

EDUCAȚIA ÎN INSTITUȚIILE PENITENCIARE: O CALE SPRE REABILITARE ȘI INTEGRARE

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Prezentul articol atrage atenția asupra rolului important al educației în reintegrarea cu succes în societate a deținuților după ce și-au ispășit pedeapsa. Autorul subliniază faptul că educația este un instrument-cheie pentru prevenirea recidivei și pentru creșterea șanselor deținuților de a se reintegra pe deplin în societate. Articolul, la fel, subliniază importanța unei abordări individuale a educației și reabilitării deținuților, ținând cont de nevoile și caracteristicile unice ale acestora. O atenție deosebită este acordată sprijinului psihologic și reabilitării sociale, care sunt considerate componente integrante ale unei adaptări reușite a deținuților. În plus, este subliniată importanța cooperării între sistemul penitenciar, instituțiile de învățământ și societatea civilă. Această cooperare asigură accesul deținuților la educație și la sprijin după eliberare, ceea ce contribuie la crearea unei societăți mai sigure și mai stabile.

Cuvinte-cheie: educație, instituție penitenciară, condamnat, reabilitare, reintegrare, dreptul la educație, adaptare socială.

EDUCATION IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS: A PATH TO REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

This article draws attention to the important role of education in the successful reintegration of convicted persons into society after serving their sentence. It emphasizes that education is a key tool for preventing reoffending and increasing the chances of convicts to fully reintegrate into society. The article emphasizes the importance of an individual approach to education and rehabilitation of inmates, taking into account their unique needs and characteristics. Particular attention is paid to psychological support and social rehabilitation, considered as integral components of successful adaptation of convicts. In addition, the importance of cooperation between the penitentiary system, educational institutions and civil society is emphasized. This cooperation ensures that inmates have access to education and support upon release, which contributes to a safer and more stable society.

Keywords: education, penitentiary institution, convict, rehabilitation, reintegration, right to education, social adaptation.

L'ÉDUCATION DANS LES ÉTABLISSEMENTS PÉNITENTIAIRES: UNE VOIE VERS LA RÉHABILITATION ET LA RÉINTÉGRATION

Cet article attire l'attention sur le rôle important de l'éducation dans la réinsertion réussie des condamnés dans la société après avoir purgé leur peine. Il souligne que l'éducation est un outil clé pour prévenir la récidive et augmenter les chances des condamnés de se réinsérer pleinement dans la société. L'article souligne l'importance d'une approche individuelle de l'éducation et de la réinsertion des détenus, en tenant compte de leurs besoins et caractéristiques uniques. Une attention particulière est accordée au soutien psychologique et à la réadaptation sociale, qui sont considérés comme

des éléments à part entière d'une adaptation réussie des détenus. En outre, l'importance de la coopération entre le système pénitentiaire, les établissements d'enseignement et la société civile est soulignée. Cette coopération garantit que les détenus ont accès à l'éducation et au soutien après leur libération, ce qui contribue à une société plus sûre et plus stable.

Mots-clés: *éducation, institution pénitentiaire, condamné, réhabilitation, réinsertion, droit à l'éducation, adaptation sociale.*

ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В УЧРЕЖДЕНИЯХ УГОЛОВНО-ИСПОЛНИТЕЛЬНОЙ СИСТЕМЫ: ПУТЬ К РЕАБИЛИТАЦИИ И РЕИНТЕГРАЦИИ

Данная статья обращает внимание на важную роль образования, успешной реинтеграции осужденных в общество после отбытия наказания. Автор подчеркивает, что образование является ключевым инструментом для предотвращения повторных преступлений и увеличения шансов осужденных на полноценное возвращение в общество. В статье акцентируется значение индивидуального подхода к образованию и реабилитации осужденных, учитывая их уникальные потребности и особенности. Особое внимание уделяется психологической поддержке и социальной реабилитации, как неотъемлемым компонентам успешной адаптации осужденных. Помимо этого, подчеркивается важность сотрудничества между пенитенциарной системой, образовательными учреждениями и гражданским обществом. Данное сотрудничество обеспечивает доступ осужденных к образованию и поддержке после освобождения, что способствует созданию более безопасного и стабильного общества.

Ключевые слова: *образование, пенитенциарное учреждение, осужденный, реабилитация, реинтеграция, право на образование, социальная адаптация.*

Introduction

The problems associated with criminal penalties and the rehabilitation of convicted persons leave far-reaching social and legal consequences. Effective methods of influencing individuals serving a sentence for their subsequent successful reintegration into society are becoming increasingly relevant. Among the factors contributing to this process, education and vocational training play a key role.

