A STUDY ON THE FUTURE AND ON DELINQUENT PERSONALITIES’ PERCEPTION OF IT

Marius RIZESCU
“Nicolae Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy, Sibiu

Abstract
This paper provides an in-depth description of convicts’ perception of the future and of how they think they will adapt to life on the outside, re-integrate into society and resume daily activities.

The specialized literature has already consecrated the fact that the personality consists of more subsystems, one of which is orientation. The perception of the future is part of the orientation subsystem and this paper analyses two of its elements, convicts’ self perception and their values respectively, in order to reveal any possible relationship between these personality components and convicts’ perception of the future, this being the foremost objective of this paper.

Keywords: delinquency, social perception, future, personality, convict, education, aggressiveness, violence

Each and every one of us has at some point pondered on ideas such as “who are we?”, “what is the meaning of life?”, “where do we come from?”, “what is our occupation?” “does our occupation match our needs and aspirations?”, “how will our lives develop over the course of time?”, “what are our expectations?”. All these queries differ from individual to individual depending on our psycho-individual particularities, on our socio-cultural and family environment, and on our life experience.

1. Perceptions of the Future

Thinking about the future means pondering on the meaning of life. Tudor Cățianu [1] claims that thinking about the meaning of life is establishing what life means to you. To some, life is what it is, and they don’t spend too much time trying to give a meaning to its values. To others, the meaning of life resides in a particular value – thus there are as many meanings as authentic or questionable values. Life is meaningless, others may argue, because it is unpredictable.

Opinions as to what time is, what future is and how it is perceived seem to differ very much in the specialized literature. Saint Augustine [2] believes that we know what times is, our memories build up our past, our current impressions are the present and our expectations are the future, in other words, the future is related to aspects that we don’t know and can not control. H. Bergson [3] considers time to be duration as it is lived and not an abstract line projected over time. Time should be seen as a product of our inner life - time consciousness is structured depending on inter-human relations and on the environment. P. Janet [4] argues that unlearned men go through life without giving time any thought. Time is not an elementary reaction but a complex one involving a wide variety of states of mind.
Time is, according to Janet the organization of states of mind according to the cultural background of the person in question.

As far as the future is concerned opinions are just as divergent. Pavel Apostol [5] claims that the future is a univocally determined flow of past and present, a structure of possible lines of development, each associated to a certain conditioned probability. These possible lines of development include, due to human initiative, certain structural mutations or revolutionary transformations of social systems. Long term projections of the future have a reduced operational value. In other words, “the future represents all possible transformations, the probability of which differs very much in scale, transformations occurring under predictable circumstances, with well-defined products and means, and decisions and actions of communities or individuals which have repercussions on the life of the entire society” [6].

The author conceives of the future in terms of probability and not of certainty, the future implying transformation and change based on different actions and decisions – volitional, behavioural and motivational. Exploring the future means building up mental lines for the evolution of a particular social system – so the future is practically construed as social transformation, the individual being left out of the equation, or it is precisely the individual who makes these projections of the future.

Bruno Wurtz conceives of the future in the same terms of probability [7] but he does manage to catch the obvious fact that this probability is not dependant on the future, but on the present, i.e. that the attitude to the future is determined by the present state of facts, a concept this paper relies heavily but not exclusively on. The perception of the future is also determined by the past events of an individual. The feeling of frailty is the shadow of non-recognition and of lack of perspective.

When we study the future we investigate ideas about the future starting from our own perceptions of what the world is and of how we believe it will develop and change. Our past experiences are the basis of our perception of future changes; change implies both continuity and discontinuity. This concept catches the fact that our perception of the future implies a careful consideration of both the past and the present, and that change can sometimes be relying on surprising, uncommon elements.

1.1. Defining the Future

Ursula Schiopu in the Dictionary of Psychology defines future as follows: ‘a great deal of our mental life consists of expectations, hopes, anticipations, aspirations, projections which all form an orientation towards the future’. These complex structures are layered. They refer to life, people, world, society. The same structure applies in the case of self-perception or self-esteem. They are projected into the future and create a subjective, intimate life space. The existential comfort or discomfort depends on how we relate our aspirations to the trajectory of layered standards and to the status or role that we project – be them commonly accepted or not [8].

An analysis of this definition reveals that the future includes expectations and aspirations, which depending on the status or role of the person in question, may be more or less real.

As far as the perception of time and future are concerned, note that time, just as space, is yet another dimension of human existence. Besides the real, chronological and objective time, there is the subjective, psychological, lived time. Besides the physics of time there also is the psychology of time.

