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Psychologist's Resilience to Stress Factors: Exploring Psychological Peculiarities

Abstract: In the context of the socio-political instability that exists in Ukraine, the problem of stress resistance among psychological service professionals has emerged. The aim of the research is to analyse the professional activity of psychologists in Ukraine at the present stage under the influence of stress factors. The following methods were used to study the nature of stress and its impact on the personality of a psychologist: analytical and synthesis methods, statistical, comparative, survey and interpretive methods. The research results theoretically reveal the peculiarities of the concept of stress, the stages of stress development, and identify the main stressors of professional activity. An empirical study of the stress resistance of psychologists was conducted. The influence of stress on the quality of psychological care was determined. Professional qualities in the psychologist's personality structure were identified, the phenomenon of professional exhaustion, the role of countertransference in counselling were studied, the importance of the code of ethics for psychologists and its violation in the course of practice were revealed. The importance of interventions and supervision as a means of psychological support for the professional development of psychologists was investigated, and statistical indicators of the level of stress were analysed. The practical significance of the research is determined by the current coverage of the problem of the impact of stress on the professional activity of a psychologist and in the creation of effective ways of emotional self-preservation and development of stress resistance, which provide the search for their resources for self-healing and effective work.

Keywords: *professional burnout, supervision, countertransference, coping strategies, intervention*

INTRODUCTION

According to the Ministry of Health, 650.000 people consulted psychologists since the beginning of the full-scale war. Currently, psychological assistance specialists are also actively involved in the Armed Forces of Ukraine to preserve the mental health of the military, and their emotional and volitional stability, and prevent the occurrence of psychogenic disorders. Many specialists help Ukrainians overcome fear, panic attacks, separation, and despair due to the loss of relatives or homes. As of 2022, the number of psychological service specialists in Ukraine is

20413 people (State of Ukrainian's..., 2022). Ukraine and Israel were chosen for the comparative analysis of psychological services in this study as both countries have similar problems that affect the specifics of the activities and directions of development of psychological services: a threat to life during a military conflict, lack of confidence in the future, tragic events that lead to anxiety disorders and stress-related diseases. The experience of Israeli psychologists is based on the knowledge of military psychology, which is being actively adopted by Ukrainian specialists.

E. Inobat et al. (2019), studying the professional characteristics of psychologists and the factors that can



deform them, concluded that the full-fledged activity and personal development of a specialist depend on the initial stage of training that takes place in educational institutions. Their main goal is to form an active, mature, conscious personality with professionally significant qualities (Prib and Bobko, 2023). According to researchers, a psychologist's personality becomes a tool that ensures optimal goal achievement in difficult emotional circumstances. K. Posluns (2020) noted that the profession of a psychologist is considered one of the most vulnerable to stress, resulting in disorientation during the performance of professional duties, physical and emotional exhaustion, and professional burnout, during which motivation and inspiration to help others are lost.

A.M. Williams et al. (2020) noted that stress resistance is one of the most important competencies of psychologists, based on personal characteristics, which encourages them to deal with stress factors during professional interaction with clients and to independently search for internal resources for energy recovery. In turn, E. Lazos and V. Malushka (2022) defined the concept of stress resistance as a complex of emotional and volitional, intellectual, and motivational components of a person's mental activity that ensure the effective achievement of a goal in a difficult atmosphere or during temporary emotional stress. Scientists have emphasised that the body's stressful reaction to external factors entails a complex of mental and somatic disorders that are reinforced by suppressed emotions or feelings that disrupt the functions of mental adaptation. Y. Teptyuk (2020) described occupational stress as a multi-level phenomenon that manifests itself through psychological and physiological reactions to vital or extreme situations; a state of tension that an employee consciously reproduces to combat a negative factor during professional activity.

Despite their cognitive capacities and theoretical knowledge, psychologists sometimes become hostages of information stress during counselling or therapeutic techniques, which they cannot cope with on their own (Ortikova, 2010; Terletska, 2019). At this stage, not only an excessive level of empathy is triggered, but also the psychologist's life problems that he or she may experience outside the professional environment. Information stress can cause tension, negative feelings, and mental disintegration that affect activity and performance during the day, as well as affect the psychologist's personality in case of violation of their own life positions, principles, or values (Teptyuk, 2021).

