

SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PREVENTION OF PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT OF SOCIAL SPHERE EMPLOYEES UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE MARTIAL LAW

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Abstract: The purpose of the article was to analyze the theoretical basis for the issue of social and psychological prevention of professional burnout of a social worker in the conditions of martial law and to single out effective preventive measures to minimize professional burnout in view of the martial law. The following general scientific methods of learning social phenomena and processes are used, namely: logical-historical, structural-functional and comparative - to analyze the terms "work stress", "professional stress", "organizational stress"; analysis and synthesis - to highlight the content and specifics of professional burnout of a social worker in the conditions of martial law; classifications - to typologize the types of professional burnout of a social worker in the conditions of martial law; structural and functional analysis - to find out the main directions of prevention of professional burnout of social workers, which requires studying and rethinking the most effective means in view of the martial law. As a result it was included the following terms in the terminological basis of the study: "work stress" (occurs on the basis of events that are directly related to the physical workplace), "occupational stress" (occurs due to reasons related to the specifics of work), "organizational stress" (occurs against the background of a negative impact on a person due to the specifics of a certain organization in which he is involved). The concept of professional burnout is analyzed, it is interpreted as a certain result of the process of adaptation to professional stress and represents the features of the dissatisfied adaptation of a social worker to stressful working conditions. In the course of the research, the concept of "professional burnout", its main causes, stages and manifestations were identified. It was found out that professional burnout of social workers significantly affects their productivity in the work process, mental and physical health. The steps proposed by authors will minimize the risks of professional burnout of young professionals.

Keywords: professional burnout; social and psychological prevention; social worker; stress.

1 Introduction

Modern Ukrainian society today is in rather difficult socio-psychological conditions, which are primarily related to the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This directly makes it difficult for any person to be in a stressful state, which greatly affects changes in a person's worldview and revision of their value orientations. The corresponding professional stress leads to the emergence of the syndrome of professional burnout, psychological exhaustion, a decrease in professional self-esteem, sometimes a negative attitude towards one's professional duties and misunderstandings among colleagues and clients.

The main reason for the appearance of professional burnout, scientists single out, is psychological tension in the conditions of martial law, which became a catalyst for the appearance of many psychological problems among the entire population of Ukraine, and in particular, among social workers. In such cases, in order to work with psychological health, attention is focused on comprehensive work to exclude emotions from traumatic factors. In the course of the research, we singled out three approaches to the definition of professional burnout (ecological, transactional, regulatory), which are the theoretical basis of our article.

A rather long stay of a person in the conditions of martial law causes the emergence of new requirements for the physical and psychological resources of social workers. An increased number of stress factors, constant work in conditions of air alarms, difficulty in communicating with loved ones, making emergency decisions, observing professional ethics, as well as safety rules - all this has a rather strong effect on the psychological state of

every specialist in the social sphere. A peculiar characteristic of a social specialist is the direct ability to communicate with people who find themselves in difficult life circumstances, the ability to react quickly in crisis situations and, accordingly, to build mutual positive communication with clients.

We emphasize that stress is a complex process that includes both physiological and psychological components (A. Ababkov, S. Auerbach, O. Baranov, D. Bright, F. Jones, V. Yevdokimov, V. Maryschuk, V. Perre, A. Rean, H. Selye). The main manifestations and phases of stress (according to H. Selye): anxiety, resistance, exhaustion. Based on J. Greenberg's model, the main components of stress were analyzed: a) life situation; b) perception of the life situation as stressful; c) emotional excitement; d) physiological excitement; e) consequences. The need for stress management through purposeful intervention in the course of events to prevent negative consequences that stress can cause is emphasized [10].

In particular, in the scientific literature, purposeful social behavior is singled out, which enables a specialist to withstand a difficult situation or stress through the prism of perceiving an action strategy. Corresponding, this intentional behavior occurs at any change in the situation to which the specialist can adapt and control it. Styles and strategies are chosen in accordance with individual components of a specialist's social behavior, as a result of which he is able to cope with difficult situations without a threat to his social and psychological state.

