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**SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS AND FORECASTS
REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORENSIC
PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERTISE IN
THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

511.03 – SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Scientific summary of the doctoral thesis in psychology

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Abbreviations used in the scientific summary

FPE – forensic psychological expertise

CONCEPTUAL MARKINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Actuality and importance of the addressed topic. Social representations play an essential role in the perception of reality, functioning as a “reading grid” that defines social phenomena and the collective position towards them [13, p. 9]. Their study through various methods, focused on functions, structure and dynamics, offers a common perspective on social products, influenced by the historical and cultural context. They reflect not only the socio-cultural and historical aspects, but also collective psycho-emotional experiences internalized at the individual level, contributing to understanding the present and anticipating future developments of mentalities. As collective filters of the perception of reality, social representations help to define and interpret social objects, including forensic psychological expertise (FPE). Studying FPE by means of social representations allows exploring the functions, dynamics and how professional groups perceive and use this practice. In the Republic of Moldova, FPE, although emerging, plays a significant role in the judicial process, but faces methodological and legislative limitations. The alignment of legislation with European standards emphasizes the relevance of the FPE in protecting the rights of persons involved in legal processes, and the lack of a Psychologist’s Law highlights the need for a specific legislative framework [10].

In this context, the research is focusing on the study of the actual situation of FPE, on the knowledge and attitudes of legal specialists, outlining the perspectives of development of this institution in the Republic of Moldova and identification of favorable conditions for the professional development of specialists in the field.

Presentation of the researched topic at the international, national, local and interdisciplinary levels, as well as the results of previous research. The concept of social representation is complex, involving the individual in relation with society, respectively having a dynamic feature in dependence on socio-economic and cultural realities within which it is developing. The research of social representation has begun with S. Moscovici [12, 44, 45] and was continued by many authors from different countries: Abric J.-C. [34, 35], Jodelet D. [42], Guimelli Ch. [41], Vergès P. [48], Moliner P. [43], Lo Monaco G. [46], Flament C. [38], Flick U., Foster J., Caillaud S. [39], Sammut G., Andreouli E., Gaskell G., Valsiner J. [47], Bouriche B [37], Neculau A. [13], Curelaru M. [8], Robu V., Sandovici A. [19], Захаров К.В. [30], Бовина И. Б. [25], ЕМИЛЬЯНОВА Т. П. [28], and others. The authors focused on elaboration, experimenting and analysis of methods and tools of measuring social representations, their structure, the dynamic of the content and structural parts, the influence of the context on social representations and other relevant aspects. In the Republic of Moldova, the interest for social representation is relatively new one, and the works of the autochthonous authors as Șleahțișchi M. [23, 24], Negură I. [14, 15], Rusnac S. [22], Popescu M. [16], Cazacu D. [3], Cojocaru N. [4, 5], and others, reflect theoretical perspectives as well as pragmatic ones regarding this field.

The notion of FPE was researched through the forensic psychology, including

the crossing of many psycho-socio-legal fields, having as core the psychological assessment, evaluation in the legal context. The authors who have contributed to the theoretical and practical development of FPE are: Grisso T. [40], Archer R. P., Buffington-Vollum J. K., Stredny R. V., & Handel R. W. [36], Butoi T. [2], Сафуанов Ф.С. [32], Коченов М. [31], Гимранов Р.Ф. [27], Еникеев М. И. [29], Чуфаровский Ю.В. [33], Васильев В. Л. [26]. In the Republic of Moldova, there are some authors – Rusnac S. [20, 21], Rîjicova S. [17, 18], Dolea I., Gherasim S., Zaharia V. [7] – who have manifested and promoted the interest towards the FPE by initiating and elaborating courses of forensic psychology, the course of psychodiagnostics and psychological expertise in criminal and civil justice, and pointing out to the procedures and peculiarities of performing the FPE in the national legal context.

Description of the situation in the researched field and formulation of the scientific problem. According to the specialized literature, social representation, that is the cognitive dimension of the forecasting model, offer a theoretical and methodological foundation for the complex analysis of the context, conditions and perspectives of development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova. In present, FPE is an emerging practice, in its early stage, with a limited arsenal of methods and techniques, being known and used mainly by legal specialists for the resolution of criminal and civil cases. The evolution of this procedure depends largely on the perceptions and social representations of these professional groups. For these reasons, the research problem aims to address the need to solve the following question: How are the FPE and the need for its development in the Republic of Moldova perceived and socially represented by the legal community? What is the place of social representation in the structure of the forecast, in its cognitive, attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions, with a decisive impact on the directions of development and improvement of the FPE?

The aim of the research consists in the analysis of social representation of FPE in the legal community of the Republic of Moldova, highlighting its influence on perspectives of the field development and evaluating the degree of awareness of the need for improvement and development, through the cognitive, attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions of forecasting.

Research objectives: 1) synthesizing and analyzing international and national specialized literature on the concept of social representation and FPE, for their definition and characterization, identification of the structure and particularities of manifestation, study of applied theories and research methods; 2) investigating the social representation of FPE among legal specialists, compared to the social representation among students of the Faculty of Law; 3) developing a conceptual model of the forecast regarding the Development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, integrating social representation within the cognitive, attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions, in order to provide a theoretical basis and a practical tool useful in identifying the prospects for the development of this

field in the future; 4) identifying the tools and techniques necessary for assessing the attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions of the forecast regarding the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, applying them to determine the content of the normative-moral, legal and psycho-emotional profile of legal specialists, including their knowledge and skills as illustrating these two dimensions, and developing a forecast regarding the future development of this field; 5) developing practical recommendations for the improvement and development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, taking into account the results obtained in the research.

Hypotheses of the research: 1) social representation of FPE in future and actual legal specialists can be considered specific, where the scientific knowledge plays an important role, anchoring and objectifying this representation within the cognitive dimension of the forecasting model regarding the future development of the field; 2) moral and legal normativity, in association with the psycho-emotional profile of the specialists and transferred knowledge in their daily practice, represent the attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions of the forecasting model and constitute an essential condition for the development and implementation of FPE in the procedural practice of the Republic of Moldova.

Methodology of research and justification of research methods. The research methodology was based on fundamental theoretical approaches and experimental research in the field of social psychology and social representations, having as central points: 1) social representation reflects the image of reality perceived by individuals from a social category, integrating the past, present and collective future; 2) the structure of the social representation of an object reveals its position in the reality of the group and the individual, influencing their reasoning, emotions and behaviors.

The used methods aimed at a detailed analysis of the social representation of FPE and the factors influencing the development of this field in the Republic of Moldova. Theoretical methods included bibliographic research and scientific documentation to synthesize knowledge in the field, and empirical methods included techniques such as free evocation, the social representation structuring model, the substitution technique for studying the content and silent zones of social representation, the use of standardized scales for assessing moral normativity, attitudes towards the rule of law and psychological states, qualitative research methods (focus groups), as well as statistical analysis to validate operational hypotheses.

Obtained results that contribute to the solution of the important scientific problem lies in the development of the predictive conceptual model for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, integrating essential stages and dimensions of the forecasting process, which led to the clarification of the evolution of FPE at the national level and the identification of the needs and gaps in its applicability, thus providing a conceptual basis for optimizing the use of FPE in the legal system and directing future strategic and praxiological interventions.

The novelty and scientific originality of the obtained results consist in the development of an innovative forecasting model for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, which integrates the perspectives of the past, present and future, both in the specific context of applicability and in the general context of the Moldovan legal space, creating a solid basis for the exploration and development of an insufficiently exploited procedure and significantly contributing to the consolidation and streamlining of psychological expertise in the national legal system.

The theoretical significance of the research consists in completing and deepening the analysis of social representation, highlighting its role in studying social reality, characterized by unique everyday experiences and complex interactions within society. The research also contributes to the enrichment of national and international scientific knowledge, providing a detailed analysis of the current situation regarding FPE, emphasizing the need to consolidate and develop this procedure in the legislative and praxiological context of the Republic of Moldova.

The applied value of the research consists in providing a methodological framework for investigating social representation and forecast regarding a social object by analyzing cognitive, affective-attitudinal and contextual-spatial dimensions; the contribution of the predictive model to the consolidation of FPE in the Republic of Moldova through strategic optimization directions, clarifying legislative needs, improving the training of specialists and increasing the accessibility of the procedure; supporting the development of policies, guides and methodologies for the efficient integration of FPE in legal processes and improving the act of justice; emphasis of the results for the development of training programs for expert psychologists and lawyers, promoting professional competence and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Approval and implementation of the results. The theoretical and experimental results of the research were presented at 11 scientific manifestations, the most relevant of which are: the Conference “Contemporary Concerns of Socio-Human Sciences” (ULIM, 2018), the Conference “Ensuring Law and Order and Combating Crime in Ukraine and in the World: Problems and Solutions” (Dnipro Humanitarian University, Ukraine, 2023), the Annual Conferences of the European Association of Psychology and Law (Romania, Portugal, 2023-2024) and the Conference “Development through Research and Innovation – 2023” (ASEM, Chisinau, 2023).

