruism, work and freedom, as well as the orientation towards the process.

Thus, the results of a comparative analysis of pairwise differences in the socio-psychological attitudes of individuals from the experimental and control samples show that, regardless of whether or not the respondents have a terrorist past, they are more

characterized by personal attitudes that determine the personality's orientation towards altruism, work and freedom (concurrently, in contrast to terrorists, the individuals from the reference group also have an attitude that determines the orientation towards the process). At the same time, the severity of these attitudes in individuals from the experimental and reference groups is significantly different, as evidenced by both the results of a comparative analysis and the location of the average values when compiling the personality profile of individuals from both groups (see Fig. 1).

Thus, the results of the analysis show that such personal attitudes in the motivational-need sphere as an orientation towards freedom and an orientation towards altruism, which are the most prevalent in terrorists in terms of their degree of expression in the personality profile, have lower coefficients compared to similar indicators of persons from the control group. At the same time, for persons from the control group, the attitudes that determine the orientation of the individual to the process and result, as well as the content of the work (orientation to work) are more significant than the sample of terrorists. At the same time, an almost identical location in the personality profile (closest to zero in the center) of the individuals of both the experimental and reference groups has a personal attitude towards money.

Moreover, as part of the analysis of individual socio-environmental factors in the formation of socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivational-need sphere, the indicators of their severity were studied taking into account the criterion of place of residence (urban / rural), which made it possible to identify significant differences in only two constructs: the orientation towards altruism (more prevalent among terrorists from rural areas) in the experimental group, the orientation towards the process (prevails among law-abiding respondents from the rural area) in the reference group ($p \leq 0.05$).

4 Discussion

According to literary sources, the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivational-need sphere are directly related to certain forms of the individual's social activity [21] and may differ depending on the professional orientation of the person and the role he plays [23], while on the formation of data constructs can depend on both the mental state of a person [22], and his self-attitude and well-being [24]. This study of the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual (in the context of committing crimes of a terrorist nature by an individual) shows that persons who have committed crimes of a terrorist nature differ from law-abiding citizens in a lower orientation (motivation) to the process, result, work, freedom and power. Despite the pronounced anti-social nature of terrorists, the leading motivational attitudes in their motivational-need sphere are orientations towards altruism and freedom. However, it should be emphasized that all these and other personal attitudes of terrorists are more poorly expressed in the personality profile in comparison with law-abiding citizens. At the same time, for terrorists from rural areas (who turned out to be three times smaller than criminals from urban areas), it is important to act primarily for the benefit of others, often to the detriment of themselves (orientation towards altruism), while law-abiding citizens living in rural areas, more driven by interest in the case (process orientation).

The study of personal characteristics and, separately, motivational attitudes on the example of people with a terrorist past, despite the lack of a universal profile of a terrorist, is important both for understanding the nature of this phenomenon and for predicting, and therefore preventing manifestations of extreme forms of violence in society. Therefore, the results of the study may be useful in the development of comprehensive programs for the socio-psychological prevention of extremist and terrorist manifestations, especially among young people.

5 Conclusion

The surveyed terrorists, compared with law-abiding citizens, revealed lower indicators of the severity of the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivational-need sphere, which determine the orientation of the individual to the process, result, work, freedom and power.

In the motivational-required sphere of terrorists, despite their anti-social and anti-human orientation and nature, socio-psychological attitudes towards altruism and freedom predominate, while terrorists' attitudes that determine the personality's orientation towards selfishness and money are less formed.

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