Therefore, the syndrome of professional burnout of specialists in the social sphere acts as a certain destructive factor that significantly reduces the fruitful activity of employees, indicates professional regression, acts as a destruction not only of psychological health, but also of physical health, and accordingly is a danger for the very clients seeking assistance from such a specialist in the social sphere. That is why there is a need not only for a theoretical analysis of the specified research topic, but also for the development of preventive steps to prevent professional burnout of social workers.

2 Materials and Methods

To solve the purpose of the article, the following general scientific methods of learning social phenomena and processes are used, namely: *logical-historical*, *structural-functional* and *comparative* - to analyze the terms "work stress", "professional stress", "organizational stress"; *analysis and synthesis* - to highlight the content and specifics of professional burnout of a social worker in the conditions of martial law; *classifications* - to typologize the types of professional burnout of a social worker in the conditions of martial law; *structural and functional analysis* - to find out the main directions of prevention of professional burnout of social workers, which requires studying and rethinking the most effective means in view of the martial law.

The theoretical basis of our study was the fundamental scientific positions of foreign scientists on the issue of professional burnout of a social worker, namely: L. Armstrong, A. Bradsky, S. Brown, M. Gunn, B. Perlman, and others. The problem of the syndrome of "professional burnout" was reflected in the works of foreign and domestic scientists devoted to the content and structure of this syndrome (M. Burysh, H. Dion, L. Karamushka, N. Levytska, G. Lozhkin, M. Leiter, S. Maksymenko, L. Malets, E. Maher, V. Orel, M. Smulson, T. Formaniuk, H. Freudenberger, U. Shufeli, and others), as well as methods of its diagnosis (V. Boiko, N. Vodopianova, S. Jackson, K. Maslach, T. Ronginska, O. Starchenkova, etc.).

However, in view of the latest challenges and threats facing social workers, namely, the martial law, which has lasted for two years in the entire territory of Ukraine, requires additional theoretical and practical study of the mentioned subject. Since

the researchers' theoretical work does not cover the entire range of problems faced by workers in the social sphere of modern Ukrainian society starting from February 24, 2022, this prompted the choice of this research topic.

3 Results

Professional burnout is most clearly manifested in the group of professions that belong to the "person-person" system. The relevant specialists of this system must constantly enter into communication with a large number of people. Daily emotional stress, accordingly, carries a certain danger of difficult experiences, which are directly related to a person's professional activity. And being in the process of martial law plunges a person into a stressful state even more.

In the course of our research, we consider the term "stress" as a certain reaction of the human body, which manifests itself in a state of tension, a certain depression and is manifested in a person under the influence of an extreme situation (in particular, the research is about the Russian-Ukrainian war).

For a more detailed understanding of the stress associated with a person's professional activity, which is the main cause of professional burnout from a terminological point of view, scientists have distinguished such concepts as: "work stress", "professional stress" and "organizational stress".

As for work stress, it arises on the basis of events that are directly related to the physical workplace (conditions or place of work). In turn, professional stress can appear due to reasons related to the specifics of work. Organizational stress, in turn, arises against the background of a negative impact on a person due to the specifics of a certain organization in which he is involved. And it is worth emphasizing that these terms are not synonymous, rather they are close in meaning. Their use depends on which factors are involved in stressful situations.

The question arises, how to distinguish the factors that cause different types of stress (work, professional or organizational). Let's dwell on them in more detail:

- work stress - specialists can be adversely affected by unsatisfactory working conditions (poor technical component, uncomfortable workplace, inappropriate work schedule, heavy workload, etc.). Accordingly, these factors can occur not only due to the imperfection of a certain organization, but also due to objective conditions that are not influenced by the employer (lack of certain technical points, climatic conditions, unstructured demand for this type of work, etc.);
- professional stress - quite a lot of professions are associated with stressful situations, especially when it comes to "person-to-person" professions, to which the social sphere belongs. In this regard, it has been rightly pointed out by many scientists that the profession itself, in this case, is stressful;
- organizational stress - it can be attributed to a negative psychological climate in the team, incompetent or abusive management, inaccuracy in job duties, irrational or insufficient distribution of work responsibilities, poor communication along the vertical and horizontal hierarchy of the company, inaccurate goals of the company's activities and other.

Based on the topic of our research, we will dwell in more detail on the concept of "professional stress", which is defined as a multidimensional phenomenon that is expressed in physiological and psychological reactions to a difficult professional situation. Three main approaches to the study of professional stress are distinguished - ecological, transactional, regulatory [10].