Scientific publications on the topic of the thesis. The conclusions of the theoretical investigations and the results of the empirical research were published in 13 scientific papers, of which 8 articles were published in accredited journals.

Thesis volume and structure. The thesis consists of annotations (in Romanian, Russian and English), introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography (181 sources), 8 annexes. The text contains 34 tables and 39 figures. The main text of the thesis comprises 141 pages.

Keywords: social representation, forensic psychological expertise, forecast, cognitive dimension, affective-attitudinal dimension, contextual-spatial dimension.

THESIS CONTENT

Introduction presents the actuality and importance of the topic addressed, its place in the context of international and national research, with an inter- and transdisciplinary character. It also includes references to the results of previous research, the formulation of the research problem, the purpose and objectives of the work, the basic (scientific) hypotheses, the synthesis of the research methodology, the justification of the chosen methods and a summary of the thesis sections.

In the **Chapter 1 – Theoretical approach and social representation and their functionality in researching actual and anticipative state of the forensic psychological expertise** theoretical, conceptual-scientific foundations and essential contributions regarding the social representation and FPE are presented. The definition, functions and dimensions of social representations, their structure and their particularities of manifestation are analyzed. The theoretical and practical implications of FPE at the international and national levels are also examined. The chapter ends with conclusions, summarizing the scientific and applied sources relating to the discussed concepts.

Following the analysis and synthesis of the scientific literature, it was concluded that social representation is a complex concept, reflecting both individual experiences and the social environment of a community, which are in a relationship of interdependence. It encompasses the cognitive, affective and contextual dimensions (interaction environment) of the targeted social object, revealing a variety of particularities of its dynamics and status. Social representation provides valuable data on the history, present and near future of a social object in relation to society, being influenced by the processes of development and social transformation.

Social representation is a structured system of psycho-social and emotional knowledge, determined by different components: central (central core), peripheral (peripheral area) and hidden (“silent zone”). These components give it stability and coherence, but also flexibility to adapt to resistance and contradictions, allowing the unmasking of the truth in the relationship between the social object and the present social environment. Social representation functions as a bank of information and factors, providing valuable clues for modeling predictions about a social object. This process facilitates the planning and forecasting stages for the development of the respective object.

Social representations, in their essence of defining and reflecting reality at a given moment in a specific social environment, structure and orient the interactions between the individual and society, encompassing all levels of the individual’s functioning and determining the position of a social object within individual-social interactions. In this context, the paper highlights the structural approach to social representation, analyzed

by authors such as Abric J.C., Moscovici S., Doise W., Moliner P., Flament C. Thus, social representation is organized in a dual system of information, opinions and beliefs [35]: the *central core* and the *peripheral elements*. The central core, according to the authors, represents the stable and rigid part of the representation (including defining and normative elements) [23, p. 205; 46, p. 479], fulfilling the significance function (it provides the general meaning of the social representation), the organizational function (modulates the meaning of the peripheral elements) and the stabilizing function (it is the most stable and robust part of the representation) [23, p. 42; 43, p. 3.2-3.3]. The peripheral elements, considered the “shock absorber” between the central core and the environment, represent the unstable and accessible part of the representation, connecting the individual and the collective experience. They fulfill the functions of concretization (facilitate the understanding of concrete situations), regulation (allow adaptation to the environment), defense (support contradictions) and prescription [16, p. 41], incorporating descriptive and anticipatory elements, such as expectations, desires and fears [6, p. 99-100].

Of particular importance is the functionality of the central core, determined by the non-activated or “dormant” elements, which can become visible within the structure of social representation depending on conditions and context, being called the *silent zone* [35, p. 61]. The silent zone, according to M. Şlehtiçi, includes the unexposed parts of the field of social representation, being described as the “unseen force” that includes counter-normative elements, contradicting the norms of the structured group [after 16, p. 45]. This reflects the intimate beliefs of the individual, a minority perspective opposed to the majority trend, representing the masking of some portions of the field of social representation and the real position of the subject towards the object of representation [23, p. 213-214].

In this paper, according to the purpose of the research, we use the notion of forecasting to build an overview of the development of the FPE. Forecasting is defined as a sketch of the dynamics and development of a social object or product, being based on previous data, elaborated and practiced, which provides a perspective on the present and describes the path from the starting point to the current moment. Social representation, through its peculiarities and functionality, provides an important landmark in establishing the forecasting and anticipatory elements for the development of the object of study.

Within the theory of social representations, forecasting is closely linked to certain defining and functional peculiarities of representation: the *informative dimension* and the cognitive component are presented in the form of “knowledge” about the object, validating it within society and shaping it a form, which facilitates the integration of the representational object into the social reality of individuals; the *attitudinal dimension* and the *affective-behavioral component* reflect the emotional positioning and reactivity, which influence the individual’s actions towards the object, being conditioned by the process of (dis)integration, which involves the adjustment of cognitive

structures (existing knowledge) through the prism of stereotypes, social roles, general norms and individual experiences in relation to society [37]; the *structural (spatial) dimension* provides existing and structured data about the object of representation, characterizing the state of social representation in the current socio-cultural and normative-organizational context.

In this paper, a forecasting research model was applied, taken from the economic field, which was adapted for the analysis and anticipation of the development of FPE.

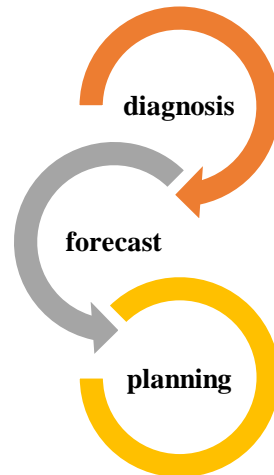


Figure 1. Model of forecasting research [1, p. 19]

The economic forecasting model illustrated in Figure 1, which includes three essential stages – diagnosis, forecasting and planning – was adapted for the development of the FPE forecasting model. This model has allowed the investigation of social representation of FPE and the particularities of the beneficiary subjects, providing a thorough understanding of the individual and contextual value of FPE (diagnostic stage), the identification of the necessary conditions for the development of FPE (forecasting stage) and the formulation of strategic solutions for its development (planning stage).

FPE is a relatively new procedure, applied in practice since the beginning of the 20th century, and which experienced rapid development after the Second World War in regions such as North America, Western Europe and the former Soviet Union [20, p. 31]. Although initially met with scepticism by judges, FPE developed rapidly, defining its form, object, tasks, specific features and psycho-emotional and social circumstances in a legal context [27].

The given work mentions several defining elements, as well as conditions for the development and application of FPE at the international [21, 36, 40] and national levels [7, 11, 17, 18, 20, 21]. In the Republic of Moldova, FPE does not benefit from a distinct definition in legislative documents, being considered part of the forensic expertise, regulated by related legislative acts [8, 9, 20]. From a legislative point of view, FPE can be defined through the Nomenclature of Forensic Expertises [8], which establishes the purpose and problems that can be solved by psychological expertise in criminal and civil trials.

Thus, FPE is characterized as a scientific and practical research activity carried out within the judicial process, aiming to investigate problems with psychological content in order to find the truth by carrying out complex psychological assessments. The results of these assessments are presented in the form of reasoned conclusions, which can be used as evidence in a judicial process [9, art. 2; 20, p. 35]. In the Republic of Moldova, FPE is in a stage of establishment as a judicial procedure, facing multiple problems that need to be resolved: the small number of forensic psychologists licensed by the Ministry of Justice, the insufficiently developed methodology, the lack of validated psychodiagnostic methods and the absence of a clear regulation of psychological assessment in the legal framework (including the lack of a Law on Psychologists). However, the increased interest of specialists in the field and beneficiaries (subjects of criminal and civil cases) indicates the need for an approach based on experimental research, which could contribute to identifying ways to develop FPE.

Chapter 2 – Social representation of the forensic psychological expertise: establishment at the confluence of theoretical knowledge and professional practice – presents a description of the empirical research methods, the research sample and the stages of carrying out the empirical approach related to social representation, as well as the obtained results. The chapter focuses on establishing and comparing the structure of the social representation of the FPE, as well as on identifying its silent zones in future specialists (students of the Faculty of Law) and current legal specialists.