The research aims to determine the peculiarities of psychologists' stress resistance in the current conditions of the constant pressure of stress factors. The main tasks are to reveal the main criteria in psychological activity that specialists should rely on to improve their skills and avoid harming clients; identify the best ways to increase the level of stress resistance, develop competence and the ability to find internal resources for their recovery and mechanical self-preservation. The research problem concerns the issues related to the mental health of psychol-

ogists themselves, and their dependence on the impact of excessive stress, which can destabilise, and affect self-development and the quality of counselling.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological approach is based on the analysis and synthesis methods, which allowed to develop the theoretical basis of the problem of studying the nature of stress, its impact on the activities and competence of psychologists, and to determine the determinants of emotional burnout. The synthesis method generalised the obtained data into a single structure that formed basic ideas about the degree of influence of stress factors on the quality of psychological care, explored the importance of compliance with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists in counselling, and determined the essence of the impact of countertransference on the result of professional interaction with a client.

The statistical method was used to analyse the periods of activity of psychological services in Ukraine and indicators of professional stress resistance. This method is based on the disclosure of numerical values regarding psychological services and the quality of consultations provided by the Ukrainian Scientific and Methodological Centre for Practical Psychology and Social Work (Berezina et al., 2015). The comparative method was used to study the distinctive features of psychologists' activities in Ukraine and Israel, their interaction and exchange of experience to address difficult situations that destabilise the emotional health of civilians and the military.

The empirical component was implemented through a survey conducted among a group of Ukrainian psychologists of different ages who voluntarily took part in the study. The total sample consisted of 76 people. The survey was conducted online using Google Forms. To conduct the empirical study, the Holmes-Rahe methodology, the adaptability to stress methodology, and the coping behaviour in stressful situations methodology (S. Norman, D. Endler) were used.

The Holmes-Rahe methodology was used in the study to assess the level of stress among psychologists at the current stage of professional activity. The Holmes-Rahe Stress Inventory, also known as the Holmes and Rahe Life Stress Inventory, is a tool used to determine the risk of stress-induced health breakdowns. Developed in the 1960s by psychiatrists Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe, this scale assesses the cumulative effect of significant life events on an individual's health. The test presents a list of events (43 statements) to determine which life situations cause an "acute" reaction in the body, which in the future may be accompanied by somatic diseases (Zlyvko et al., 2016). The methodology allowed to determine the adaptive abilities of psychologists under stressful conditions and ways of recovery, which are demonstrated by eight scales. The methodology of studying coping behaviour in stressful conditions is aimed at identifying strategies of behaviour in stressful situations, according to the following scales (Table 1).

Table 1. Criteria of adaptive capabilities and coping behaviour in stressful conditions

Criteria of adaptive capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the scale of working time and personal life self-management; – somatic regulation scale; – psychophysiological state management scale; – self-confidence scale; – a scale of dreams and sleep patterns; – adaptive thinking scale; – social support scale; – optimism scale. 	V. Rozov (2005)
Criteria of studying coping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – problem-solving orientation; – emotion orientation; – evasion orientation; – distraction subscale; – social distraction subscale 	Y. Bolotina (2021)

The maximum score obtained for one of the scales indicates the dominant strategy in the behavioural response to the stress factor, which psychologists are guided by in practice. The interpretive method allowed to combine the analysed data of early scientific approaches with the practical achievements, to summarise the results into a single system of knowledge that revealed the importance of the impact of stress on the emotional background and well-being of the psychologist's personality, and to establish the role of interventions and supervision as important methods for finding internal resources and self-regulation.

On the beginning of the research all participants were fully informed if the anonymity is assured, why the research is being conducted, how their data will be used and if there are any risks associated. Investigations were carried out following the rules of the Declaration of Helsinki (1975).

It's important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. The sample size of Ukrainian psychologists is relatively small, and their participation in volunteer organizations, private centres, and online formats might introduce selection bias. A larger sample could provide more robust findings and allow for greater generalization of the results. Acknowledging limitations ensures the credibility of a study and provides context for the interpretation of the results.

RESULTS

The profession of a psychologist is complex in nature and often has "severe" consequences that affect the well-being and self-improvement of a specialist. During interaction, not only does the counselling assistance on a given client's problem take place but also the full surrender of one's own emotions, experiences, compassion, proper support and situational living of the client's

"pain" "here and now". The current situation in Ukraine, which is characterised by the reality of the military-political conflict, often exhausts, and destabilises the most experienced professionals working with victims. The proper level of professional skills, knowledge and practical abilities are not always able to help under the influence of a strong stressor that has become a "novelty" for a psychologist, contrary to his or her life views and norms. Every day intense psycho-emotional activity and increased responsibility gradually exhaust, causing anxiety, professional burnout, and demotivation.