Time is a measure of change, it reflects the existential duration of objects, phenomena, their simultaneity and sequence. Whenever we have a lot of activities to accomplish in a period of time, that period will seem shorter than when we have fewer
activities to accomplish during the same period of time. It always seems that when we are looking forward to something pleasant, we have to wait quite a lot of time, whereas when something unpleasant is about to happen, the waiting time is much shorter.

If we focus on time, regardless of the nature of the activities we are engaged in, be them pleasant or unpleasant, time seems to be passing slower than usual. A period of time including discontinuous stimulations seems longer than the same interval but without stimulations.

1.2. Perception of the Future – the Constructivist Concept of Perception and its Operationalization

The perception of time and future develops over time, it is not inborn. This fact is confirmed by the constructivist model of perception – “perception is part of that vital process through which, each and every one of us, starting from our own point of view, create a world of our own” [9].

The perceptive construction of reality depends not so much on the objective particularities of objects and phenomena as on our mental projections. People leave in a world that they perceive as a state of facts, so that their behaviour will be influenced not only by the actual world but also by its perception.

Social perception is the cognitive process developed over time, based on the social experiences of each individual, through the use of certain generalized stereotypes, clichés or cultural patterns.

Social perception includes: self-perception – the way we perceive ourselves, in relation to the others and to the group. It is based on the feedback we get from the other members of the group; perception of the other – it is formal and based on direct experience; collective perception – built up as a common way of reflecting the social reality. Social perception takes two approaches: one is a perception of the actual social behavior of each individual or member of a group and the other is a presumptive perception, i.e. what are our subject’s expectations concerning the others, depending on their social position.

The quality of one individual’s perception is influenced by the group perception: the perception of a gypsy is definitely marked by the biased perception of the gypsy people as a whole. The difficulty of correctly perceiving the others is even greater because people always tend to have certain interests, objectives or reasons, that makes them unpredictable in their actions: they can behave in a certain way in a context and in a totally different way in another context. Social perception is built up in time and has a significant influence over the future because individuals can not be taken separately without considering the other members of the group they belong to.

It is not only perception which is built up but also individuals’ personality. Personality is not seen as residing exclusively within the individual, but as well as emanating from his/her features as a psycho-social construction the essence of which can be identified within the interactional process. Those taking part in the process of social communication employ a certain common code for the social meaning of behaviours.

Adrian Neculau [10] goes as far as to speak about an auto-construction of personality that bears the mark of the social – we build up our personalities by resorting to a wide variety of sources many of which lie outside us (observations and appreciations of the others), even self-observance and self-construction being determined through assessment grids that the others offer.

Time can only be evaluated in relation to the past, present and future and the way individuals relate to these dimensions is dependent on their past and present experiences, on the social group they belong to and on other aspects such as family, aspirations and ideals. As a
consequence the perception of the future will be influenced by all these factors.

By operationalizing the syntagm of perception of the future we will practically refer to what convicts “see” beyond their detention, to how they “see” their life on the outside, what are their expectations, aspirations and projects and their chances of success. Their perception of the future will bear the mark of the period of detention which, we believe will decisively influence their motivations, decisions and capacity to act.

2. Convict Personality
2.1. Criminal Behavior Generating Factors

Tudorel Butoi [11] identifies two categories of factors: endogenous factors, and in this category there are factors such as brain malfunction, reduced intellectual capacity, difficulties in anticipating actions, living almost exclusively in the present, emotional instability – frustration, wishing for a better life, behavioural disorders – insufficient self control, impulsiveness, aggressiveness, underestimation, rejection of norms. Exogenous factors represent the second category of factors – the group the convict belongs to and its evil influence on the convict and the family environment, we refer here in particular to disorganized and conflicting families.

2.2 Deprivation of Liberty

Gheorghe Florian [12] claimed that prison life generates to major problems to convicts: firstle, the convict has to adapt to the norms and values specific to this new type of life and secondly convicts’ future development of personality will be influenced by this period of detention and all the consequences arising from it. Deprivation of liberty greatly influences the life style of individuals, both during and outside prison life. As long as the convict is surrounded by other people who have also committed anti-social acts, the remorse will diminish and will be replaced by all kinds of justifications meant to excuse their criminal actions. By trying to escape culpability, convicts are just trying to diminish their sense of guilty and to relieve their consciousness.

Difficulties arise not just from the social environment of convicts but also from their morality. The will to behave in a moral way, will never be approved by the others and thus the convict will be interested exclusively in obtaining personal and material advantages.