The purpose of the experimental research on social representation was to determine its structural features in the legal community of the Republic of Moldova. The following objectives were proposed in the study: 1) developing a research methodology for the social representation of the FPE in the legal community of the Republic of Moldova; 2) selecting sample subjects from higher education institutions and legal institutions in the country; 3) identification and analysis of the structure of the social representation of FPE and mute areas among law students and specialists; 4) comparison of the structure of the social representation of FPE and mute zones among law students and specialists.

Basic experimental hypothesis. It is assumed that the social representation of FPE, shared by the legal community, is structured as follows: the central core is formed by general associative terms, reflecting theoretical knowledge and common aspects, while the peripheral zone includes more specific terms, related to the practical application of expertise, influenced by the socio-professional status of the subjects. The silent zones of the social representation contain terms that indicate a confused and sceptical attitude towards FPE.

Operational hypotheses. 1. If the social representation of FPE in law students is influenced mainly by the knowledge accumulated during university studies, then in the case of legal specialists it largely reflects practical experience in the field. 2. The

silent zone of the social representation of FPE includes contents that illustrate the distrust in the potential, usefulness and applicability of this procedure in judicial practice.

Description of the sample. The sample used to research the social representation of the FPE included 614 subjects (men and women, aged between 19 and 60, with different professional experiences), divided according to professional status: 197 students of the Faculty of Law within Free International University of Moldova and 417 specialists from the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation of the General Inspectorate of Police and the Union of Advocates of the Republic of Moldova.

Methods of research. The following methods were used in the empirical research: *free evocation method* (J.C. Abric & P. Vergès) – for determining the structure of the social representation of the FPE, identifying the central core, peripheral elements and those with ambiguous status; *substitution technique* – used to identify the “silent zones” of the social representation (K. Cates and D. Messick; J.-L. Beauvois; C. Flament; C. Guimelli; J.-C. Deschamps).

The analysis of social representation structure. The structure of the social representation of the FPE was outlined by applying a minimum threshold of 5% to determine the field of social representation and 15% to identify potential elements in the central core. The median was also calculated to establish the importance rank of the associative terms ($M < 3$).

In the group of law students, the social representation was formed by 20 associative terms, having the following structure detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Structure of social representation of FPE in students of the faculty of law

	High rank of importance (elements placed mainly on the first three positions of the associative chain - $M < 3$)	Low rank of importance (elements placed mainly on the last positions of the associative chain - $M > 3$)
High frequency (more than 15%)	individual psychological peculiarities, research, psychological assessment, analysis, offender, mental health, psychic state (central core)	<i>crime</i> (ambiguous status)
Low frequency (less than 15%)	<i>psychologist, psychology, truth, expert</i> (ambiguous status)	<i>court, conclusion, law, finding, control, person, help, judicial process</i> (peripheral themes)

The *central core* of the social representation is determined by the object of the FPE (*individual psychological characteristics, mental health, psychic state*), its subject (*offender*) and the tools used (*psychological assessment, research, analysis*).

The *peripheral zone* of the social representation is influenced by various parts and circumstances of the FPE: the context of application (*court, judicial process*), the

product (*conclusion*), the objective (*help*), the subject of the FPE (*person*), as well as terms associated with the legal field (*law, finding*) and others (*control*).

Elements with ambiguous status, characterized by low frequency and high importance, usually include contrastive elements related to the field of competence of the expert psychologist, such as: *psychologist, psychology, truth, expert*. The term *crime* also has an ambiguous status, being represented both in the peripheral zone, with low importance, and with high frequency.

Two *silent zones* were studied in the research, from the perspective of other jurists and the general population of the Republic of Moldova.

The silent zone of the social representation of FPE among students revealed associative terms common to the basic social representation of FPE, such as: *truth, analysis, research, conclusion, psychological assessment, offender, crime, law, individual psychological peculiarities, judicial process, psychologist, psychology, mental health, psychic state*.

Context-specific terms that imply the perspective of other legal specialists include: *cause, crime, clarity, decision, criminal law, evidence, criminal procedure, victim*.

Context-specific terms represented by the population of the Republic of Moldova are: *counseling, useless, deception, unknown, unimportant, psychiatry, emotional state*.

For the group of legal specialists, already involved in professional activity, we obtained the social representation of FPE consisting of 25 associative terms, integrated into the structural model shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Structure of the social representation of “FPE” among legal specialists

	High rank of importance (elements placed mainly on the first three positions of the associative chain - $M < 3$)	Low rank of importance (elements placed mainly on the last positions of the associative chain - $M > 3$)
High frequency (more than 15%)	assessment, mental health, discernment, psychic state, crime, victim (central core)	<i>individual psychological peculiarities</i> (ambiguous status)
Low frequency (less than 15%)	<i>emotional state, psychologist, person, criminal case, criminal responsibility, research, minor, evidence, procedural action, expert, expertise, psychology</i> (ambiguous status)	<i>conclusion, offender, level of development, analysis, psychiatrist, delay</i> (peripheral themes)

In researching the social representation of FPE among legal specialists, it was found that it is mainly determined by terms such as *assessment, mental health, discernment, psychological state, crime* and *victim* (*central core*). These central themes are

complemented by other elements, with ambiguous status such as *emotional state, individual psychological peculiarities, research, minor, psychologist, psychology, criminal case, capacity to practice, expert and expertise*.

The *peripheral elements* show that the social representation also is characterized by references to the role of the *psychiatrist, analysis of the level of development* and integration of the results into *conclusions*. The structure of the social representation obtained indicates that lawyers do not have well-defined attitudes or perceptions regarding FPE, these being influenced mainly by legal practice and general knowledge accumulated during legal training.

Within the two silent zones (other legal specialist and population of the Republic of Moldova), social representation in other contexts revealed two common terms for the sample of legal specialists: *truth* and *specialists (lack of)*. These terms suggest the general perception of FPE as an activity aimed at revealing the truth and involving the expertise of qualified professionals.

For the specific context of legal specialists, the associated terms are *qualification, action* and *finding*, which reflect the language and frequent professional experiences of lawyers, especially in relation to legal expertise in general. This association highlights how the daily experience of specialists influences the social representation of FPE.

In contrast, the specific terms for the general population context are *medical examination, ignorance* and *guilt*. These reflect the superficial or confused perception of FPE, suggesting a reserved or sceptical attitude towards this procedure. These terms may also indicate a lack of clear understanding of the field of psychology in general, contributing to the confusion between psychology and psychiatry.

Thus, the silent zones, investigated by context substitution, revealed the subjects' sincere beliefs and opinions. Legal specialists perceive FPE as a tool intended to reveal the truth – especially in detecting simulated behavior or in establishing the subjective circumstances of the crime from a psychological perspective. At the same time, the research participants mentioned the perception of FPE as a medical examination, which denotes the persistent confusion between psychology and psychiatry. This confusion is frequently encountered both among lawyers and among the general population of the Republic of Moldova. Another important perception was also highlighted – FPE is seen as being related to the qualification of actions and guilt. This is justified by the role of FPE in the complex analysis of the person subject to expertise in a legal context, providing detailed information in the form of reports or conclusions that support judges or other authorities in qualifying the person's actions or establishing guilt. This function emphasizes the importance of the FPE as an indispensable element in the legal decision-making process.

Elaborating a conclusive analysis on the structure of the social representation of FPE for the entire sample, the following data were obtained (Figure 2): the **central core** of the representation includes three stable elements – *mental health, psychic state*

and *assessment*. These defining elements answer questions related to the way of conducting the expertise and the object of the assessment.

These terms have a high frequency in almost all contexts and a high rank of importance. It is important to note that the term *mental health* borders on the field of psychiatry, which indicates some confusion among the legal community regarding the delimitation of the psychological field. However, the terms *psychic state* and *assessment* suggest a positive perspective on the FPE procedure, indicating recognition of its potential.