Education is considered to be one of the main tools for influencing the personality of convicts and shaping their worldview, values and skills. In this research article we will examine the importance of education and vocational training in the context of rehabilitation and re-education of convicts. We will also analyze different points of view and methods used in research on this topic and highlight the key aspects necessary for successful social rehabilitation of convicts.

We will emphasize that education in penitentiary institutions should be not only accessible but also

motivating for inmates. Effective educational programs should take into account the individual needs and interests of each inmate, as well as promote their personal growth and professional development. The importance of educational work and changing negative stereotypes in society also cannot be underestimated in the context of rehabilitation.

Finally, we will draw attention to the need for cooperation between different institutions, including penitentiary institutions, educational institutions and society as a whole, to ensure the successful adaptation of convicts and provide them with the opportunity for a meaningful life after serving their sentence.

In light of these important aspects, this research article aims to better understand the role of education and vocational training in the process of rehabilitation of convicts and their successful re-socialization.

Research methods used. To achieve the objective, several methods characteristic of this scientific

approach were resorted to, including empirical, expert, comparative and logical methods.

Basic research content

When studying the institution of education in modern society, it is important to note that the state should consider it as a priority area of activity. In the Republic of Moldova, the right to education for individuals serving sentences in the penal system is enshrined at the constitutional and legal level. It belongs to the category of fundamental constitutional rights of individuals.

The right to education is considered one of the most important human rights worldwide, as education helps individuals develop and realize their potential. Education, in its broadest sense, is the process of transmitting knowledge and skills accumulated by society, as well as acquiring and mastering them, along with labor skills. It serves as the foundation for the development of culture and contributes to the advancement of society as a whole, as all nations depend on educated individuals.

Author Ion Oancea, in his definitions, emphasizes that “Education is a form of societal activity that involves guiding and the psychomoral and social development of individuals. Education is understood as the process of shaping, nurturing, or caring for an individual by another person or institution, in order to instill psychosocial, moral characteristics, and behavioral rules necessary for integration or adaptation to family, professional, and social life” [1, p. 8]. The analysis of this definition demonstrates that education and upbringing are of critical importance for the successful integration of an individual into society. Education goes beyond mere knowledge transfer and is also directed towards shaping the individual in social and moral dimensions. Upbringing also plays a vital role in shaping the moral and psychosocial characteristics necessary for successful life adaptation.

This perspective is shared by Kh. A. Tyugaeva, who believes that “personality correction is achievable through active development through educational activities” [2, p. 11]. Education is a public good, and access to it should be provided for everyone, including the incarcerated. In penal institutions, conditions should be created for the education and development of inmates, and access to various forms of education should be ensured.

Securing the right to education for inmates has both moral-ethical and practical significance. On one hand, inmates are citizens whose rights and freedoms, including the right to education, must be guaranteed. Restricting this right can be seen as a violation of human rights and unfair treatment of inmates. On the other hand, education in penal institutions contributes to a more successful rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates into society, ultimately reducing the rate of recidivism.

Research shows that inmates who receive education while incarcerated have a lower chance of reoffending after their release. This is because education develops the skills and knowledge necessary for successful adaptation in society, as well as increasing inmates’ self-esteem and motivation. Thus, ensuring the right to education for inmates is not only a moral-ethical requirement but also a practical necessity to achieve the goals of the penal system.

Therefore, creating conditions for the education and development of inmates and ensuring access to various forms of education is an important task for the state. It is crucial that individuals serving sentences in penal institutions have the opportunity to receive education that can enhance their qualifications, improve their future employment prospects, and prevent recidivism. In the Republic of Moldova, the administration of penal institutions ensures the creation of conditions for inmates to obtain a general secondary education in accordance with the Ex-

ecutive Code of the Republic of Moldova [3]. This allows the convicted individuals to acquire basic knowledge and skills necessary for interacting with the world around them and for successful adaptation in society after serving their sentences.

Furthermore, for inmates who have not completed their general secondary education and are serving life sentences, conditions are provided for self-education that does not violate the order and conditions of their incarceration. This means that inmates have the opportunity to receive additional education and develop their knowledge and skills, even if they cannot obtain a general secondary education.

Overall, ensuring access to education for inmates is an important component of the penal system, as it helps them rehabilitate and successfully reintegrate into society after serving their sentences. Additionally, it can also reduce the risks of recidivism and crime in society. These examples illustrate how education in penal institutions can change the lives of inmates and reduce the likelihood of their returning to criminal activities.

