

# The Problem of Unconscious Aggressiveness of Criminals in the Conditions of Postmodern Society Development

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**Abstract:** In this paper, attention has been paid to the study of the individual psychological and criminological features of acquisitive and violent criminals. The purpose of the research is to find out the peculiarities of unconscious aggression of non-chronic, chronic and extreme-chronic acquisitive and violent criminals. The non-chronic type included twice sentenced criminals; the chronic type – criminals who had served their prison term 3-5 times; extreme-chronic type – those who had 6 or more convictions. The research tool used was the test “Hands” by Wagner, designed to diagnose the indicators of personality aggression. The study sample included male acquisitive and violent criminals with a total of 294 people who were sentenced to imprisonment for unlawful acts. The participants of the study were divided into groups of corresponding criminal orientation and a certain type of crime reproducibility. The group of acquisitive criminals comprised 143 people, 29 of them were non-chronic, 86 – chronic, 28 – extreme-chronic. The group of violent criminals included 151 people, 29 of who were non-chronic, 93 – chronic, 29 – extreme-chronic. The results of the study indicated a combination of aggressive and directive indicators of the identity of criminals that proved an increased probability of aggressive behavior, the lack of desire to take into account the opinion, feelings, rights, and intentions of others. The indicators obtained can promote the development of effective methods of rehabilitating those who serve the prison term for acquisitive and violent crimes.

**Keywords:** *unconscious aggressiveness; acquisitive and violent criminals; habitual criminals; aggressive behavior; antisocial attitude.*

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## 1. Introduction

According to the World Prison Population List (Walmsley, 2018), there have been at least 10.3 million people in prison by 2017-2018 worldwide. However, the actual number of prisoners may be much higher, as there is no reliable information from a number of countries. The United States leads in the number of prisoners: in absolute amount, about 2.2 million (that accounts for 25% of all convicts in the world; it is more than in the 35 largest European countries combined, and 40% more than in China). In Russia, the number of individuals in the custody is 518.000 as of 1 March 2019. About 70.000 convicts are serving their sentences in prisons in Ukraine; 49% of them are twice sentenced. For example, the number of convicted individuals in the world has increased by 19.8% since 2015 (Walmsley, 2018). The criminal subculture is gaining more influence on the overall social processes.

The problems of effective rehabilitation and resocialization of criminals are extremely urgent and complex in the conditions of development of a postmodern society, and therefore they require a comprehensive understanding of the psychological characteristics of this category of people. A detailed study of the psychological characteristics of criminals makes it possible to effectually build the work on the improvement of those personal traits of criminals that contributed to the creation and strengthening of criminal antisocial attitudes, habits, and inclinations and in some cases, were the cause of a series of unlawful acts.

The conducted research established that in the conditions of staying together and communicating, there is a mutual “criminal infection” of different categories of criminals, and in the future, deepening of the unlawful orientation of an individual (Burt, & Donnellan, 2008; Filonenko, 2013; Hornsveld et al., 2018; Kryvolapchuk et al., 2020; Rosenfeld, 2009; Shvets et al., 2020; Stanković et al., 2019).

The knowledge of the psychological features of criminals allows identifying the corresponding reasons for their unlawful act, improving educational work in penal institutions, to developing social and psychological measures to ensure the prevention of the repetition of offences. The undifferentiated nature of correctional and educational influence on criminals concerning fundamentally different types of criminal offenses reduces the possibility of purposeful execution of punishment, the effectiveness of the activity of correctional facilities. That is why the study of the psychological characteristics of the individuals of different criminal orientation, in particular, acquisitive and violent, and the determination of

the individual features of their adaptation mechanisms, typical forms of response and social interaction with the environment become relevant. It is quite clear that one of the most important factors influencing behavior is character traits, which in the future may cause aggressive behavior.

Concerning criminal behavior, some researchers point out that the psychological specificity of such behavior and unlawful actions in a number of cases should be combined not only with characteristic features but also with aggressive behavior (Burt, & Donnellan, 2008; Hornsveld et al., 2018; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2018; Jones et al., 2011; Lenta & Cormos, 2017; Međedović 2017; Schienle et al., 2017; Van Dijk, 2015).