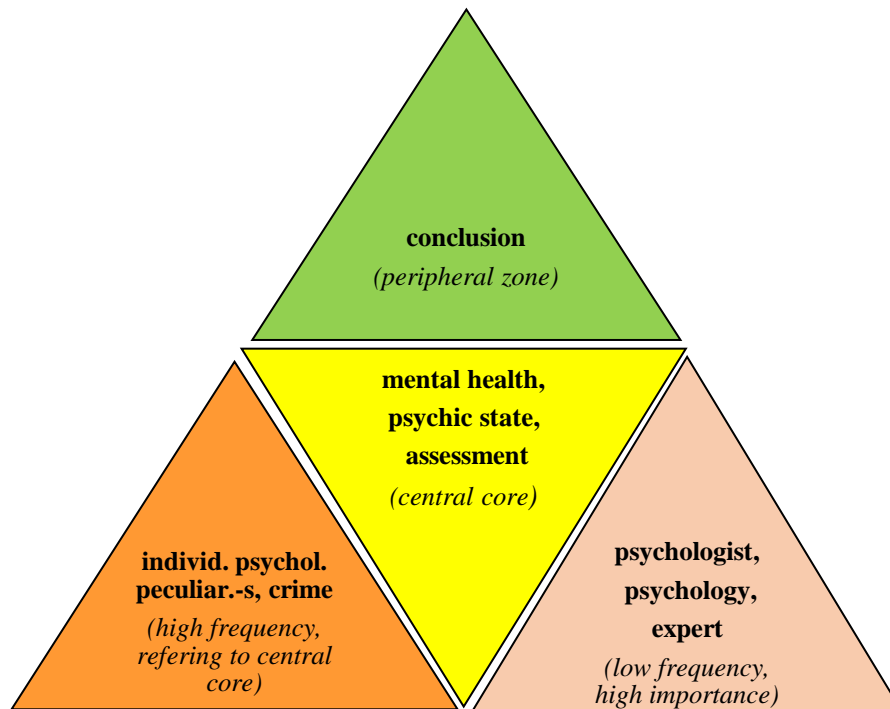


Figure 2. Concluding analysis of the structure of social representation of FPE (entire sample)

Here we can also mention the elements with very high frequency, which are part of the central nuclei of the groups of subjects: *individual psychological peculiarities* and *crime*. These reflect the object of the expertise and the primary circumstances that determine its ordering.

The **peripheral zone** includes a single element –*conclusion*– which, in relation to the inductive term (FPE), represents the result of the expertise and the form of its presentation to the judicial body that requested it. The peripheral zone indicates the attitudes, perceptions and opinions of the subjects regarding the FPE, highlighting the initiation of the process of anchoring the social representation in the legal community. This reflects both general and routine professional experience (*conclusion, crime*), and the acceptance and integration of the psychological field into the legal system, by recognizing the elements relevant from a legal point of view (*individual psychological particularities*).

Also, it is necessary to mention the **elements with ambiguous status**, or those in the contrastive area, such as *expert, psychologist* and *psychology*. These emphasize the lack of familiarity of specialists with FPE, indicating that these terms are still in the process of “assimilation” by the researched subjects.

The conclusive analysis regarding the silent zones of the social representation of FPE (Table 3) revealed a series of common terms, on which the context does not influence, namely – *research, conclusion, assessment, crime, individual psychological peculiarities, mental health, psychic state*.

Practically all the elements are part of the basic structure of the social representation, confirming the centrality of the central core and emphasizing the relevance of the element in the peripheral area – *conclusion*, which presents itself as a link between FPE and reality, being equated with the judicial expertise reports in general. This fact demonstrates that the process of objectification of the representation takes place, by adjusting FPE to the socio-professional reality existing among the researched subjects.

Table 3. Conclusive analysis of the representational field of FPE on the entire sample depending on the context

<i>Main social representation</i>	<i>Other legal specialists</i>	<i>Population of the Republic of Moldova</i>
research, <i>conclusion</i> , assessment, crime, individual psychological peculiarities, mental health, psychic state		
analysis, offender, expert, person		
	truth, discernment, specialists (lack)	
	finding evidence victim	unknown psychiatry emotional state

From the perspective of the subjects’ field of study and activity (legal), four elements are highlighted – *analysis, offender, expert* and *person* – which reflect general knowledge about FPE. Thus, the process of adjusting the object of representation to the subjects’ daily reality is observed, combining terms from the legal field (*offender, expert*) with terms from the psychological field (*analysis, person*).

Common silent zones highlight other important and defining aspects of expertise, such as finding the *truth*, establishing *discernment* and the lack of *specialists*. However, each silent area brings a specific angle of interpretation: legal specialists associate FPE with *finding* the facts, the quality of *evidence* and working with the *victim*, while public opinion suggests that expertise is linked to the *emotional state* of the subject, evaluated through the prism of the *psychiatric* field (suffering) or associated with something still *unknown*, respectively new or not understood at present.

According to the results obtained, we can analyze the validity of the formulated operational hypotheses. In relation to the first hypothesis, it was established that the social representation of FPE among law students is influenced by the knowledge accumulated during university courses. This is evident from the dispersion of associative terms

between various fields – legal and general psychological. In contrast, the social representation of FPE among legal specialists includes, in addition to the terms associated with the theoretical knowledge accumulated during studies, terms specific to professional practice in the field of protecting legal norms. This confirms the first hypothesis.

Operational hypothesis no. 2 was partially confirmed. The content of the silent zones of the social representation of FPE in the context of “other specialists in the field” did not reveal negative terms in relation to the object of representation. However, in the context of “the population of the Republic of Moldova”, terms were identified that reflect a sceptical and reserved attitude towards psychological expertise in the legal field.

The basic experimental hypothesis was partially confirmed. The central core of the social representation is determined by both general terms (*assessment*) and terms specific to the practical application of FPE (*mental health, psychic state* – the object of expertise). The peripheral zone includes the term *conclusion*, representative of both the application aspect of the procedure and the general practice in the field of judicial expertise. The silent zone, in both contexts, largely consolidates the content of the basic social representation of FPE in the researched legal community, revealing only two terms (*unknown, psychiatry*), which reflect a confused attitude towards the object of representation. Summarizing the results, we can conclude that FPE, being a relatively new procedure in judicial practice, especially in the Republic of Moldova, does not have a significant historical capital and is still in the formation stage. The function of the social representation of “taming the unknown” plays a decisive role at this stage, covering mainly the cognitive component. A more detailed investigation of the affective and contextual aspects of the FPE representation is needed, from the perspective of the research subjects, who represent the main beneficiaries of this procedure.

Chapter 3 – Normative-moral profile of legal specialists and forecasts regarding the development of forensic psychological expertise in the Republic of Moldova – explores the conceptual model of the forecast regarding the evolution of the FPE in the Republic of Moldova, structured in three stages (see Figure 1).

The *diagnostic stage*, the most complex, integrates three dimensions: 1) *the cognitive dimension*: reflects the data obtained from the research of social representation; 2) *the affective-attitudinal dimension*: highlights the subjective aspects of the FPE by analyzing the normative-moral and legal profile, as well as the psycho-emotional states of legal specialists; 3) *the contextual-spatial dimension*: analyzes the legal and socio-professional context of the subjects involved in the research (the *contextual* component), as well as the “social” status of the FPE in this context (the *spatial* component). The focus group method is used to address both components of this dimension, while integrating the connection with the affective-attitudinal dimension and general bio-social variables (gender, professional experience).

The *prognosticating (forecasting) stage* represents a preliminary forecast, based

on the data obtained in the diagnostic stage. It reflects the results by selecting the factors that condition and have the potential to influence the development of the FPE in the Republic of Moldova, within the legal community.

The *planning stage* presents the last stage of the model, in which concrete strategies and plans for the development of FPE are developed. In the paper, these plans are presented in the form of final recommendations, which aim to promote and consolidate the field. These may include legislative proposals, training and development programs for specialists, implementation of new technologies and other necessary actions.

The purpose of the empirical research in this chapter is to analyze the relationship between the normative-moral profile, psycho-emotional states and the views of specialists on the reality and prospects for the development of the FPE, in order to define the affective-attitudinal and contextual-spatial dimensions, essential in diagnosing, prognostication and formulating forecasts regarding the development of the FPE in the Republic of Moldova.

Research objectives: 1) selecting methods for investigating the normative-moral and legal profile (moral normativity and attitude towards the rule of law), psycho-emotional states and the current situation within the legal context of the FPE among legal specialists; 2) identifying and analyzing the level of moral normativity among legal specialists, assessing their attitude towards the rule of law, in order to build a normative-moral and legal profile, as well as to understand how these aspects influence the professional approach and perception of the FPE; 3) identification and analysis of the psycho-emotional profile of legal specialists, in order to understand the impact of affective factors on professional attitudes, as well as analysis of the relationship between moral normativity, attitude towards the rule of law and psycho-emotional profile, in order to establish the affective-attitudinal dimension of the diagnostic stage of the forecasting process; 4) evaluation of the perceptions and opinions expressed by legal specialists on FPE, in order to determine the extent to which they reflect the current context, challenges and the relationship to the normative-moral and legal profile; 5) investigation of the influence of gender and professional experience on the level of moral normativity, attitude towards the rule of law, psycho-emotional profile and opinions on the context and prospects of FPE; 6) integration of the results obtained into the forecasting model to prognosticate the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova.