By knowing the essential aspects of detention, we will be able to better understand the particularities of convict personality.

2.3. The Features of Convict Personality

Convicts are seen as distorted personalities, a fact which allows them to commit atypical crimes with an anti-social and dissocial character. The convict is seen as an insufficiently socially mature individual who has problems of social integration and who comes into conflict with the norms and values of society. Here are the most important characteristics of convict personality:

– emotional instability – arising from negative experiences, improper education from the family, anti-social abilities and practices. This lack of emotional autonomy, this insufficient development of emotional self-control and poor development of emotions leads to an incapacity of correct self-evaluation and a lack of objectivity;
– social inadaptation, because education was improper; because convicts come from disorganized families (deceased, divorced, criminal, alcoholic parents); parents do not care about their children’s education; parents’ socio-cultural education is relatively low. All these aspects create anti-social attitudes that originate in the negative influence of the environment and lead to criminal behaviours;
– oversensitivity caused by a lack of inhibitions; a focus on personal interests,
regardless of consequences excessively mobilizes all the physical and psychological resources;

– duplicity is convicts’ second nature – the convict uses a masque not only when he commits the crime, but all the time; he works in secret, plans and executes everything in secret: this artificial game perverts his actions and daily actions which become easily noticeable by a keen observer. The convict has what Gheorghe Florian calls a chameleonic behaviour, adapting to facts and situations, always on the watch and ready to please others in order to satisfy his personal interests;

– intellectual immaturity refers to: convict’s incapacity to make a long term evaluation of the consequences of his anti-social actions; reduced capacity to establish rapport; the convict lives exclusively in the present and gives little importance to the future;

– emotional immaturity – a gap between the cognitive processes and the emotional ones: psychological rigidity, disproportionate reactions; the convict resorts to infantile behaviours (fits of anger) in order to obtain immediate, minor and sometimes insignificant pleasures; the convict is not consistent when it comes to real and important problems, he lacks a critical or self-critical attitude, is emotionally instable and unrealistic;

– frustration – is the emotional state that occurs when he is deprived of certain rights, rewards or satisfactions he believes himself entitled to. At a cognitive level, frustration is felt as a disorganizing crisis affecting the cortical command and triggering sub-cortical over excitation;

– the complex of inferiority - the feeling of insufficiency, of personal incapacity based on certain deficiencies, real or imaginary infirmities, which are often capacitated by the discontent and disapproval of the others;

– the feeling of self-assessment is undermined – the convict has nothing to loose is he is incarcerated, he doesn’t have a social status to defend; convicts have nothing to defend because they have nothing to loose.

Jean Pinatel [13] considers that four main characteristics define convicts’ personality. *Egocentrism*, which is the tendency to understand and interpret the world in terms of the self; when the convict can not accomplish his objectives, he becomes envious, susceptible and even despotic; he is not capable to see beyond his own interests, he doesn’t recognise the superiority of the others, he believes he is permanently persecuted, minimizes his flaws and failures. *Lability* which causes uncontrolled, spontaneous reactions which occur for no apparent reason; the convict can not suppress his desires and instinctual behaviour when faced with danger. *Aggressiveness*, which occurs when the individual is prevented from satisfying his desires and which manifests in a violent and destructive behaviour. Emotional indifference is closely related to egocentrism and is also called moral insensitiveness – i.e. the incapacity to understand the needs and problems of the others. It occurs at young ages being one of the main defaults of the socializing process caused by a faulty family education. The convict is not aware of his emotional inhibitions, which explains both his calm and his cold blood. Given the connection between emotional indifference and egocentrism, it can be argued that the convict does not feel guilt or culpability.

The axiological orientation and system of values of convicts makes them incapable of engaging in long term social activities, corroborated with contempt of work and negative attitude to those who develop an organized, productive activity.

In the absence of an emotional microclimate and ethical values, the convict becomes indifferent to his own fate.

The Italian researcher Giacomo Canepa [14] has performed several investigations on recidivists and other criminals and identified several essential
aspects of their personality: the tendency to perceive a distorted image of the reality, in the sense that the convict believes everybody to be his enemy, and considers that everything in life is governed by chance or bad luck; a certain inner incertitude and incapacity to decide; an incapacity to perceive himself in a realistic way and a strenuous effort to hide his personality.