According to Frączek (2002), aggression can be considered as a set of stable individual characteristics, which are defined as repetitive, steady and stable patterns of behavior, a stable life orientation, which is revealed in hostility or specific intra-psychological attributes of personality in the form of habits and attitudes. The problem of aggressiveness and aggressive behavior of people who are inclined to offenses, who have committed crimes and serve the prison term, attracts the attention of many specialists who study the causes of antisocial actions and their legal assessment, medical and psychological qualification of the offender's personality, and the prevention of criminal behavior. This problem is particularly acute for the penitentiary system, which is tasked not only to execute penalties but also to reeducate convicts and ensure their further resocialization and readaptation to society.

The study of the problem of criminals' aggressiveness allows predicting its manifestations in the conditions of serving the sentence and evaluating the possibilities of resocialization and helps to develop effective methods of preventing recidivism. Therefore, this study paid attention to identifying the specificity of aggression among convicts.

## **2. Literature Review**

Aggressiveness is a personal trait that represents a person's tendency to react to a situation in a certain way, a willingness to act aggressively, and an inclination to perceive the behavior of others as hostile.

At different times, scientists considered aggression and aggressiveness from different positions and approaches, the main ones being related to the identification of the contribution to its origin made by the biological and social factors. Considering the determinants of aggression, some researchers, such as Dill and Anderson (1995), Lorenz (2002), Mack (1969), preferred internal biological factors, considered aggression a

necessary driving force in the fight for survival, which occurs mainly within one the species; others attributed aggression to external social factors and viewed acts of aggression as socially learned patterns of behavior (Berkowitz, 1981; Ronel, 2011).

In terms of frustration theories (Blair, 2010; Breuer, & Elson, 2017), aggressiveness is an external reaction that emerges as a result of experiencing any frustrating situation. That is why the contribution of emotional processes must be taken into account when describing aggression. From the point of view of coercive theory (Jolliffe, & Farrington, 2018), aggressiveness is not an instinctive motivational force that appears as a result of depriving an organism of important things, conditions, and increases with the enhancing of such deprivation. The representatives of the ethical and humanistic approach (Jones et al., 2011) view aggression and violence as a kind of psychological protection, forced actions of an individual in response to threatening experience.

In modern literature, aggressiveness is regarded as an integral feature of a harmoniously developed personality, and its absence can lead to an inability to protect one's own interests and defend oneself. Fromm (1972) distinguishes the so-called defensive aggression that serves for the survival of an individual as an instinct, and another type of aggression – destructiveness or cruelty, which is a passion that has no specific purpose, its manifestation is a purely human feature.

Perhaps the most modern and universal is the general aggression model (GAM) (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). It is a biosocial-cognitive model designed to account for both short-term and long-term (developing) effects with a large range of aggression variables. GAM can explain the broadest range of aggressive behaviors, including those that are not based on negative events or negative effects. In addition, this theory has considerable empirical support. GAM integrates previous psychological models of aggression into a single framework and incorporates knowledge from other disciplines (Warburton & Anderson, 2015).

Analyzing substantial studies of many scientists, Filonenko (2013) notes that, in contrast to law-abiding person, a criminal has stable psychological characteristics, the combination of which has criminogenic meaning: impulsiveness, aggressiveness, excessive sensitivity in relationships, strangeness, inability to adjust to the new social situation, anxiety, the lack of empathy, suspicion, self-doubt, and pessimistic moods. The researcher identified that 36-44% of the people who committed violent and acquisitive-violent crimes and 22-26% of acquisitive criminals had these features. The aggressive behavior is the result of the development of a particular individual

in particular conditions under the influence of biological and social factors. Being a structural element of personality, aggressiveness interacts with its components, such as communicativeness, purposefulness, interests, and others. The individual criminal violent behavior is the result of the interaction of stable personal entities that characterize the subject's antisocial orientation (one's needs, beliefs, values, etc.) and the criminogenic situation or specific life situation contributing to the crime (Filonenko, 2013).

Those who commit violent actions are also numerous and diverse; starting to commit offenses in the early days, they have a high risk of recidivism in adulthood (Polaschek et al., 2018).

A favorable environment for the manifestation and development of aggressiveness is the microenvironment of convicts, which can provoke the realization of not only aggressive but also auto-aggressive tendencies.