By its structure, professional stress is a combination of stressor and stress reactivity. Stressors are factors that can potentially cause a stress reaction. Stress reactivity is a change in the physiological state of the body (increased muscle tension,

increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, increased sweating, increased cholesterol in the blood, hydrochloric acid in the stomach, etc.). At the same time, the professional stress model consists of the following main components: a professional situation (which consistently or unexpectedly brings a person out of a state of equilibrium); perception of the professional situation as stressful (one that causes concern); emotional arousal (fear, anger, sense of threat, state of shock, etc.) as a reaction to events that cause suffering; physiological excitement (increased blood pressure, muscle tension, decreased efficiency of the immune system, etc.); consequences (diseases; decrease in labor productivity; interpersonal conflicts, etc.) [4].

Based on the analysis of approaches to the study of the "professional burnout" syndrome (A. Vydai, S. Jackson, L. Karamushka, N. Levytska, H. Lozhkin, K. Maslach, L. Malets, V. Orel, M. Smulson, T. Formaniuk, H. Freudenberger) this syndrome was defined as a stress reaction that occurs as a result of long-term professional stress of medium intensity. From the point of view of the definition of the stress process according to H. Selye (that is, the stages of anxiety, resistance and exhaustion), the syndrome of "professional burnout" is classified as the third stage, which is preceded by a persistent and uncontrollable level of excitement. The definition of the content of this phenomenon is based on the approach of H. Freudenberger, who in 1974 characterized the syndrome of "professional burnout" as a special mental state of healthy people who are in intensive communication with clients, patients, in an emotionally charged atmosphere when providing professional assistance [10].

American researchers K. Maslach and S. Jackson note that professional burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduction of personal achievements. Emotional exhaustion is the main component of professional burnout: the feeling of emotional devastation, fatigue is generated by one's own work. Emotional exhaustion manifests itself as an emotional background, indifference or emotional oversaturation [6].

As noted by O. Hlavatska, the syndrome of professional burnout is characteristic of employees of "communicative" professions that make high demands on psychological stability in situations of business communication. It is the profession of a social worker that is most prone to burnout due to the specifics of their activity. The main groups of factors that contribute to the formation of the syndrome of professional burnout of social workers include: individual characteristics of the personality (characteristic, self-esteem, level of education, etc.); organizational (work content, work overload, working conditions); peculiarities of professional activity. It is worth noting that the profession of a social worker does not have a high social status today in our society. In fact, low evaluation of his work can also be an additional source of professional burnout [3].

Quite interesting is the position of the scientist N. Perkhail, who believes that the syndrome of professional burnout of specialists in the social sphere is a destructive factor that not only reduces the productivity of employees, it indicates professional regression, dissatisfaction with self-realization, destroys their physical and psychological health, and is a danger for clients who seek assistance from social services [7].

Professional burnout (burnout syndrome) in Ukraine was officially recognized by WHO in 2001 as a psychological problem. In the International Classification of Diseases of the 10th revision, "burnout syndrome" is allocated to a separate diagnostic taxon - Z73 Problems related to life-management difficulty, coded as Z73.0 - Burn-out [6].

The syndrome of professional burnout negatively affects the professional and personal life of social workers and leads to the following consequences:

- social: loss of satisfaction with the quality of relations with clients, colleagues or management; loss of benevolence, care and friendliness in situations of business communication; loss of interest in customers; dissatisfaction with social and administrative support, feelings of alienation;
- spiritual: dissatisfaction with self-realization; despair in the implementation of life plans; loss of faith in one's own abilities and potential; lowering the bar of personal growth; loss of identity;
- physiological: loss of physical strength and exhaustion; psychosomatic illness; insomnia, appetite disturbances, etc.;
- material: loss of enthusiasm and motivation for financial earnings, loss or abandonment of clients;
- psychological: loss of positive mood and emotional elation; decrease in self-esteem related to work; feeling empty; loss of positive energy, dissatisfaction with one's mood and lack of cheerfulness, loss of mental balance (irritability, incontinence, fatigue, feelings of guilt, addiction, etc.); violation of the motivational and instructional sphere in professional behavior [3].