Basic hypothesis. The forecasting of the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, manifested in the cognitive, affective-attitudinal and contextual-spatial dimensions, is influenced by the content of social representation, the relationship between the peculiarities of the normative-moral and affective profile of specialists, as well as their perception of the current context and future prospects, reflecting the evolution and recognition of the importance of psychological expertise in justice and its impact on legality.

Operational hypotheses

1. It is assumed that there is a correlation between the level of moral normativity and the attitude of legal specialists towards the rule of law, the given variables also presenting an interdependent relationship with the psycho-emotional profile of the subjects.

2. It is assumed that in the interaction between moral normativity, the attitude of legal specialists towards the rule of law and their psycho-emotional profile, the subjective affective-attitudinal dimension of the diagnostic stage is formed, essential for the realization of the forecast of the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova.

3. It is assumed that the perceptions and opinions expressed by legal specialists on FPE reflect both the current context and its challenges, as well as the prospects for the future development of the field. Thus, these opinions can be interpreted as representing a subjective dimension of context and space within the diagnostic stage of the forecasting process.

4. It is assumed that the level of moral normativity, the attitude of legal specialists towards the rule of law, their psycho-emotional profile and opinions on the current context and future prospects of FPE are influenced by the gender and professional experience of the subjects.

The following **methods** were used in the empirical research in chapter 3.

Research methods of the normative-moral and legal profile: 1) The scale for measuring moral normativity from the personality questionnaire MJIO-AM; 2) The scale for measuring the attitude towards the norm of law, which evaluates different types of attitudes towards the law, as an expression of the legal consciousness, determined by the (in)tolerance of the rules of law (legal realism, legal scepticism, legal conformism, legal cynicism, fetishization of the norm of law, legal infantilism, idealization of the norm of law and legal nihilism).

Research methods of the psycho-emotional profile: The scale of self-assessment of mental states, used to assess anxiety, frustration, aggression and rigidity.

Qualitative research methods: The Focus Group method, which allowed outlining the contextual-spatial dimension, including the analysis of the socio-professional context of the subjects and the status of FPE among legal specialists.

Statistical research methods. To verify the operational hypotheses, various statistical methods were applied, using SPSS software: t-Student test for independent samples; ANOVA-Bonferroni test for multiple statistical comparison; Bravais-Pearson correlation test; Chi-Square variation test (Friedman test).

Description of the research sample of the normative-moral and legal profile, and psycho-emotional states. The sample of legal specialists included 417 subjects working in the legal field (General Directorate of Criminal Investigation of the General Inspectorate of Police and the Union of Advocates of the Republic of Moldova), who also participated in the research on the social representation of the FPE. The variables used for the research

of the normative-moral and legal profile and psycho-emotional states were gender and professional experience. The experimental group was divided as follows: 1) by gender: 279 men and 138 women; 2) by professional experience: subjects with experience of up to 5 years – 200 people, subjects with experience between 6 and 10 years – 89 people, subjects with experience of 11 or more years – 128 people.

Description of the research sample within the focus group method. The focus group sessions were attended by 46 legal specialists from the General Directorate for Criminal Investigation (Chisinau), aged between 28 and 54. The sample was composed of 35 men and 11 women, with a professional experience ranging from a minimum of 6 years to a maximum of 32 years.

Analysis of the normative-moral profile. The results of the research on the normative-moral profile of legal specialists revealed the following. Legal specialists, in general, manifest an average level of moral normativity, which suggests its situational character. The integration of moral and social norms is balanced between men and women, as well as between subjects with varied professional experiences. Regarding legal normativity, determined by attitudes towards the rule of law, the predominance of legal realism was found, accompanied by tendencies towards legal idealization and a conformist attitude towards legal norms. Average levels of manifestation were recorded on the scales of legal conformism, fetishization of legal norms, legal nihilism and legal scepticism, while legal cynicism and infantilism were less manifest. Statistical comparison by gender revealed significant differences on the scales of legal conformism and legal scepticism ($p < 0,05$). Men obtained higher average values than women, which indicates a greater tendency towards scepticism and passivity towards the rule of law, perceived more as a professional tool. Statistical analysis of the manifestation of attitudes towards the rule of law according to professional experience did not identify significant differences.

Profile of attitudes towards the rule of law. In order to build a profile of attitudes towards the rule of law among current employees of the legal system of the Republic of Moldova (specialists in the field of criminal prosecution and investigation), the correlation between the variables of the “Attitudes towards the rules of law” method was calculated. The results indicated the following significant positive correlations: legal realism and legal conformism ($r = 0.816$, $p < 0.000$); legal realism and legal fetishism ($r = 0.669$, $p < 0.000$); legal realism and legal idealism ($r = 0.783$, $p < 0.000$). These correlations suggest that legal realism is determined by increased legal conformism, fetishization of legal norms and their idealization: the more manifest these attitudes are, the more developed legal realism is. On the other hand, legal realism is negatively influenced by legal scepticism ($r = -0.738$, $p < 0.005$) and legal cynicism ($r = -0.769$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, legal realism is conditioned by manifest legal idealism and low sceptical and cynical attitudes. Also, the correlations between legal scepticism and other distorted attitudes highlighted: legal scepticism and cynicism ($r = 0.818$, $p < 0.000$); legal scepticism and infantilism

($r=0.809$, $p<0.000$); legal scepticism and legal nihilism ($r=0.722$, $p<0.000$). These results show that, the more defiant, infantile or negative the attitudes towards the rule of law are, the more accentuated legal scepticism is. Legal conformism correlated positively with all attitudinal scales towards the rule of law. It reflects a passive attitude, of automatic acceptance of the rules of law, without critical reflection on the circumstances.

The normative-legal profile identified is complex and poorly highlighted. Realistic, objective attitudes towards the rule of law are influenced by distorted attitudes such as conformism, fetishism and idealism. These, in turn, can lead to the development of negative distorted attitudes towards the rules of law.

Psycho-emotional profile. According to the data obtained, the subjects present an average level of anxiety, aggression and rigidity, and frustration is at a low level. These results suggest a realistic attitude towards the field of activity, without generating illusory or unrealistic expectations related to the legal profession. Probably, this fact contributes to minimizing frustration among the subjects. Anxiety, aggression and rigidity are situational states, being influenced by specific circumstances. The minor differences found between men and women in the manifestation of psycho-emotional states reflect the impact of historical and social stereotypes, persistent in the legal field over time. However, the statistical analysis did not confirm significant differences between genders, which emphasizes the uniformity of behaviors and compliance with the requirements and principles of activity in the legal system. Comparative analysis according to professional experience revealed significant differences in the manifestation of aggression, this being more pronounced in employees with advanced professional experience compared to those at the beginning of their careers.

In conclusion, the psycho-emotional states of legal specialists are determined by situational factors, with a general tendency towards a low level. This aspect indicates the ability of the subjects to manage their emotions in new or difficult situations, finding effective ways of adaptation. The results reflect the specificity of the socio-professional environment in which they work, characterized by the demands and challenges of the legal field.

Results of the analysis of the correlation between the variables of the normative-moral and psycho-emotional profile. The statistical analysis of the correlation between the variables of the normative-moral and psycho-emotional profile revealed the following (Table 4).

Legal conformism is influenced by anxiety, frustration and aggression, with a significant positive correlation ($p<0.05$). These states can lead to an attitude not only of passive acceptance, but also of indifference towards rules of law.

Legal cynicism is determined by frustration and aggression (positive correlation, $p<0.05$), states that favor a sceptical and doubtful attitude towards legislative norms, reflecting possible psychological defense mechanisms in the socio-professional context.

Table 4. Correlation between the normative moral and psycho-emotional profiles

		Anxiety	Frustration	Aggression	Rigidity	Moral normativity
Legal realism	<i>r</i>	0,008	-0,046	0,090	0,048	0,303*
	<i>p</i>	0,869	0,354	0,067	0,333	0,036
Legal scepticism	<i>r</i>	0,597*	0,743**	0,091	0,089	-0,612**
	<i>p</i>	0,048	0,000	0,063	0,070	0,000
Legal conformism	<i>r</i>	0,644**	0,674**	0,626*	0,074	-0,441**
	<i>p</i>	0,003	0,000	0,010	0,129	0,004
Legal cynicism	<i>r</i>	0,060	0,717**	0,608*	0,078	-0,624**
	<i>p</i>	0,222	0,000	0,028	0,111	0,000
Legal fetishism	<i>r</i>	0,048	0,045	0,033	0,602*	-0,092
	<i>p</i>	0,328	0,360	0,501	0,037	0,060
Legal infantilism	<i>r</i>	0,641**	0,742**	0,604*	0,089	-0,501**
	<i>p</i>	0,004	0,000	0,034	0,068	0,000
Legal idealism	<i>r</i>	0,012	-0,063	0,074	0,044	0,011
	<i>p</i>	0,803	0,203	0,130	0,369	0,818
Legal nihilism	<i>r</i>	0,715**	0,769**	0,708**	0,752**	-0,594**
	<i>p</i>	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,002	0,000
Moral normativity	<i>r</i>	-0,671**	-0,745**	-0,723**	-0,899**	
	<i>p</i>	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	

r - correlation coefficient, *p* – statistical significance threshold

Legal fetishism is influenced by rigidity ($r=0.602$, $p<0.05$), characterized by stubbornness and principledness, traits that can constitute the basis of an excessive idolization of the rule of law.