Many scientists, who tried to identify patterns that lead to manifestations of aggression and the commitment of violent crimes, investigated the aggressive behavior of criminals and the aggressiveness of prisoners. Some of them referred aggressive criminal behavior to mental anomalies, pathopsychological characteristics, considered aggression as a reaction to the frustration of needs, accompanied by emotional states of anger, hostility, hatred, etc. (Kolla et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2017), others stressed that in a situation of forced isolation, any person becomes hateful and aggressive (Breuer, & Elson, 2017; Falk et al., 2017; Shackman & Pollak, 2014; Værøy et al., 2016).

**The purpose** of the study is to define the features of unconscious aggression of non-chronic, chronic and extreme-chronic acquisitive and violent offenders.

### 3. Methodology

The study sample included male acquisitive and violent criminals with a total of 294 people who committed repeated offenses. The participants of the study were divided into groups of corresponding criminal orientation and a certain type of crime reproducibility. The group of acquisitive criminals comprised 143 people, 29 of them were non-chronic (who were twice sentenced), 86 – chronic (who had 3-5 convictions), 28 – extreme-chronic (who had 6 or more convictions). The group of habitual violent criminals included 151 people, 29 of them were non-chronic (with two convictions), 93 – chronic (with 3-5 convictions), 29 – extreme-chronic (with 6 and more convictions).

The study was conducted using the test “Hands” by Wagner, designed to diagnose aggressiveness (Wagner, 1983). The technique can be used to examine both adults and children. The test “Hands” generally allows predicting a person’s criminal behavior and recidivism (Lie & Wagner, 1996).

Like most projective methods, the test “Hands” belongs to the class of tests characterized by a hidden from the subject purpose of the test, thus reducing the possibility of results falsification, which is also one of the advantages of using this technique in psychological expertise in court. The projective test “Hands” contains nine hand images. The tenth card has no image. The test includes the following diagnostic scales.

“Aggression” includes the responses in which the hand appears to be attacking, injuring, harming, aggressively dominating or actively grabbing another person or object. The scale also involves responses that have tendencies to action that suppose a sufficiently high degree of acceptance of the idea of aggression.

“Prescription” includes the answers in which the hand appears to be leading, destroying, or affecting another person in the other way. The answers reflect a sense of superiority over other people. The attitude toward people lies in the fact that others must agree with the intention of the hand that reflects a willingness to benefit from others.

“Fear” involves the answers reflecting fear of retaliation. They reduce the probability of overt aggressive behavior. It can be assumed that a huge number of such answers increase the possibility of overt aggressive behavior (in an imaginary attack). The fear scale includes answers in which the hand is perceived as a victim of one’s own aggression. The rejection of aggression means the fear of retaliation.

“Affectivity” covers the answers in which the hand is presented as making an affective gesture or affectively kind gesture. The hands appear to offer friendship or help to others. The answers reflect an increased capacity for an active social life. They reflect the subject's desire to work with others to share affectivity.

“Communication” comprises the answers where the hand communicates or attempts to communicate with a person who appears to be equal or dominant. It is supposed that the communicator needs an audience more than the audience needs one, or that there are symmetrical relationships between the communicator and the audience. These answers imply a need to “share the difficulties”, “a desire to be accepted”, etc.

The scale “Dependency” includes the responses in which the hand actively or passively seeks support or assistance from another person. The successful implementation depends on the explicit or implicit need for a

friendly attitude of others. This scale involves all the answers in which someone actively asks for the help of any kind, or in which subordinate bends before the power or authority of another person.

The scale “Exhibitionism” includes the answers in which the hand approves oneself by one means or other. The hand takes part in some action where it specifically expresses itself.

The scale “Mutilation” involves hands that appear to be deformed, damaged, etc. These responses reflect feelings of physical inadequacy.

The scale “Active impersonal actions” (motor activity) covers responses that reflect a tendency to actions, in which the hand changes its physical position or resists gravity.

The scale “Passive impersonal actions” (passivity) includes the answers that reflect impersonal tendencies to actions, in which the hand does not change physical position or passively obey the force of gravity.

“Description” embraces the answers that actually are a physical description of the hand. The patient may have some “moods”, connected with the hand, but no association with a tendency to act or move is observed.

The answers related to the scales “Aggression” + “Prescription” are considered as the unwillingness and unreadiness to adapt to the external environment. The answers on the scale of “Fear” + “Emotionality” + “Communication” + “Dependency” indicate the readiness for constructive interaction in the social environment and low probability of aggressive behavior. The data from the scales “Mutilation” and “Exhibitionism” are not considered aggressive.