So, summarizing the analyzed terms, we can come to the conclusion that professional burnout is interpreted as a certain result of the process of adaptation to professional stress and is a feature of the dissatisfied adaptation of a social worker to stressful working conditions. Accordingly, the phenomenon of professional burnout itself takes on the features of a reactive-adaptive psychological content with a certain definition of its place in the system of interpretation of the psychological theory of stress.

The analysis of scientific research shows us that the professional burnout of social workers is devoted to a sufficient number of theoretical works by authors, both domestic and foreign. The essence and specifics of professional burnout, its origin and main components are comprehensively investigated in these works. However, today the issue of the influence of the martial law on professional burnout remains unsolved, and the system for the prevention of professional burnout remains undeveloped.

Important thing in stress management is the formation of an adequate attitude to the main stressor, which is the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine: the perception of war as an objective reality; the need to mobilize resources to overcome this situation; the ability to take responsibility for one's life and the lives of loved ones; active involvement in various types of activity related to the defense of Ukraine; understanding the phasic course of the war and one's emotional reactions; mastering the rules of regulating one's behavior, etc. It is also essential to identify additional stressors that operate during war. These, for example, can be the following stressors: inability to engage in active activities to support the population and military personnel; conflicts with relatives; impossibility of constant communication with loved ones who have gone abroad; communication with "toxic" people, etc. [11]. The professional activity of a social worker consists in timely help to the client through support, resocialization or rehabilitation. That is, the basic point of professional activity with the client is interaction and high-quality communication. The presence of a high-quality reaction of a social worker to a stressful situation determines the possibility of falling into the category of persons with the syndrome of professional burnout.

Professional burnout in the modern world is studied as a fairly long-term stressful situation that appears as a result of the effects of constant (sometimes chronic) professional stress on a person. In this regard, the syndrome of professional burnout in a certain way deforms a person from the point of view of his professional characteristics.

The syndrome of professional burnout is one of the dangerous psychological diseases, especially for specialists in the social sphere. Interestingly, a certain group of scientists correlates professional burnout with increased human empathy. It is no

coincidence that K. Maslach, the first researcher of this phenomenon, called her book "Emotional burnout - the price of compassion." K. Maslach claims that professional burnout is not a loss of creative potential, not a reaction to boredom, but, most likely, emotional exhaustion arising against the background of stress caused by interpersonal communication [5].

Factors causing professional burnout are divided into external and internal. The first include: work organization (overload, undefined job duties, role conflict, professional non-recognition); the nature of the activity, which requires constant concentration and dedication; lack of professional motivation and financial interest. Internal factors that lead to burnout of a specialist are excessive care for clients, insufficient professional and communicative competence, excessive anxiety, nervous tension, personal ambitions, workaholism, mental imbalance, internal conflict, etc. Role factors of professional burnout include: role conflict, role uncertainty, dissatisfaction with professional and personal growth, low social status, rejection by the reference group. Separately, it should be said about another factor that causes burnout of specialists - the presence of a psychologically difficult contingent with whom they have to work and communicate in the social sphere [7].

In particular, it is possible to make a certain division of persons who are most often prone to professional burnout and are at risk: 1) introverts who are unable to conduct constant active communication due to their individual and psychological characteristics; 2) people who have a certain internal conflict in connection with the specifics of work; 3) women who are in conflict between the balance of work and family, as well as due to the need to prove their professional suitability against the background of the male gender (a certain oppression from the gender aspect); 4) persons working under conditions of chronic stress (constant threat of job loss, independent search for a client base, etc.).

Data from various studies prove that young, inexperienced workers in the social sphere are more prone to burnout, because they have unrealistic expectations about the profession, organization, and professional success. The source of burnout can be inflated and unsatisfied expectations. In general, the greater the discrepancy between expectations and reality, the more negative the consequences will be for each individual employee and for the organization as a whole. In addition, low wages and relatively low social status are also factors contributing to the emergence of professional burnout syndrome [3].