V. Manya says, “Educating the convicted is a complex process that demands a great deal of patience from those who wish to undertake it.” [4, p. 435]. The author appropriately highlights the practical importance of legislators in the realm of education for individuals who are confined away from the free civil society. This is essential to provide convicted individuals with the opportunity to access education and prepare for their return to society after serving their sentences.

As per G. Sult, “...when considering subsequent methods of rehabilitating convicts, it can be observed that obtaining a general education is an integral part of the concept of upbringing, while vocational training can be incorporated into the process of vocational education.” [5, p. 214]. We disagree with the author’s opinion, as it is not entirely accurate. Education and upbringing are different processes, although closely

related. Education is aimed at acquiring knowledge and skills, while upbringing is focused on shaping a person’s worldview, values, and moral principles. Additionally, vocational training cannot fully replace vocational upbringing, as the latter also includes the development of work-related skills, work discipline, and responsibility towards society.

Authors express different views regarding the role of education and vocational training in the rehabilitation and reformation of convicts.

The first author believes that education and vocational training play a key role in this process. At the same time, the second author points out that educating convicts is a complex process, and education and upbringing are distinct processes, although closely related. They also assert that vocational training cannot completely replace vocational upbringing. According to V. Manya, legislation should provide convicts with the opportunity to receive education and prepare for their return to society after serving their sentences. Sult G. does not deny the importance of general education and vocational training but emphasizes that the upbringing process also plays a significant role in rehabilitating convicts.

In summary, both authors agree that education and vocational training are important for the rehabilitation and reformation of convicts. However, they express different viewpoints regarding their specific roles in this process.

Gabriel-Silviu Barbu and Alexandru Șerban in their book “Drept execuțional penal” assert that “education and development for inmates should be conducted in an organized manner and based on appropriate programs, taking into account their psychosocial characteristics, level of education, and needs” [6, p. 12]. These programs should aim to enrich the cultural level, develop moral qualities, and professional skills while also stimulating the interest and desire of inmates to lead a normal life. The analysis of the quote demonstrates that education

and development are of significant importance in the rehabilitation process of inmates and help them successfully reintegrate into society after serving their sentences. Therefore, education and development should be organized according to the needs and level of preparedness of inmates and are an integral part of the rehabilitation process within the correctional system.

Author I. Rusu describes the importance of social rehabilitation and reintegration of released convicts into society. “The objectives of this activity encompass various aspects, such as education, support, development of social skills, and behavioral rehabilitation” [7, p. 449]. We agree because these objectives are aimed at preparing convicts for successful adaptation in society and reducing the risk of reoffending. The author rightly emphasizes that it is important not only to provide convicts with education and assistance in developing social skills but also to help them reintegrate into society by ensuring access to housing, employment, and other living conditions. Additionally, providing convicts with support and moral assistance can help them believe in themselves and their abilities, which can also reduce the risk of reoffending.

In the article “Distance Education in Penal Institutions as a Factor in Positive Personal Growth, Rehabilitation, and Resocialization of Convicts” by authors S. V. Simonov and O. N. Shvartskop, it is noted that “society must create special mechanisms for the social rehabilitation of criminals, to which, firstly, institutions that provide acquisition of professional skills should be included, and secondly, changes in social stereotypes characterizing the personality of a criminal in the public consciousness” [8]. Based on this, in our view, it can be concluded that for the successful rehabilitation and resocialization of convicts, it is necessary not only to provide access to education and vocational training but also to work on changing negative stereotypes associ-

ated with criminals in public opinion. Overall, these measures can contribute to a positive dynamic of personal growth, reformation, and resocialization of convicts. It should be noted that the statements of these authors are more related to the influence of education on social rehabilitation, without focusing on the attainment of education, and enable them to be employed in jobs as holders of complete education cycles.

However, the authors of both articles agree that education is an important tool for the social rehabilitation and resocialization of convicts. Nevertheless, the author of the first article claims that education allows convicts to develop activity and responsibility, prevents personal degradation in conditions of isolation, while the authors of the second article argue that for successful rehabilitation, it is necessary not only to provide access to education and vocational training but also to work on changing negative stereotypes associated with criminals in public opinion. Thus, it can be said that the authors of both articles agree that education is an important component of rehabilitation, but they have different viewpoints on how to ensure the successful rehabilitation of convicts.