We used the Student’s t-criterion to statistically process the results. The significance for all statistical tests was set at  $p < 0.05$ . All statistical analyses were performed with the SPSS software, version 21, adapted to medical and biological researches.

The research was carried out according to the requirements of the Code of Ethics of Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs, which was developed on the basis of Ukrainian and world practices in ethical rulemaking, the recommendations of experts, taking into account the proposals of the structural units of the University. This document was approved by the Academic Council of Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs (Protocol No. 13 of 24 December 2019) and implemented by the order of the Rector of the University (Order No. 875 of 27 December 2019). According to its provisions, the members of the scientific community are guided by the principles of self-sufficiency, independence in the dissemination of knowledge and information, conducting scientific



research and the application of results. At the same time, the principles of upholding honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, following ethical principles and rules of creative activity are taken into account in order to establish confidence in the results of scientific achievements. Informed consent was received from all individuals who took part in this research and people under test who could refuse participation at any time.

#### 4. Results

Statistically significant differences were found in the indicators between the groups of non-chronic acquisitive and violent criminals on some scales. The results of the study of the unconscious aggression of non-chronic acquisitive and violent offenders are presented in Table 1. The investigation identified statistically significant differences between the groups of acquisitive and violent criminals on the scale “Aggression”: a significant increase of the indicator was observed in the convicts of violent type, which accounted for  $5.63 \pm 0.8$ , they were characterized as more aggressive, in contrast to the acquisitive convicts –  $4.38 \pm 0.43$ . On the “Prescription” scale, the indicator was  $1.93 \pm 0.53$  in the group of acquisitive criminals, and  $5.14 \pm 0.93$  in the group of violent criminals. Thus, a significant increase was found in a group of violent criminals. Statistically significant differences were identified between the groups of acquisitive and violent criminals on the scale of “Communication”: non-chronic convicts of acquisitive type were found to have a significant increase of the indicator –  $10.42 \pm 1.05$ , they were characterized as socially active, cooperative, in contrast to non-chronic habitual criminals of violent type, whose indicator accounted for  $7.02 \pm 0.93$ . The acquisitive and violent offenders were defined to have no statistically significant differences between the indicators on the scales “Fear”, “Affectivity”, “Dependency”, “Exhibitionism”, “Mutilation”, “Active impersonal actions”, “Passive impersonal actions”, and “Description”.

**Table 1.** The indicators of unconscious aggressiveness of non-chronic acquisitive and violent criminals (Mean±SD)  
Source: Authors own conception

The scales	Acquisitive criminals	Violent criminals	P
Aggression	$4.38 \pm 0.43$	$5.63 \pm 0.58$	<0.05
Prescription	$1.93 \pm 0.53$	$5.14 \pm 0.93$	<0.05
Fear	$0.44 \pm 0.47$	$0.10 \pm 0.10$	-

Emotionality	1.58 ± 0.77	2.24 ± 0.67	-
Communication	10.42 ± 1.05	7.02 ± 0.93	<0.05
Dependency	0.87 ± 0.51	0.89 ± 0.26	-
Ostentation	1.06 ± 0.62	1.62 ± 0.42	-
Mutilation	1.6 ± 0.73	1.71 ± 0.50	-
Active impersonal actions	11.23 ± 1.63	10.46 ± 1.26	-
Passive impersonal actions	1.73 ± 0.81	2.45 ± 0.64	-
Hand description	0.67 ± 0.50	1.38 ± 1.03	-
“Aggression + Prescription”	7.31 ± 1.06	9.97 ± 0.97	<0.05
“Communication + Dependency + Fear + Affectability”	12.87 ± 1.96	10.21 ± 0.97	-

*Legend: Mean – arithmetical average; SD – standard deviation; p – the significance of the difference between the indicators of acquisitive and violent criminals due to the Student’s t-criterion*