Legal infantilism is associated with manifest anxiety, frustration and aggression (positive correlation, $p<0.05$), indicating a lack of maturity in approaching rules of law.

Legal nihilism is influenced by all four states – anxiety, frustration, aggression and rigidity (positive correlation, $p<0.05$), which can favor the rejection of the rules of law and the denial of their value.

Negative psycho-emotional states, such as anxiety, frustration and aggression, can affect critical thinking, generating a dissociation from appropriate attitudes towards the social and professional environment. In this context, trust in the rules of law can be undermined, which negatively influences the relationship between the individual and the rules of law.

Regarding the relationship between the attitude towards the rule of law and moral normativity (Table 4), it was found that the fetishization of the legal norm and the idealization of the legal norm are not influenced by moral normativity. However, a positive correlation was identified between moral normativity and legal realism ($r=0.403$, $p<0.036$), indicating that socialization and legal awareness support each other, contributing to a balanced relationship necessary for the observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms, as well as other norms and legislative regulations in the Republic

of Moldova. Also, several negative correlations were identified between moral normativity and the scales of legal normativity: legal scepticism, legal conformism, legal cynicism, legal infantilism and legal nihilism ($p < 0.05$). These relationships suggest that defiance of moral and social norms, as well as difficulties in socialization, can lead to a critical and distrustful attitude towards the rule of law. Thus, ignorance of legal norms, lack of interest in the legal system, disregard or defiance of them, and manipulation of the will of others are reflected by subjects who manifest legal cynicism. They tend to have a similar attitude towards the moral norms circulated in society.

The analysis of the correlation between moral normativity and psycho-emotional states revealed statistically significant relationships between the scales. Negative correlations were identified between moral normativity and anxiety, frustration, aggression and rigidity ($p < 0.05$). These results suggest that the problems and difficulties encountered, inner tensions, the feeling of loss or facing barriers in achieving goals, reduced social contacts, latent anger expressed through behaviors of rejection of others and other manifestations of affective disorders can lead to demoralization and a decrease in value attitudes.

We conclude that, as negative psycho-emotional states intensify, adherence to moral normativity decreases. In this context, the person experiences greater difficulties in integrating into the collective or society, faces conflicts, manifests an increased tendency towards isolation and demonstrates a reduced capacity for communication.

The analysis of the data obtained through the focus group method and the Chi-Square statistical analysis revealed that the participants have “sufficient/good” general knowledge about FPE, acquired through their studies and professional experience. The results showed that the specialists recognize FPE as an expert procedure that provides specialized information in the psychological field, mentioning that they have used this service at least once in their professional activity, especially in cases involving minors (victims, offenders, witnesses), but also in rape or murder cases committed in a state of affect. The information collected in the focus group sessions clearly highlighted the current problems of the FPE procedure in the Republic of Moldova, emphasizing the need for development actions. Among the main deficiencies identified are: the lack of expert psychologists, the absence of a regulation on the conduct of FPE and the activity of expert psychologists.

Chi-Square analysis varied scores on knowledge, frequency of use, current availability and future prospects of FPE, depending on gender, professional experience, moral normativity and legal realism. The results showed that men are more open to FPE, more frequently use the services of a psychological expert in legal work and show a positive attitude towards both the possibility of having FPE at present and its consolidation in the future. Professional experience is also a significant indicator, revealing socio-economic influences on judicial activities in state institutions. Subjects with medium professional experience (6-15 years) have a more positive and optimistic attitude towards the FPE, considering it useful at present and promising for the future. In contrast, those with long

professional experience (16-32 years) display a more rigid and sceptical attitude towards this procedure.

Moral normativity was identified as an essential condition for the harmonious and progressive development of the FPE, being interdependent with knowledge, frequency of use, current availability and its future consolidation. Legal realism also proved to be an important variable, influencing openness to knowledge accumulation, positive attitude towards the FPE and willingness to use the services of a forensic psychologist expert.

The operational hypotheses regarding the establishment and confirmation of the affective-attitudinal and contextual-spatial dimensions, as well as the influence of the gender perspective and professional experience within the diagnostic stage, were fully confirmed, except for the fourth one, which was partially confirmed.

Based on the experimental results obtained in the diagnostic stage, which included the research of the social representation of the FPE, the analysis of the normative-moral and legal profile, the assessment of the psycho-emotional states of legal specialists and the analysis of the socio-professional context of the FPE determined by them, the following data were obtained (Figure 3).

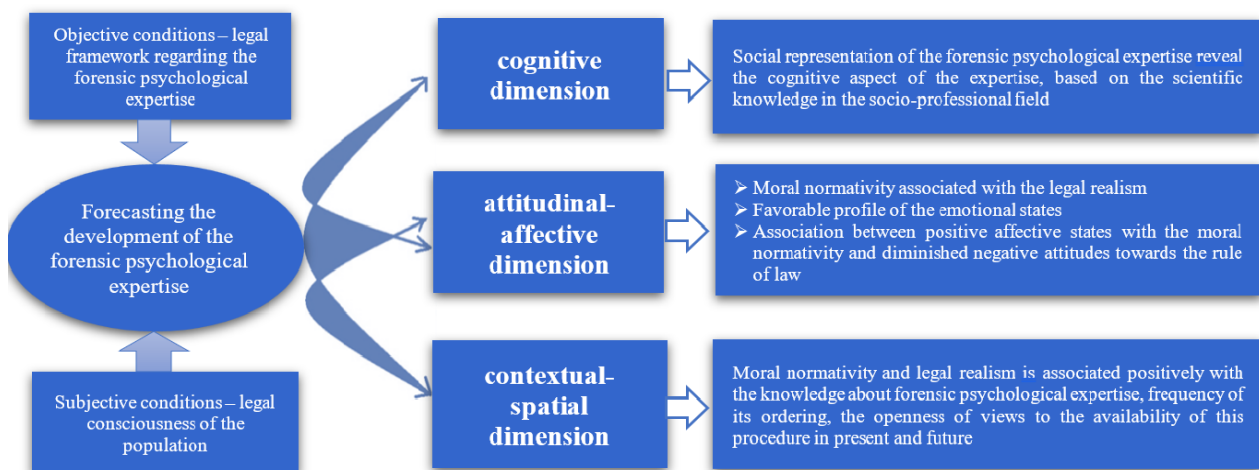


Figure 3. Stage of prognosticating of the forecast of the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova

The cognitive dimension of the diagnostic stage, defined by the results regarding the social representation of the FPE, highlighted that the FPE is perceived from a cognitive perspective as being based on scientific knowledge relevant to the socio-professional field.

The attitudinal-affective dimension suggested the following conditions for the development of the FPE: 1) positive relationship between moral normativity and legal realism, indicating a favorable attitude towards legal norms; 2) a favorable psycho-emotional profile, characterized by low and adaptive levels of anxiety, aggression, frustration and rigidity in legal specialists; 3) the association of positive emotional states with the reduction of negative attitudes towards the legal norm; 4) the indirect relationship between moral normativity and negative emotional states, which can negatively influence the integration of social norms by the individual.

The contextual-spatial dimension highlighted the condition of positive association between moral normativity (integration of moral-social norms), legal realism (positive attitude towards the rule of law) and current variables: specialists' knowledge about FPE, the frequency of ordering the FPE procedure, as well as visions of its availability and consolidation in the present and future.

In this context, we can conclude that the forecasting of the development of FPE includes both objective conditions, determined by the existing legal framework, which is currently ensured only by the general practice of forensic expertise (the normative and legislative regulation of psychological activity is still in the approval process), and subjective conditions, influenced by the legal consciousness (positive integration of legal norms) of the population in general and legal specialists in particular.