2.4. Personality Sides

In an analytical approach to personality, Mielu Zlate [15] speaks about more sides of personality: real personality – as it actually is, self-assessed personality – individual’s ideas and representations about one’s own personality included in the self image; ideal personality – that which the individual wishes to obtain; perceived personality – ideas and representations of the others; projected personality – what an individual believes others think about him; manifest personality which includes all the other aspects. Depending on the situation, the convict will use one or another side of his personality so as to obtain personal advantages; we can hardly speak of authenticity in the case of convicts.

2.5. The Typology of Criminals

In an environment deprived of liberty we can meet different types of criminal personalities:

– the inveterate criminal has a repetitive behaviour posing a serious threat to the security of his fellow citizens, through persistent aggressiveness and total indifference as to the consequences of his actions;

– the dangerous criminal – the notion of dangerous criminal is supported neither on juridical nor on clinical considerations. This classification implies the necessity to resort to severe measures to the criminal. The notion of criminal is based on several criteria: crime seriousness, number of crimes, criminal’s mental state; the criminal continues to pose a threat to public security when released;

– the difficult criminal – unlike the dangerous criminal, the difficult one has problems adapting to the rigours of prison life, especially due to his personality. They are the product of prison which causes claustrophobia and fosters all these symptoms to convicts. Difficult convicts pose administrative rather than security problems;

– long term convict – long term imprisonment is a relative notion as it depends on the capital punishment. As far as this category of convicts is concerned, we can differentiate between convicts that represent a threat to society, to prison staff and to other convicts and convicts who have to be imprisoned for a long period of time because the crime they have committed is so horrible that long-term imprisonment is seen as the only possible way to stigmatize their deeds. The longer the punishment is, the stricter the prison conditions are and the more lasting convicts’ alienation becomes.

3. Factors Influencing the Perception of the Future

3.1. Family – Education Received within the and Family’s Attitude

Ursula Schipu defines family as the main nucleus reunited through marriage, blood relation or adoption. Thus, family is considered to be the fundamental social cell that maintains and transgresses forms of social stability – traditions, common customs. Family undergoes a series of changes, it never remains the same. There is a status, role and prestige inherent to families, as a standard of economic and moral life. Events like separations, deaths, diseases, excessive tensions, moral decays or social progress take place within the family. Each family has a certain culture, certain aspirations, and tensions may arise within when family members can not rise to expectations. Psychologically speaking, family members have common aspirations, ideals, and similar opinions and may
maintain or increase the social status of the family through professional and cultural roles. From a spatial-temporal perspective, the development of each individual’s personality is rooted within the family; family contributes to the social future of the individual. Parents influence their children through their outlook on life and world, as well as through their behaviours which express their love, tolerance, care, acceptance or rejection. Parot believes that the emotional lever is the most important elements forming the personality of individuals within the family and contributing to the development of regulatory and socializing functions of the individual. From an emotional perspective, the characteristics of family environment oscillate between psychological security and psychological balance on the one hand and insecurity and disharmony on the other hand.

The rules of conduct and values governing the day-to-day organization of family life play an important role within the family. They allow the children to foresee the consequences of his/her actions, activities and behaviours and to establish the limits of tolerance. According to Jacques Latreg, there are three types of families that influence children development: the weak structure – characterized by contradicting rules and norms; the rigid structure – characterized by strict discipline; the supple structure – considered to be the optimum structure for child development characterized by securing norms and rules.

J Dewey [18] establishes a family geometry based on interviews and surveys. The first born can often be a victim of parents’ ambition and lack of experience, and can become shy or insecure or exactly the opposite, over-valorised, proud and discrete. The youngest child of the family has the advantage of his/her parents’ educational experience and is thus more detached, but he/she suffers because of being ignored by his/her elder brothers/sisters. An only child is brighter but less sociable. Children who live in an excessively strict and hostile environment perceive themselves as unhappy and inferior, have troubles receiving or showing affection towards the others and tend to form a negative self image. Iolanda Mitrofan [19] believes that behaviour mirrors children’s psychological development; it is the child’s developing personality reaction to the outside world; it is the external expression of his/her emerging personality.

An inappropriate education within the family is a clear cause of behavioural disorders (the convict is the clear expression of behavioural disorder). Inconsistency, excessive authority or excessive freedom, inflections, contradictions, disagreements, conflicting families, inexperienced families generate conflicting and potentially delinquent children.