We indeed believe that obtaining education has become particularly relevant today. Education includes not only formal learning but also the development of skills and abilities that can be valuable for the future employment of convicts. The absence of a minimum level of education can push a citizen to the margins of life, and this often becomes a cause of criminal activity, leading to convictions and imprisonment. The rehabilitation period plays a significant role in the process of reformation, during which an individual must readapt to normal living conditions and find their place in the social structure. However, many released convicts commit crimes again precisely because they cannot find a meaningful role in society. The reason for this is that they lack the necessary level of knowledge and

professional skills, and they become victims of a social stereotype that assumes that a person who has been released from incarceration is, if not an actual, then a potential criminal [9, p. 209]. However, it should be noted that a reverse vector of movement is needed here, where the primary task of the penitentiary system is to educate convicts during the process of correction and make them in-demand in society. This is not about a certificate or diploma, but about education – the result of acquiring systematic knowledge, skills, and abilities. Only education can provide a convict with a chance to start a new, law-abiding life, considering the negative aspects of their personality associated with conviction and imprisonment.

Undoubtedly, the right to education is also one of the priority tasks as a form of educational work for individuals serving sentences in penitentiary institutions. However, it is worth noting that not only education but also vocational training plays an important role in this process. For example, many penitentiary institutions provide convicts with the opportunity to acquire professional skills and qualifications in various fields such as construction, culinary arts, mechanics, and so on. This not only helps convicts acquire new skills but also boosts their self-esteem and self-confidence.

It is also important to consider that education and vocational training should be accessible not only to convicts but also to former convicts who have already been released. To achieve this, appropriate programs and mechanisms need to be established to help them adapt to their new life and successfully integrate into society. Let's add a few more points to our position.

Firstly, in addition to education and vocational training, it is also important to consider the psychological and social aspects of the rehabilitation process. Convicts need support and assistance in adapting to life after imprisonment, including finding

employment, interacting with others, and rebuilding their relationships with family and friends.

Secondly, it should be noted that the effectiveness of education and vocational training for convicts can only be achieved if they are genuinely interested in the process and willing to learn. Therefore, in addition to the availability of educational programs and courses, it is necessary to create a motivating atmosphere in penitentiary institutions and encourage convicts to participate in education.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the rehabilitation and re-education of convicts are not only the responsibility of the penitentiary system but also of society as a whole. It is important to support initiatives aimed at helping former convicts integrate into society and create conditions for their successful adaptation. This can be achieved through collaboration with employers, educational institutions, and other social institutions.

We believe that education and vocational training play a key role in the rehabilitation and re-education of convicts, helping them successfully reintegrate into society. In addition to education, psychological support and social rehabilitation are integral elements of the successful reintegration of convicts. These aspects play a critical role in the reintegration process, allowing convicts not only to acquire knowledge and skills but also to overcome internal and external barriers that may hinder their successful adaptation.

It is important to note that the level of education significantly affects the formation of interests, needs and views of a person serving a sentence. Thus, convicts with a higher level of education show greater interest in continuing their studies, their need for literature is immeasurably higher. At the same time, they are less likely to have negative needs.

It is obvious that the need for education for the penitentiary system is related to the great increase of recidivism, so spontaneous learning of asocial

norms in the conditions of isolation from society, the disadaptation of convicts and their inability to adequately adapt to the rapid flow of developing information technologies, to the unstable market structure of the economic sphere, to the transition of the state to social principles, which implies quality education of each member of the state and the development of social protection in general.

O. Dobă, in the article “Statutul juridic al condamnatului și reintegrarea lui în societate” notes that “the main means of correction of the convicted person are: the method and conditions of execution of punishment, socially useful work, educational work, vocational training, general education, the influence of society, these means are applied taking into account the category of crime, personality and behavior of the convicted person according to an individual and continuous program” [10, p. 68]. We do not agree with the author’s opinion, because in practice these means are not applied on an individual and continuous program of education. In practice, it is not always possible to implement an individual and continuous approach to correction and education of inmates in penitentiary institutions. This indicates that there are problems in the organization and implementation of educational programs in penitentiary institutions, and additional efforts are needed to ensure more effective work in this area.

Thus, V. Cojocaru and a number of authors in the work “Handbook of the Convict” note that “vocational training of convicts in penitentiary institutions is carried out in the choice of profession within the proposed specialties, training for which is carried out in this penitentiary institution, is carried out by convicts voluntarily” [11, p. 118], with which we agree, since, according to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, vocational training of convicts is carried out on the basis of voluntariness.

The author I. Oancea emphasizes the importance of educational work in the penitentiary system and

identifies three main elements of this work: ideas, planning and personnel. He considers that “these elements are necessary to carry out socio-pedagogical work in penitentiary institutions, which is a carrier of higher values and must promote conformity between norm and behavior” [12, p. 81-88]. We agree with the author’s opinion and conclude that education and upbringing are important elements of personal development, necessary for its successful adaptation and integration into society.

