

DETERMINATION OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR AMONG LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

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The problem of suicides today attracts attention not only from psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, but also lawyers. Recently, there has been a rapid increase in the number of suicides and suicide attempts. This problem remains relevant for Ukraine as well, because our country occupies one of the leading places in terms of the number of suicides in Europe.

Suicide is an act committed by a person in a state of affect, frustration, under the influence of mental abnormalities. Suicide is a conscious act of taking one's life under the influence of psycho-traumatic situations, in which life, as the highest value, loses its meaning for a specific individual due to personal mental deformations, socio-economic and morally destabilizing factors.

Despite the relevance and seriousness of the problem, there is still a debate among legal scholars whether to attribute the problem of suicide to the problems of criminological research. According to scientists, the main reason for insufficient attention of criminologists is that suicide (suicidal act) is not criminal offense in most countries of the world. We support the opinion of L.M. Shestopalova, who notes that suicide is closely connected with victimology in its broadest sense and with latency of crime; there is much in common in the causes that give birth to crime and suicide; the victim's suicide can be the result of many crimes, as well as lead to suicide; indicators of crime and suicide are correlated with each other¹.

Criminological science, due to its complexity, allows studying suicide not only from a legal point of view, but also from the point of view of other sciences, such as sociology and psychology.

Based on the legal provisions, within the framework of criminal law, the concept of «suicide» can be defined as the intentional taking of one's own life or an attempt to do this act, determined by the socially dangerous, culpable, criminally punishable behavior of other subjects. However, this definition is rather narrow, since being limited only to the criminal legal framework; it does

¹ Shestopalova, L.M. (2001). Suicide and leading to suicide; countermeasures: abstract diss. candidate. law. science. 12.00.08. NAI AU, P.4.

not cover other causes of the emergence and development of a person's suicidal behavior².

Sociologists' studies of the phenomenon of suicide are focused primarily on social factors. Scientists believe that social factors are associated with variations in suicide rates in each society, including social conditions, social norms and values, and the culture of the society³. The founder of the sociological theory of suicides, Emile Durkheim, proposed four different types of suicides, such as: 1) selfish suicide is a result of a person's separation from the main social institutions and the pressure of personal desires that cannot be satisfied immediately (extreme development of individualism); 2) altruistic suicide is a result of absolute dependence of the individual on society, encouragement of sacrifice by social culture (insufficient development of individualism); 3) anomic one is a result of a disturbance in the balance in society under the influence of various crises, as a result of which the individual feels his social inferiority; 4) fatalistic suicide is a result of excessive regulation of members of society. According to his theory, depending on the degree of integration of a person into society, both selfish and altruistic suicide can occur in different ways. Members in a more integrated society are more likely to hold shared beliefs about others as they try to establish their common goals in society⁴. According to E. Durkheim's theory, selfish suicide occurs when members of society have weak integration into their society; altruistic suicide occurs when members feel that society is more important than themselves. According to E. Durkheim's concept of social regulation, anomic suicide occurs when members of society feel that it (society) rejects them (war, economic crisis, and loss of close relatives or friends, loss of job). Fatalistic suicide, on the contrary, is the result of excessive regulation of members of society (can occur among prisoners, prisoners)⁵.

Within the framework of the modern psychogenetic view of the above-mentioned problem, theories have been put forward and research is being conducted regarding genetic predisposition and the influence of the brain structure under the influence of individual determinants on suicidal behavior. Thus, V.A. Rozanov defines that «suicidal behavior» is behavior specific to a person, which includes suicidal thoughts, tendencies, intentions, statements, attempts and completed suicide, and correlates with such types of behavior as autoaggressive behavior (aggression, directed at oneself) and self-destructive

² Fokin, A. S. (2020). Criminological and criminal-legal approaches to the study of suicide and its perpetration / A. S. Fokin, D. V. Balashov. Odesa, P.8.