Professional burnout has certain dynamics and includes 4 stages: *the first stage* is characterized by a mild form of self-care (for example, organizing frequent breaks at work, mini-vacations, etc.), a person may begin to forget some small work moments. Most often, few people pay attention to this stage. The duration of the first stage is from three to five years. *The second stage* is characterized by a certain decrease in interest in work processes, a decrease in the need for communication (both business and intimate), the appearance of apathy towards work, the appearance of chronic headaches, the appearance of frequent colds, increased irritability. The duration of this stage can be from five to fifteen years. *The third stage* has all the signs of burnout and is chronic. Chronic diseases may appear (for example, depression, stomach problems, etc.), there is a loss of the value of one's professional activity and complete indifference to work processes. At this stage, a person strives for seclusion by all methods, the duration is up to ten years. And *the fourth (final) stage* is characterized by complete combustion. The duration can reach up to twenty years [2].

In connection with the high probability of the development of professional burnout syndrome among representatives of social professions, the issue of preventive measures to prevent and overcome this phenomenon is gaining relevance. There are two main directions of preventive and rehabilitation work: measures to prevent the syndrome of professional burnout:

- teaching social (communicative) skills, self-governance and self-control skills, mastering constructive models of behavior; rehabilitation of persons with professional burnout syndrome: recovery;
- psycho-energetic potential and meaning of professional activity and life, actualization of personal resources, increase of self-esteem [8].

In particular, scientists single out a group of certain warnings of professional burnout, which contributes to the improvement of their psychological well-being, namely: a clear understanding of work goals (both long-term and short-term); regular rest from work (regular working day, weekends and vacations according to the schedule); constant professional development and improvement of one's competence; the possibility of professional growth; avoiding comparing oneself with other specialists in the relevant field; leading a healthy lifestyle and regular sports. Also, on the part of the management, the following will contribute to the prevention of professional burnout: opportunities for the professional growth of a specialist, a salary increase or a permanent bonus (certain motivational stimulation); providing specialists with the necessary technical equipment; positive psychological climate in the team and others.

Also, it is necessary to take into account the points of digitalization of the work of social workers to simplify work processes, because the digital revolution has been going on for more than seventy years in the world, which is a multifactorial transition from analog to digital methods of data processing, storage, and transmission, and, accordingly, rapid development of hardware and software that serves these processes. These changes originate from the scientific research of those innovations that, with a successful coincidence of socio-economic circumstances, reach industrial development and mass implementation [1].

Based on the above analysis, the prevention of professional burnout requires a comprehensive approach and the correct formation of rules for the general training of specialists in the social sphere.

Prevention of professional burnout of specialists in the social sphere should be based on the very initial stages of entry into professional activity, namely: firstly, preparing future specialists in the social sphere for stressful factors and providing tools to counteract them; secondly, the formation of personal resources of young professionals to effectively overcome stressful situations.

Since it was found that professional burnout is most likely to be experienced by young specialists who have just entered the labor market, we have highlighted the key steps of primary preventive measures for social workers:

- 1) High-quality training of future specialists in the social sphere in institutions of higher education (hereinafter, higher education institutions), which is aimed at acquiring skills that form the students' mastery of methods for working with stress and adaptation to it;
- 2) Formation of communication skills as a key indicator of the effective work of a social worker, since this process itself acts as a stressogenic factor for a specialist. This will allow specialists in the course of work: effective self-realization, will provide an opportunity for productive communication, counter manipulation (both on the part of management and on the part of clients), readiness for business negotiations;
- 3) In the process of professional training of future specialists in the social sphere, it is necessary for future specialists in the social sphere to master rehabilitation techniques aimed at reducing the effects of stressors: removing work stress, increasing professional motivation, equalizing the balance between the efforts expended and the result, mastering the skills and abilities of self-regulation (relaxation, ideomotor acts, positive motivation), drug-free relaxation methods -

meditation, yoga, self-training, progressive relaxation, etc. [9].

4 Conclusion

Therefore, our analysis of the specifics of professional burnout of social workers, its causes, stages and manifestations makes it possible to assert that its destructive role in the development and formation of social workers reduces the productivity of workers and violates the quality of communication between the worker and the client (which is dangerous as for the specialist himself and for the client).

The proposed steps of early preventive measures for workers in the social sphere will make it possible to prevent and minimize the possible challenges of professional burnout. You will also learn skills that will help you identify and counter the effects of professional burnout.

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Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AE, AN