Statistically significant differences were identified between the groups of acquisitive and violent criminals on the scale “Aggression + Prescription”: the convicts of violent type were determined to have a significant increase in the indicator –  $9.97 \pm 0.97$ ; they were characterized as more aggressive, in contrast to the acquisitive convicts –  $7.31 \pm 1.06$ . The indicator of the criminals on the scale “Communication + Dependence + Fear + Affectability” was  $12.87 \pm 1.96$  in the first group and  $10.21 \pm 0.97$  in the second group. There is no statistically significant difference between the indicators. The qualitative analysis of the indicators obtained by the ratio of communicative, affective, and dependent responses allows characterizing acquisitive criminals as more communicative, formal and irresponsible in interpersonal relationships, which explains the increase in the overall aggressiveness index in this group. The main determinant of overt aggressive behavior is the underdevelopment of social cooperation attitudes but not developed aggressive tendencies. Therefore, it is important to consider not only the overall response rate on the scales “Aggression + Prescription” but also what resists this situation. Consequently, the propensity for overt aggressive behavior is assessed by comparing tendencies that reflect readiness for aggressive behavior and tendencies that are considered cooperative. In our opinion, the revealed specificity of unconscious aggressiveness in the group of acquisitive criminals with two convictions, which is reflected in the combination of aggressiveness and underdevelopment of social interaction attitudes and neglecting the environment, causes the risk of the future transformation of the acquisitive criminal behavior into the acquisitive and violent type of behavior.

To continue our study, we provide indicators of the unconscious aggressiveness of chronic offenders of acquisitive and violent orientation (Table 2).

**Table 2.** The indicators of unconscious aggressiveness of chronic acquisitive and violent offenders (Mean±SD)  
Source: Authors own conception

The scales	Acquisitive criminals	Violent criminals	p
Aggression	3.55 ± 0.73	6.03 ± 0.83	<0.05
Prescription	1.85 ± 0.42	5.18 ± 1.13	<0.05
Fear	0.14 ± 0.14	0.47 ± 0.35	-
Emotionality	1.91 ± 0.52	2.19 ± 0.94	-
Communication	8.77 ± 0.60	6.10 ± 0.81	<0.05
Dependency	0.72 ± 0.37	0.90 ± 0.51	-
Ostentation	1.99 ± 0.75	2.03 ± 1.39	-
Mutilation	1.80 ± 0.67	2.96 ± 1.30	-
Active impersonal actions	12.77 ± 2.13	9.17 ± 2.51	-
Passive impersonal actions	2.40 ± 0.90	2.88 ± 0.94	-
Hand description	2.02 ± 1.23	0.30 ± 0.17	-
“Aggression + Prescription”	5.35 ± 0.91	10.15 ± 1.38	<0.05
“Communication + Dependency + Fear + Affectability”	10.95 ± 1.69	9.98 ± 1.46	-

*Legend: Mean – arithmetical average; SD – standard deviation; p – the significance of the difference between the indicators of acquisitive and violent criminals due to the Student’s t-criterion*

On the scale “Aggression”, the indicator accounted for  $3.55 \pm 0.73$  in the group of acquisitive criminals, and  $6.03 \pm 0.83$  in the group of violent criminals. Consequently, a significant increase in the indicator was found in the group of violent criminals, in comparison to acquisitive ones. Statistically significant differences were identified between the groups of acquisitive and violent types of convicts on the scale “Prescription”: an authentic increase in the rate of convicts of violent type was noted –  $5.18 \pm 1.13$ , they were characterized as more demanding of others, in contrast to the convicts of acquisitive type –  $1.85 \pm 0.42$ . Statistically significant differences were identified between the groups of criminals of chronic acquisitive and violent types on the scale of “Communication”: an authentic increase of the indicator of the acquisitive convicts was noted –  $8.77 \pm 0.60$ , they were characterized as socially active, cooperative, in contrast to the convicts of the

violent type –  $6.10 \pm 0.81$ . On the scales “Fear”, “Affectability”, “Dependence”, “Exhibitionism”, “Mutilation”, “Active impersonal actions”, “Passive impersonal actions”, and “Description”, no statistically significant differences were found between the indicators of both groups.

The scale “Aggression + Prescription” identified statistically significant differences between the groups of acquisitive and violent criminals: an authentic increase of the indicator was observed among the violent type offenders –  $10.15 \pm 1.38$ , in contrast to acquisitive offenders –  $5.35 \pm 0.91$ . The indicator of the acquisitive criminals under study accounted for  $10.95 \pm 1.69$  on the scale “Communication + Dependence + Fear + Affectability”, the indicator of the violent criminals –  $9.98 \pm 1.46$ . There were no statistically significant differences between the indicators. In the groups of chronic offenders, there was a tendency for increased aggressiveness in combination with prescription in the violent type of criminals and formality and irresponsibility in the interpersonal relationships of acquisitive criminals.