S. Cosmovici [20] considers that parents’ attitude generates a certain typology of children. He advances two axes of parents’ attitudes to their children: the autonomy-control axis and the acceptance-rejection axis. The acceptance-autonomy attitude will generate irresolute, uncompetitive, shallow, untidy children; the autonomy-rejection attitude will generate impulsive, tough, negligent children – the future delinquents and possible criminals. The rejection-control attitude will generate conformist children who burst into sudden fits when you least expect it due to the fact that they reject control; the acceptance-control attitude is the ideal attitude that parents should have towards their children as it offers children clear norms on the one hand and spiritual food on the other hand.

An insufficient environment with material or emotional deficits or an environment the expectations of which exceed child’s possibilities to adapt will most frequently generate future delinquents and criminals. Children will assume the behavioural patterns of their family and will employ them in their own families.

As the child feels misunderstood and frustrated he/she will look for illicit ways to
satisfy his/her needs: at first he/she will skip classes and will practice shop lifting and will later on persist in this kind of illicit behaviour which will only lead him/her to prison.

An individual with such problems will always look for the proper environment where he/she could be appreciated and feel secure, and will try to satisfy his/her needs within his/her circle of friends.

Family has an extremely important part to play in building up personalities, outlooks upon this world, ideals and a purpose in life. Until the individual becomes autonomous, and has the capacity to decide for himself/herself, he/she is dependant on his/her family. Perturbed families will generate perturbed children, whereas conflicting families will generate conflicting children. The child needs “calm, understanding and affectionate parents, who are flexible and yet not yielding in their relations with the children. The child needs to feel taken care of; to feel that his/her parents show interest in his/her problems and in what is going on at school; the child needs a firm framework of discipline so as to know that his freedom is not endless” [21].

3.2. The Pre-Detention Period

Upon leaving their families, individuals become autonomous and integrate or not into the socio-professional life; they start their own family but will always be guided by the behavioural family adopted from their families. The persons they will come into contact with will appreciate them depending on the way they relate to social norms and rules and on how they observe them and pay their respect to others.

The better the freedom life of a convict – with many things to fight for as a harmonious family, a good fortune, strong moral values and prestige – the more dramatic prison life will be. The worse the freedom life of a convict – lack of family, house, money – the riskier prison life will turnout to be. To some prison life may even turn out to be easier than life on the outside because they have food or medical assistance, things they couldn’t have obtained had they been free. Things change in the case of recidivists – to them attaining their personal objectives is more important than freedom, they have become emotionally flat. The personality features we have already mentioned do not allow them to attain a normal balance between loss and gain.

3.3. The Detention Environment

a) Deprivation of liberty and detention deeply influences the way of life of most individuals both during and after prison life. Prison life is a group life with: no intimacy whatsoever, everything on sight, no interpersonal relations in which one doesn’t become lost, no possibility to escape the others, no capacity to empathize, and no possibility to change.

b) The interpersonal relations established between convicts play an important role and cannot be compared to the relations established between people on the outside. Balance, normality and morality in prison are out of the question because an atmosphere of calm and understanding is almost always sprinkled with fits of rage and anger, whereas morality reduces down to satisfying biological and material needs. Among convicts there will always be a high number of individuals with weaker egos, with a low self image, with an increased need to feel dependant on someone else, with an unclear image of the future. The roles and statuses one used to have on the outside tend to be maintained during prison life as well. It is not unusual for intellectuals to be kept at a distance or even persecuted because the others perceive them as a factor of humiliation and make them feel inferior.

c) The time factor plays an important part in the life of all individuals, although the Penal Code doesn’t seem to treat it accordingly. The analysis complicates when
we try to establish the intrinsic value of the time factor to assess the consequences of deprivation of liberty. Time has different meanings to a child, an adolescent and an old person. The way time is perceived differs from person to person.

The convict perceives time from a coercive, artificial stand. He is aware of the fact that he is going to be imprisoned against his will and feels this loss of liberty as a painful experience, because his liberty was full of perspectives and alternatives. The more cherished freedom time is, the more painful prison time becomes, and the punishment more repressive.

The convict becomes incapable of integrating and adapting to the social norms of cohabitation, has a suspect morality and a haunting past.

d) In quantitative terms, deprivation of liberty may be either longer or shorter, but in qualitative terms it engenders a complex range of psychological and pathological unrest, staring with the detention crisis. Ghorghe Florian [22] claims that there are three main stages during detention. The first stage is the period of quarantine when convicts lose weight, have insomnias, experience foot pains, and feel at a loss.