Undoubtedly, educational work is an important element in the penitentiary system, which is aimed at socialization and rehabilitation of inmates. Ideas, planning and personnel do play a key role in ensuring the effectiveness of this work. However, it should be noted that there are different approaches to educational work and they may differ from one prison system to another and from one country to another. There may also be different views and approaches to defining the highest values that should be conveyed in the process of educational work. In addition, attention should be paid to the fact that the success of educational work depends not only on ideas, planning and personnel, but also on other factors such as funding, access to qualified teachers and resources that can assist inmates in their personal and professional development.

Thus, while educational work is an important element in the prison system, it is not the only factor affecting the socialization and rehabilitation of inmates. It is important to consider it in the context of other factors and take into account different approaches and opinions in order to ensure the most effective education and rehabilitation of inmates.

Psychological support aims to help convicts overcome psychological traumas and stress that may have arisen as a result of imprisonment and interactions with others. Professional psychologists and therapists work with convicts to help them develop emotional stability, adaptive mechanisms, and self-

esteem. This is especially important, as the psychological state of convicts can significantly impact their ability to learn and their successful interaction in society after their release.

Social rehabilitation, in turn, is aimed at preparing convicts for life in society after serving their sentences. This aspect includes teaching social skills, restoring family ties, teaching the fundamentals of civic responsibility, and participation in community life. Additionally, social workers and rehabilitation specialists assist convicts in finding housing, employment, and support them in the process of adaptation to new social conditions.

It is important to note that education, psychological support, and social rehabilitation are interconnected and complement each other. Effective rehabilitation of convicts requires an individualized approach that takes into account their level of education, psychological characteristics, and the need for social support.

Research and practice show that a comprehensive approach, including education, psychological support, and social rehabilitation, increases the likelihood of successful adaptation of convicts after their release. This approach also reduces the risk of recidivism, ultimately contributing to improving public safety and facilitating the reintegration of former convicts into society.

It is also important to consider the importance of individually tailored rehabilitation and education for convicts, which should not be underestimated. This aspect complements and deepens the discussion, emphasizing that each convict is unique and has their own needs and specifics that need to be taken into account in the process of preparing them for reintegration into society.

Reflecting on this topic, it is important to emphasize that successful rehabilitation and education for convicts must be individually tailored, taking into account the needs and specificities of each person within

the correctional system. This individualized approach is a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the reintegration process into society.

Each convict possesses unique characteristics, educational levels, past experiences, and needs. Therefore, it is essential to conduct individual diagnostics and analysis to determine which educational programs and rehabilitation measures are most suitable for each convict.

The psychological and social aspects influencing the prospects of successful adaptation can vary significantly from person to person. Some convicts may experience traumatic effects due to their experiences in the criminal justice system, while others may require assistance in developing social skills or specific professional skills.

Hence, creating individual educational and rehabilitation plans for each convict is crucial. This allows maximizing their chances of a successful return to society while reducing the risks of recidivism.

Research and practice demonstrate that when rehabilitation and education are tailored to the specific needs of each convict, it enhances their motivation and engagement in the process. The individually oriented approach aims not only to provide convicts with necessary knowledge and skills but also to assist them in developing self-awareness, self-esteem, and planning for their future.

In conclusion, individually tailored rehabilitation and education are fundamental components of the successful reintegration of convicts, transforming them from potential reoffenders into active members of society.

In addition to individually oriented education and rehabilitation, it is also crucial to pay attention to the role of collaboration between the correctional system, educational institutions, and civil society. This collaboration creates a broader support ecosystem that can have a significant impact on the successful adaptation of convicts.

Conclusions

Educational institutions, including schools, colleges, universities, and vocational training centers, can play a crucial role in ensuring access to quality education for convicts. Collaboration with such organizations enables the development of educational programs that align with current standards and labor market requirements. This helps convicts acquire real skills and qualifications that can be valuable when seeking employment after their release.

Furthermore, civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play an important role in supporting convicts at all stages of their reintegration into society. They can provide psychological support, assist in finding housing and employment, and facilitate social integration. It is essential for the correctional system to collaborate with these organizations to ensure continuous support and monitoring for convicts after their release.

Effective cooperation among all stakeholders in this process contributes to the creation of a comprehensive support system and ensures that convicts do not face the challenges of reintegration alone. It also helps reduce the risk of recidivism, thereby promoting a safer and more stable society.

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