The basic experimental hypothesis, according to which it was assumed that the forecast of the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, manifested through the cognitive, attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial dimensions, is influenced by the content of social representation, the ratio between the peculiarities of the normative-moral and affective profile of specialists, as well as their perception of the current context and future prospects, was confirmed. These forecasts reflect the evolution and recognition of the importance of FPE in justice, highlighting the significant impact of this procedure on ensuring legality and improving the judicial process.

During the forecasting (prognosticating) stage, the premises for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova were established, determined by the permanent and complementary interaction between the objective and subjective conditions of the development of this procedure.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the topic, purpose, hypotheses and objectives of the research, the following scientific results were obtained.

1. The analysis of international and national specialized literature on the concept of social representation has highlighted that this is a complex and valuable social construct for studying social phenomena and objects [54, p. 265; 60, p. 300]. Social representation reflects the social reality of a group or collectivities, being determined by the particularities of interaction and cohabitation within them [56, p. 284]. It arises with the emergence of the social object, going through the stages of adjustment and development of knowledge about the object, the adoption of attitudes through the affective filter and, finally, its integration and positioning in the individual and community space (subchapter 1.1). In this paper, social representation is a central variable, representing a platform that reflects the socio-individual realities related to the object and the dynamics of its development in society [50, p. 68].

2. The concept of forecasting used in the paper was a combined one, integrating

the characteristics of social representation, especially the function of anticipation at the cognitive, affective and behavioral levels, and practices in the socio-economic field, where forecasting studies are frequently applied. Forecasting is defined as an inference or assumption regarding a social object or product – in this case, “FPE” – based on the analysis of the past-present dynamics of the FPE (diagnosis: general position and specific circumstances, such as the context and beneficiaries), including forecasting and planning procedures for its improvement and development (subchapter 1.2).

3. The object of social representation in this paper is FPE, a relatively new forensic procedure in the Republic of Moldova, which involves the application of psychological knowledge in the legal field. FPE integrates scientific-practical knowledge, responsibility, ethical standards from two fields (psychology/law) and is extremely useful in judicial processes, answering specialized questions, difficult to approach without a scientific basis. Currently, FPE is at an early stage in the Moldovan legal system, facing distrust and resistance, aspects that motivated research on the social representation, perspectives and development forecasts of this procedure in our society. (subchapter 1.3) [50, p. 68].

4. The investigation of the social representation of FPE among legal specialists, compared to that of students of the Faculty of Law, highlighted contents based on the scientific and practical knowledge of the legal community. Students showed a general perception, influenced by the knowledge acquired during their studies, but also by sceptical and negative attitudes towards expertise (fraud, lying) (subchapter 2.2). Specialists, having direct practical experience, identified aspects related to general and particular judicial practice, highlighting problems such as delay, lack of specialists and confusion between psychology and psychiatry (ignorance, psychiatry, medical examination) (subchapter 2.3). The structure of the social representation of FPE, in both cases, is influenced by the knowledge acquired during studies, by information from the media and by experiences in legal activity (subchapter 2.4.) [50, p. 78-79, 53, p. 227-228].

5. The forecasting model for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova is structured in three essential stages: diagnosis, forecasting (prognosticating) and planning (subchapter 3.1.), the diagnostic stage being based on three dimensions: cognitive, attitudinal-affective and contextual-spatial (subchapter 3.2-3.4) [50, p. 79, 51, p. 299, 53, p. 228, 59, p. 205]. The cognitive dimension reflects the content of the social representation of FPE in the legal community, the attitudinal-affective dimension captures the normative-moral and legal profile of this professional group, and the contextual-spatial dimension highlights the integration of FPE in professional practice in relation to ethical-legal norms. By integrating these dimensions, the model offers a clear perspective on the development of FPE. The forecast results from the harmonization of the objective conditions, offered by the interdisciplinary legal framework (law-psychology), with the subjective ones, manifested in the legal consciousness of the population. The cognitive dimension contributes through the knowledge that objectifies the social

representation of the FPE at the national level, the attitudinal- affective dimension supports the development through the positive correlation between moral normativity and legal realism, and the contextual-spatial dimension defines the evolution of the FPE through the favorable association between knowledge, frequency of use and perceptions of its accessibility in the present and future (subchapter 3.4).

Based on the research findings, we propose the following **practical recommendations** for the development and strengthening of the FPE in the Republic of Moldova:

1. Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration between psychological experts and legal specialists through trainings, focus groups and workshops, in order to raise awareness among legal professionals about the notion of FPE and its particularities.

2. Developing a practical guide for judges, prosecutors, criminal investigation officers and other judicial agents, which would include details about the FPE procedure, model questions for the expert and their connection to national legislation, developed with the involvement of experts and in accordance with international good practices.

3. Creating a deontological guide for forensic psychological experts, harmonized with the code of ethics of judicial experts and the future Law of regulating the activity of psychologists, to clarify their rights, competences and responsibilities, including recommendations for the structure of the expert report.

4. Prioritizing the development of FPE by the Ministry of Justice and the National Center for Forensic Expertises, through practical solutions to improve the activity and create a platform favorable to the consolidation of the field.

5. Organizing a professional association of forensic psychologist experts from the Republic of Moldova and facilitating international collaboration for the exchange of good practices and the implementation of global standards.

6. Adapting the university curriculum for bachelor's programs in law and psychology, integrating notions about legal psychology and FPE, to standardize and enrich the training of future professionals.

7. Developing continuing education programs for psychologists and lawyers, including modules dedicated to FPE, to update and expand knowledge in this interdisciplinary field.

8. Stimulating applied and fundamental research in the field of FPE through national and international projects, to improve procedures and their applicability in the legal system of the Republic of Moldova.

Future research directions. Continuing research aims to extend the investigations to other population categories, such as the general population, forensic psychologists and prison psychologists, in order to obtain a broader perspective on the social representation of FPE and to complement the current results.

An important direction is to conduct a comparative study between the social representation of FPE in the Republic of Moldova and Romania, given the broader experience of Romanian specialists in implementing the procedure. This approach would facilitate

the identification of good practices and their adaptation in the Moldovan legal system.

It is also essential to study the social representation of FPE longitudinally, analyzing its dynamics after a 10-year interval. Such research would highlight changes in perceptions and practices, reflecting the impact of interventions, public policies and legislative changes on the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova.

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ADNOTARE

Melentieva Aliona, Reprezentarea socială și previziuni privind dezvoltarea expertizei psihologice judiciare în Republica Moldova, teză de doctor în psihologie, 2024

Structura tezei: introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 181 de titluri, 8 anexe, 141 de pagini text de bază, 39 de figuri, 34 de tabele. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 13 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: reprezentarea socială, expertiza psihologică judiciară, previziune, dimensiune cognitivă, dimensiune afectiv-atitudinală, dimensiune contextual-spațială.

Scopul lucrării constă în analiza reprezentării sociale a FPE în comunitatea juridică din Republica Moldova, evidențiind influența acesteia asupra perspectivelor de evoluție a domeniului și evaluând gradul de conștientizare a necesității de îmbunătățire și dezvoltare, prin prisma dimensiunilor cognitive, atitudinal-afectivă și contextual-spațială ale previziunii.

Obiectivele cercetării constau în analizarea literaturii de specialitate internaționale și naționale pentru definirea și caracterizarea conceptului de reprezentare socială și a FPE; investigarea reprezentării sociale a FPE în rândul specialiștilor juriști comparativ cu studenții facultății de drept; dezvoltarea unui model conceptual al previziunii privind evoluția FPE în Republica Moldova prin integrarea dimensiunilor cognitive, atitudinal-afectivă și contextual-spațială; identificarea și aplicarea instrumentelor necesare pentru evaluarea acestor dimensiuni ale previziunii; elaborarea recomandărilor practice pentru îmbunătățirea și dezvoltarea FPE în Republica Moldova.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică a rezultatelor obținute constau în elaborarea unui model previzional inovator pentru dezvoltarea FPE în Republica Moldova, care integrează perspectivele trecutului, prezentului și viitorului, atât în contextul specific al aplicabilității, cât și în cel general al spațiului juridic moldovenesc, creând o bază solidă pentru explorarea și dezvoltarea unei proceduri insuficient valorificate și contribuind semnificativ la consolidarea și eficientizarea expertizei în sistemul de drept național.

Rezultatele obținute care contribuie la soluționarea problemei științifice importante rezidă în elaborarea modelului conceptual previzional pentru dezvoltarea FPE în Republica Moldova, integrând etape și dimensiuni esențiale ale procesului de previziune, fapt ce a condus la clarificarea evoluției expertizei psihologice judiciare la nivel național și la identificarea necesităților și lacunelor din aplicabilitatea acesteia, oferind astfel o bază conceptuală pentru optimizarea utilizării FPE în sistemul juridic și direcționând viitoarele intervenții strategice și praxiologice.