The analysis of the indicators of unconscious aggressiveness of extreme-chronic acquisitive and violent criminals showed (Table 3) that on the scale “Aggression”, the indicator accounted for  $3.33 \pm 0.04$  in the group of acquisitive criminals, and  $5.63 \pm 1.06$  in the group of violent criminals. Thus, an authentic increase in the indicator was established in the group of violent criminals. Statistically significant differences were identified between the groups of acquisitive and violent convicts under study on the scale “Prescription”: a significant increase in the indicator of delinquent offenders of violent type –  $6.72 \pm 1.85$ , they were characterized as more demanding of others, in contrast to acquisitive convicts –  $1.77 \pm 1.44$ . The scale “Communication” indicated significant differences between the groups of acquisitive and violent types of criminals: an authentic increase in the indicator of acquisitive convicts was noted –  $8.87 \pm 0.56$ , they were characterized as more socially active, cooperative, in contrast to violent convicts –  $5.49 \pm 0.97$ . On the scales “Fear”, “Affectability”, “Dependence”, “Exhibitionism”, “Mutilation”, “Active impersonal actions”, “Passive impersonal actions”, and “Description”, no statistically significant differences were found between the indicators of both groups.

The scale “Aggression + Prescription” established significant differences between the groups of the acquisitive and violent types of criminals: an authentic increase in the number of violent offenders was observed –  $12.39 \pm 2.15$ , they were characterized as more aggressive, in contrast to the acquisitive ones –  $5.1 \pm 1.48$ . The indicator on the scale “Communication + Dependence + Fear + Affectability” accounted for

11.97 ± 2.32 in the group of acquisitive criminals, and 8.91 ± 0.84 in the group of the violent ones. There were no statistically significant differences between the indicators.

Generally, in the groups of extreme-chronic offenders, there is a tendency towards increased aggressiveness, combined with prescription in violent criminals, and the formality and irresponsibility of interpersonal relationships in acquisitive criminals. In contrast to the group of criminals with three or five convictions, acquisitive criminals with six or more convictions were characterized by an increase in the probability of overt aggression. In our view, the genesis of this phenomenon is different from the increase in a similar indicator in the group of acquisitive criminals with two convictions. The older an acquisitive criminal is, the more intense the criminal activity is, the bigger the number of convictions is, the more primitive demands one has, and the lower the socialization of an individual is. In this context, there are logically no responses on the scales “Fear” and “Dependence”. Such answers are generally uncharacteristic of all groups, regardless of the number of convictions and the type of criminal orientation, but acquisitive criminals with six or more convictions did not give such answers at all. That is, reducing the possibilities of organizing and committing an acquisitive crime, combined with the formality of relationships, irresponsibility towards the environment, the lack of fear of punishment and separation from other people, the probability of applying violence in order to achieve a criminal purpose is increased.

**Table 3.** The indicators of unconscious aggressiveness of extreme-chronic acquisitive and violent criminals (Mean±SD)

Source: Authors own conception

The scales	Acquisitive criminals	Violent criminals	P
Aggression	3.33 ± 0.04	5.63 ± 1.06	<0.05
Prescription	1.77 ± 1.44	6.72 ± 1.85	<0.05
Fear	-	0.26 ± 0.18	-
Emotionality	3.11 ± 2.12	1.98 ± 0.90	-
Communication	8.87 ± 0.56	5.49 ± 0.97	<0.05
Dependency	-	0.77 ± 0.54	-
Ostentation	-	0.53 ± 0.25	-
Mutilation	3.00 ± 3.08	1.65 ± 0.74	-
Active impersonal actions	13.80 ± 7.19	9.50 ± 2.70	-
Passive impersonal actions	0.87 ± 1.06	3.78 ± 1.43	-
Hand description	3.33 ± 4.08	1.75 ± 1.36	-

“Aggression + Prescription”	5.10 ± 1.48	12.39 ± 2.15	<0.05
“Communication + Dependency + Fear + Affectability”	11.97 ± 2.32	8.91 ± 0.84	-

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*Legend: Mean – arithmetical average; SD – standard deviation; p – the significance of the difference between the indicators of acquisitive and violent criminals due to the Student's t-criterion*