Research by the American Institute of Stress shows that about 84% of employees suffer from occupational stress, more than 70% of employees require health insurance due to complex professional tasks, and 72% of people openly raise issues related to health and stress during the working day (Stress Statistics, 2022). In Ukraine, about 65% of working people are in a state of emotional exhaustion, which is provoked by intense work and, as a result, dissatisfaction. According to statistics from the Ukrainian Scientific and Methodological Centre for Practical Psychology and Social Work, psychological services have been cut since 2015, with the total number of psychologists being half of the normative requirement for specialists. The largest reductions were recorded in the eastern and southern regions. At the same time, in the western regions of Ukraine, the number of specialists began to grow, reaching almost 50 specialists per region. Since 2015, the number of referrals to psychologists in Ukraine has grown rapidly (up to 1.5 million), with about 60% of requests being for children. The reasons for referrals were situational traumatic events, forced displacement, family relationship problems, violence, and teenage bullying (Berezina et al., 2015).

The Holmes-Rahe methodology was used to diagnose the level of stress resistance and the impact of stress on the professional activity of psychologists. A group of Ukrainian psychologists from different regions, aged 28 to 43, who currently work in volunteer organisations, private psychological centres, crisis institutions and individually in an online format in support services, took part in the survey. The total number of respondents was 76. The main task of the respondents, despite their methodological awareness, was to choose from 48 statements options for events that had happened to them during the year. The interpretation of the results is based on two standard indicators specified in the methodology: 150 points – a partial probability of a "stress disease" with somatic consequences; 300 points – a high probability of a stress disease affecting the general psychophysiology of the respondents (Figure 1).

The methodology results showed that respondents with a partial probability of "stress illness" chose events among the statements, the number of which formed a total score of 150 points. This indicates a partial likelihood of an "anxiety disorder" that may arise because of the specific impact of difficult circumstances on respondents, their emotional background, physical condition, mood and motivation. The professional field does not allow for the

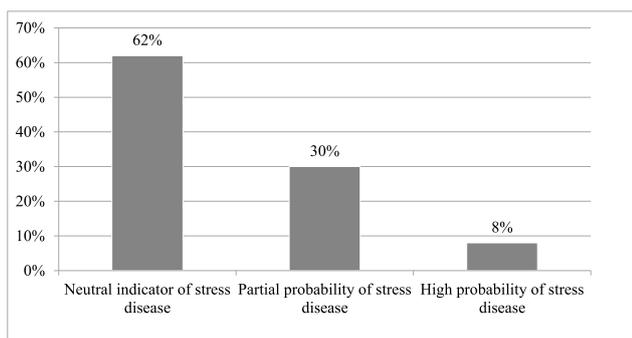


Figure 1: Diagnostic indicator of the “anxiety disorder”

“release” of pain during practice not to harm clients. As a result, there is an internal suppression of emotions (despair, fear, anger), and the willpower resource is actively used to block the manifestation of any feelings. This indicator is likely to signal the onset of psychosomatic illnesses that prevent you from working towards the desired result and direct your energy towards solving physiological problems. Respondents with a high probability of “anxiety disorder” chose life events from the listed statements, the total score of which was 300 points, which may indicate a high probability of stress illness, which can be expressed by emotional burnout, loss of interest in activities, detachment, and deep analysis of one’s experiences. As a result, psychosomatic diseases can arise as a result of suppressed aggression directed at one’s personality, as the level of demands and responsibility for one’s activities remains present and overstated.

The rest of the respondents received neutral results for the above statements, as some of the selected life periods had a positive meaning. Also, a neutral result may indicate a high level of stress resistance, or the ability to professionally avoid extraneous stimuli, “block” empathy promptly, or be less congruent. However, the results of this technique are not a 100% diagnosis confirming a certain degree of stress, but only a methodological assumption that requires in-depth analysis and further disclosure. To study the adaptive abilities of psychologists under stressful conditions, the adaptability to stress technique was used (Rozov, 2005). A preliminary sample of respondents took part in the study. The main task of the respondents was to indicate their age and openly answer the list of questions presented in the methodology (Figure 2).