Semnificația teoretică a cercetării constă în completarea și aprofundarea analizei reprezentării sociale, evidențiind rolul acesteia în investigarea realității sociale, caracterizată de experiențe cotidiene unice și interacțiuni complexe în cadrul societății. De asemenea, cercetarea contribuie la îmbogățirea cunoștințelor științifice naționale și internaționale, oferind o analiză detaliată a situației actuale privind expertiza psihologică judiciară, subliniind necesitatea consolidării și dezvoltării acestei proceduri în contextul legislativ și praxiologic din Republica Moldova.

Valoarea aplicativă a cercetării: constă în oferirea unui cadru metodologic pentru investigarea reprezentării sociale și a previziunii privind un obiect social prin analiza dimensiunilor cognitive, afectiv-atitudinale și contextual-spațiale; contribuția modelului previzional la consolidarea FPE în Republica Moldova prin direcții strategice de optimizare, clarificarea necesităților legislative, perfecționarea formării specialiștilor și sporirea accesibilității procedurii; sprijinirea elaborării politicilor, ghidurilor și metodologiilor pentru integrarea eficientă a FPE în procesele legale și îmbunătățirea actului de justiție; valorificarea rezultatelor pentru dezvoltarea programelor de instruire destinate experților psihologi și juriștilor, promovând competența profesională și colaborarea interdisciplinară.

Aprobarea și implementarea rezultatelor: rezultatele obținute au fost prezentate și discutate în cadrul conferințelor internaționale din țară și de peste hotare, și publicate în 13 lucrări științifice. Implementarea rezultatelor sunt prezentate în formă de recomandări practice de soluționare a problemei științifice cercetate.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Мелентиева Алёна, Социальное представление и прогнозирование развития судебной психологической экспертизы в Республике Молдова, диссертация на соискание степени доктора психологии, 2024

Структура диссертации: введение, три главы, общие выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 181 наименований, 8 приложений, 141 страницы основного текста, 39 рисунков, 34 таблицы. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 13 научных статьях.

Ключевые слова: социальное представление, судебная психологическая экспертиза, прогноз, когнитивное измерение, аффективно-установочное измерение, контекстно-пространственное измерение.

Цель диссертации заключается в анализе социального представления судебно-психологической экспертизы (СПЭ) в юридическом сообществе Республики Молдова, с акцентом на её влияние на перспективы развития отрасли и оценку степени осознания необходимости улучшения и модернизации СПЭ, через призму когнитивного, эмоционально-оценочного и контекстуально-пространственного измерений прогнозирования.

Задачи исследования заключаются в анализе международной и национальной научной литературы для определения и характеристики концепта социального представления и СПЭ; исследовании социального представления СПЭ среди юридических специалистов в сравнении со студентами факультета права; разработке концептуальной модели прогнозирования развития СПЭ в Республике Молдова путем интеграции когнитивного, эмоционально-оценочного и контекстуально-пространственного измерений; выявлении и применении инструментов, необходимых для оценки указанных измерений прогнозирования; разработке практических рекомендаций по улучшению и развитию СПЭ в Республике Молдова.

Научная новизна и оригинальность заключаются в разработке инновационной прогностической модели для развития СПЭ в Республике Молдова, которая интегрирует перспективы прошлого, настоящего и будущего как в специфическом контексте применимости, так и в общем контексте юридического пространства страны, создавая прочную основу для изучения и развития недостаточно исследованной процедуры и значительно способствуя укреплению и повышению эффективности экспертной деятельности в национальной правовой системе.

Полученные результаты, которые способствуют решению важной научной проблемы, заключаются в разработке концептуальной прогностической модели для развития СПЭ в Республике Молдова, включающей ключевые этапы и измерения процесса прогнозирования. Это позволило уточнить развитие СПЭ на национальном уровне, выявить потребности и пробелы в её применении, а также создать концептуальную основу для оптимизации использования СПЭ в юридической системе и направить дальнейшие стратегические и практические интервенции.

Теоретическое значение исследования заключается в дополнении и углублении анализа социального представления, подчеркивая его роль в изучении социальной реальности, которая характеризуется уникальными повседневными переживаниями и сложными взаимодействиями в рамках общества. Исследование также способствует обогащению национальных и международных научных знаний, предлагая детальный анализ текущей ситуации в области СПЭ, акцентируя необходимость укрепления и развития данной процедуры в законодательном и практическом контексте Республики Молдова.

Практическая значимость исследования заключается в создании методологической основы для изучения социального представления и прогнозирования социальных объектов через анализ когнитивного, эмоционально-оценочного и контекстуально-пространственного измерений; вкладе разработанной прогностической модели в укрепление СПЭ в Республике Молдова посредством стратегий оптимизации, уточнения законодательных потребностей, совершенствования подготовки специалистов и повышения доступности процедуры; поддержке разработки политик, руководств и методологий для эффективной интеграции СПЭ в юридические процессы и улучшения качества правосудия; использовании результатов для разработки образовательных программ, предназначенных для судебных психологов и юристов, что способствует повышению профессиональной компетенции и междисциплинарного сотрудничества.

Апробация и внедрение результатов: полученные результаты были представлены и обсуждены на международных конференциях в стране и за рубежом, а также опубликованы в 13 научных работах. Внедрение результатов осуществляется в виде практических рекомендаций по решению исследуемой научной проблемы.

ANNOTATION

Melentieva Aliona, Social representation and forecasts regarding the development of forensic psychological expertise in the Republic of Moldova, PhD Thesis in Psychology, 2024

Thesis structure: Introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography with 181 titles, 8 annexes, 141 pages of main text, 39 figures, 34 tables. The obtained results are published in 13 scientific papers.

Keywords: social representation, forensic psychological expertise, forecast, affective-attitudinal dimension, contextual-spatial dimension.

The aim of the research is to analyze the social representation of forensic psychological expertise (FPE) within the legal community of the Republic of Moldova, focusing on its impact on the prospects for the development of the field and assessing the level of awareness regarding the need for improvement and modernization of FPE, through the prism of cognitive, attitudinal-affective, and contextual-spatial dimensions of forecasting.

Objectives of the research consist in the analysis of international and national specialized literature in order to define and characterize the concepts of social representation and FPE; research of the social representation of FPE; research of social representation of FPE among legal specialists in comparison with students of the Faculty of Law; development of a conceptual model of the forecast regarding the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova by integrating the cognitive, attitudinal-affective, and contextual-spatial dimensions; identification and application of necessary tools in the assessment of these dimensions of the forecast; elaboration of practical recommendations in order to improve and develop FPE in the Republic of Moldova.

Scientific novelty and originality: the elaboration of an innovative forecasting model for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, which includes the perspectives of the past, present and future, in the specific context of applicability as well as in the general context of the Moldovan legal space, creating a solid basis in the exploration and development of an insufficiently emphasized procedure, and contributing significantly to the consolidation and streamlining the psychological expertise in the national law system.

Obtained results contributing to solving important scientific problems: lies in the development of the forecasting conceptual model for the development of FPE in the Republic of Moldova, integrating essential stages and dimensions of the forecasting process, which led to the clarification of the development of FPE at the national level and the identification of the needs and gaps in its applicability, thus providing a conceptual basis for optimizing the use of FPE in the legal system and directing future strategic and praxiological interventions.

Theoretical significance of the research consists in completing and deepening the analysis of social representation, highlighting its role in investigating social reality, characterized by unique everyday experiences and complex interactions within society. The research also contributes to the enrichment of national and international scientific knowledge, providing a detailed analysis of the current situation regarding FPE, emphasizing the need to consolidate and develop this procedure in the legislative and praxiological context of the Republic of Moldova.

Applied value of the research consists in providing a methodological framework for investigating social representation and forecast regarding a social object by analyzing cognitive, affective-attitudinal and contextual-spatial dimensions; the contribution of the forecasting model to the consolidation of FPE in the Republic of Moldova through strategic optimization directions, clarifying legislative needs, improving the training of specialists and increasing the accessibility of the procedure; supporting the development of policies, guides and methodologies for the efficient integration of FPE in legal processes and improving the act of justice; emphasis of the results for the development of training programs for expert psychologists and lawyers, promoting professional competence and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Approval and implementation of the results: the obtained results were presented and discussed at international conferences in the country and abroad, and published in 13 scientific papers. The implementation of the results is presented in the form of practical recommendations for solving the researched scientific problem.

MELENTIEVA, ALIONA

**SOCIAL REPRESENTATION AND FORECASTS REGARDING
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGICAL
EXPERTISE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

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