The second stage refers to convicts’ serving time in prison and being re-educated, a period when work becomes the main activity of many of them. By now, most convicts will have already clarified many of their issues, and found their place within group relations; official rules are seldom broken at this stage. It is easier for older convicts to serve time in prison. Many convicts show at this stage an emotional intolerance to the detention environment: closed space, unpleasant odours, difficult sleep, bath on schedule, constant noise; verbal aggressions, absurd rumours, divergent opinions, abnormal sexual orientations, theft, humiliations. At this stage we are dealing with lies, weird behaviours, and revenge desires. Reveries and daydreaming are also frequent, whereas the regression to physiological needs is more and more emphasized.

Self injury, suicide attempts and hunger strike become more frequent. “The wall complex” [23] is stronger and stronger – the convict is getting more and more disappointed at what is going on around him and turns inwards, and if he cannot find anything, he will totally emerge into the convict condition.

3.4. Personality Changes during Prison Time

Affectivity as an element of personality will be the battleground of all frustrations imposed by prison life. It is the cause of many subjective unrests or interpersonal conflicts, the affective states representing a sensitive seismograph of convicts’ emotional life during detention.

As far as convicts’ motivation is concerned, despite the apparent diversity, one can distinguish between the motivation before and after committing the crime. Convicts motivate their crimes as being the end of a hopeless, choice-less alternative, and argue that anyone would have done the same had they been in their shoes.

As far as will is concerned, it should be mentioned that it is constantly used in the process of re-educating convicts, overlooking the fact that the act of will implies meeting certain needs. As the convict loses hope of social reintegration, he will engage in actions that fail to meet the expectations of prison guardians: acts of bravery, tattoos, silent treatments, provoking other stronger convicts. In other words, there’s no talking about will-education during prison life.

The personality feature which is most difficult to change – temperament, is during prison life subject to many influences from the group. When more individuals of the same temperament personality come together, the climate will be: cold and indifferent in the case of phlegmatic temperament personalities, meditative for melancholic type personalities, noisy for...
sanguine and tensed with fits of aggression for choleric temperament personalities.

3.5. Pathogenic Potential

The pathogenic potential of detention is an important factor influencing the perception of the future. The influence a confined environment can exert on a personality is threefold: it minimizes not only the living space, but also the personal time – by suspending the future and making past relative, and the social behaviour – isolation and abandonment. Apathy, lack of initiative and of interest, emotional anaesthesia, incapacity to make plans, and fatalist resignation generate the so-called prison neurosis. A total lack of personal space and of intimacy lead to emotional collapse, and to a degenerate self image which trigger a pathological adaptation.

Gheorghe Florian [24] believes that detention is a process in four stages:
– the stage of accommodation characterized by fear and obedience and an individual effort to live in the new environment; the convict is having a feeling of reclusion and helplessness;
– the stage of adaptation characterized by a search for rewards and attempt at winning prison guardians over; during the first period the convict is a keen observer of what is going on around him and after evaluating the situation he will adapt to one behaviour or another;
– the stage of participation is a stage when the convict no longer feels alienated, takes an active part in group relationships; how much each convict participates in group relations depends on his/her psycho-social development;
– the stage of integration is a stage when group dependence is created and emphasized and a psycho-motive balance is achieved.

The stage immediately following that of integration is of preparation for life on the outside, whereby the convict will undergo a training period. Freedom poses the problem of a new identity which will be pretty difficult to attain, especially because of the stigma attached to it.

3.6. Social Labelling

Social labelling is another factor influencing the perception of the future and represents a new form of social reaction, a stigma; the crime is a product of social reaction, and those who do not observe social norms are labelled as criminals. Labelling theory states that society reacts to individuals’ socially-destructive behaviours and not to their marginal position.

3.7. Aggressiveness and Violence

The aggressiveness and violence acquired during detention will influence life on the outside. Aggressiveness refers to verbal or physical abuses meant to humiliate or suppress others. Violence aims at using force in order to impose one’s will on the others. Deprivation of liberty favours aggressive behaviours which will implicitly influence life on the outside. Frustration comes when people encounter difficulties in satisfying their needs and this changes their behaviour. Frustration is felt especially because of the time restrictions in prison: monotonous organization of time; strict organization of free time which makes convicts even more aggressive. Lack of or restricted freedom of movement is another factor of frustration which triggers destructive behaviours.

4. Conclusions

In other words, what remains relevant for our research is that only when people know themselves, are they able to establish their own objectives. As far as the perception of the future is concerned, the issue is also approached by Gheorghe Florian in a more detailed research, accomplished based on questionnaires, which deals with convicts’ attitude to themselves, to work, to their family, to law and to the future. Dimensions such as attitude to life on the outside, influence of
detention, and attitude to future are also dealt with in that paper.

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