³ Lester, D. (1972). Studies in death attitudes. *Psychological Reports*, 30 (440). Maris, R. (1981). *Pathways to suicide: A survey of self-destructive behavior*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

⁴ Johnson, B. D., & Durkheim, E. (1965). *Durkheim's one cause of suicide*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.

⁵ Durkheim, E. (1897/1951). *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. Translated by J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson.

behavior, where it is customary to include certain lifestyles with self-destructive manifestations (addictions, neglect, disregard for one's health, etc.). Among the reasons and conditions Rozanov V.A. paid special attention to biological ones, and among them – genetic markers of suicidal behavior⁶.

Modern science defines suicidal behavior as a type of general behavioral reactions of a person in extreme situations. Suicidal behavior includes: completed suicides, suicidal attempts and intentions to commit suicide.

Unfortunately, studies of this behavior type prove that suicide has become common among internal affairs officers aged 25 to 40 years. V.S. Medvedev singles out socio-psychological maladjustment as the main determinant of suicidal behavior among employees of internal affairs bodies⁷.

Suicidal behavior is often associated with a psychological crisis (mental pain, experiences), which can arise under the influence of threats of various kinds. A person, being in such a state of crisis, decides that suicide is the only way to solve problems. Given that law enforcement activity is a critical type of activity (shortage of time, increased responsibility, extremity, the presence of negative emotional factors), experiences among police officers have specific determinants. According to the results of research, the work of a law enforcement officer (policeman) is second only to the professional activity of a miner in terms of its stressogenicity (in the list of the 35 most extreme and dangerous professions, on a 10-point scale, the professional activity of a police officer is rated at 7.7 points).

So, the negative factors in the professional activity of a law enforcement officer, as a result of which a psychological and emotional crisis and tension arise, are: risky, stressful nature of the activity; lack of time (lack of sufficient time to make certain decisions, analyze the situation, take actions); irregular working hours, long stay at work, and, as a result, significant emotional and physical strain; increased level of responsibility; various kinds of conflicts; negative influence, opposition from the criminal environment (threats, revenge, blackmail, etc. from offenders); the need to use firearms; suicides are also caused by post-traumatic disorders as a result of participation in Ukraine's military operation against Russian aggression, etc.

The study conducted by employees of the Psychology Center of Personnel Work Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine revealed the following determinants of suicides among employees of the internal organs of Ukraine, such as: social and domestic ones, which are

⁶ Rozanov, V. A. (2010). About the mechanisms of the formation of suicidal behavior and the possibility of its prediction in the early stages of development. *Ukrainian medical journal*. 2010. No. 75. P. 92–97.

⁷ Medvedev, B.C. (2000). Suicide and professional deformation of the employees of internal agencies. Psychology of suicidal behavior: diagnosis, treatment, prevention: Collection of scien.works / Accord. to the edition of C.I. Yakovenko. K: KIBC, P. 62-64.

associated with troubles in family and love relationships; alcohol abuse, excessive psychological vulnerability of employees, gambling addiction, violation of discipline, significant debt obligations; low level of study of service candidates and their relatives; efforts to eliminate shortages in positions at any cost; inadequate attention from management to subordinates, especially the problems of young employees, ignorance of the situation in families, as well as improper response to discovered facts of alcohol consumption and gaming addiction of subordinates, untimeliness of preventive measures and ignorance of ways to resolve conflict situations⁸.

So, suicidal behavior among law enforcement officers is determined by a number of factors. Each of the above-listed determinants separately and collectively have a negative impact on the policeman's personality, and as a result, his social and psychological well-being is destroyed, the protective functions of the body and psyche are depleted, mental disorders and mental illnesses may occur.

⁸ Tymchenko, O.V. (2003). Self-aggressive behavior of employees of internal affairs bodies of Ukraine (social and psychological determinants, occurrence, methods of prevention and prevention): Abstract diss.. candidate of psychol. science 19.00.06. Kh., P.6.