## 5. Limits and Discussion

Career criminals commit more than half of society's crimes and an even greater proportion of the most serious crimes, including murder. The aggressiveness is typical of the criminals who systematically committed unlawful acts to a greater extent than other criminals. Eventually, the aggressiveness of criminals' increases, first small hooligan acts are committed, insults are made, beatings and light bodily injuries are inflicted and later murder happens. According to the researchers, habitual criminals are characterized by a bigger social danger, which is associated with the existence of stable antisocial attitudes, a firmly rooted willingness to act in order to achieve the unlawful purpose (Breetzke et al., 2019; DeLisi, 2016; Stanković et al., 2019).

The study was conducted on the basis of the penal institutions of Ukraine, where the individuals who committed crimes of violent and acquisitive types serve the sentence. The sampling for the research was carried out by distinguishing criminals by the number of convictions. According to this feature, the repeatedly convicted criminals (convicted for the second time) and the criminals convicted multiple times (three or more times) were distinguished. On the basis of the studies of foreign scientists, the sample of habitual criminals may also be divided according to the degree of crime reproducibility. Some researchers identify the following types of habitual criminals: non-chronic and chronic (Newburn & Jones, 2007), while DeLisi (2001) adds the group of extreme-chronic offenders, who have been sentenced more than five times.

Schoeman (2002) identifies such groups as “repeat offenders” (with 2 convictions), “chronic offenders” (with 3-5 convictions), “career criminals” (with more than 5 convictions) and emphasizes the adequacy of such typological criteria for the requirements of the penitentiary system and the organization of corrective actions.

It should also be considered that the rigid regulation of activity and behavior while serving sentences in prisons, where there is a punishment for deviation from the norm, creates passivity, leads to the situation when most prisoners consciously choose a neutral position as the main strategy of life. The behavior of convicts becomes very similar; they are compelled to act

like others, not separating from them, otherwise, they will be the subjects for condemnation (Filonenko, 2013). It also confirms the necessity of psychological specification of the identified types and distribution of the sample in this study not only in the context of the criminal orientation of the subjects but also according to the type of crime reproducibility.

The results obtained correlate with those of Mejovšek et al. (2001), who conducted a comparative analysis of the aggressiveness of habitual criminals (who committed crimes systematically) and non-habitual criminals (with no significant criminal experience). The sample consisted of 258 people aged 27-43 years (83 habitual criminals and 175 convicted for the first time). The convicts who committed unlawful acts for not the first time were found to have significantly higher indicators of aggressiveness. Besides, Mack (1969) had studied earlier some of the psychological features of habitual criminals and the ones committed for the first time. 65 habitual criminals and 59 individuals with one conviction participated in the study. The groups were matched by age and intelligence ratio. However, as a result, criminals who systematically committed unlawful acts demonstrated a higher level of aggressiveness.

## **6. Conclusions**

The applied test provided the opportunity to conduct not only quantitative but also qualitative analysis of the ratio and distinct manifestation of the components of aggressiveness that allowed determining the specificity of each group on the basis of this possibility. In the group of violent criminals, there was a combination of high indicators on the scales “Aggression” and “Prescription” defined that were significantly higher than the indicators in the group of acquisitive delinquents.

The combination of aggressive and prescriptive indicators proved an increased probability of aggressive behavior, no desire to take into account the opinions, feelings, rights, and intentions of others that did not imply mutual “symmetrical” interpersonal relationships. The combination of high indicators of aggressiveness and prescription made it possible to describe violent offenders, both from the standpoint of their readiness for open aggressive behavior and unwillingness to adapt to the social environment.

The communication indicator in the group of acquisitive criminals was significantly higher than in the group of violent ones and it was combined with low rates of emotionality and dependence. This made it possible to characterize acquisitive criminals as more communicative but more formal and irresponsible towards the environment.

It should be noted that the discrepancy in the data of our empirical study was present only in the indicators of firmly developed personal traits of delinquents that is revealed in the process of committing unlawful acts of a particular orientation and with the acquisition of criminal skills and habits while serving the term in detention facilities.

The results obtained can be used to prevent the repetition of crimes and illegal acts, to provide law enforcement officials with effective psychological tools to take measures of educational influence on the people within the field of view of police or those in detention facilities.

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