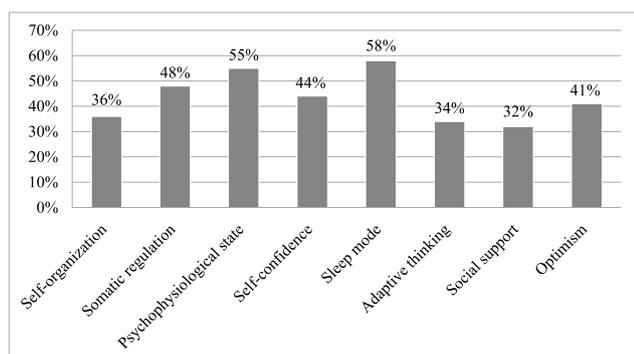


Figure 2: Diagnostic indicators of adaptive abilities under stressful conditions

The analysis of the obtained results revealed an overall average level of adaptability to stress among respondents. This is evidenced by the results of the developed scales, the level of expression of which complements and compensates for the expended resource, namely a reduced external socio-psychological mechanism of adaptation, supported by internal factors responsible for the fullness of the body’s existence at the physical level. For an integrated approach to the study of psychologists’ stress resistance, the methodology of “coping behaviour in stressful situations” (S. Norman, D. Endler) was additionally used, which revealed in detail the peculiarities of behavioural reactions to the stress factor. This methodology includes a list of mental and behavioural actions in stressful situations. The answer sheet consists of 48 statements, among which respondents should choose those that best evoke emotions (Figure 3).

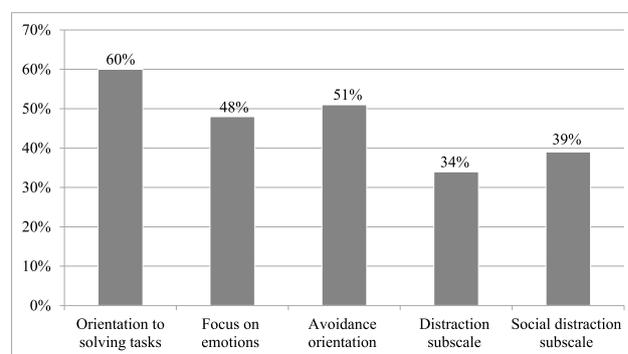


Figure 3: Results of dominant coping strategies in stressful situations

A low score on the social distraction subscale is a positive result and indicates professional indifference to social problems, a desire to help, and active involvement in organisations aimed at maintaining psychological well-being in society, productive interaction with people, and the accumulation of worthy results. The distraction subscale may signal professional exhaustion and emotional stress, which suppress motivation and volitional resources arising from insufficient attention to one’s personality. However, this indicator was low, which indicates that respondents work on themselves and their problems to avoid harming third parties. The analysis of the research has shown that stress adaptability, reaction and behaviour can be expressed in different meanings and ways depending on the situation. Respondents have several dominant capacities in dealing with the impact of stress and those that are less developed, despite their judgements and life views.

The techniques showed that a significant number of respondents have an average level of stress resistance. This indicates independence and prudence, the ability to regulate their own emotions, perform professional tasks properly, and continue working under stressful conditions, feeling the internal capabilities to do so (resistance to emotional and physiological state, well-being). Despite their professional experience, there is still a high probability that psychologists will not always be able to

orientate themselves in the right situation in time, which will be new and extremely stressful, which can lead to temporary disorientation, a noticeable decrease in performance, and manifestations of psychosomatics. That is why a group of professionals who have a low ability to psychologically distance themselves from traumatic events need outside help and support, which is provided by psychoanalytic and therapeutic methods, as well as through interventions to improve professional skills and supervision to resolve professional difficulties (Yatsenko et al., 2015).

This survey is a quasi-study and does not bear representative results. It serves as a current snapshot that situationally describes the internal state and stress resistance of the surveyed respondents. It should also be noted that the data obtained is not 100% accurate. It is possible that some respondents may not have answered the questions accurately and may have falsified their answers, as the online format of the survey, despite their initiative, may have been with a light-hearted attitude to the tasks. To maintain their mental health, positive functioning of the physiological state, and acquire new professionally important skills, psychologists often resort to regular visits for interventions and supervision, the common task of which is to fill with new knowledge, achieve emotional relief, understand the situation that caused unclear feelings, and improve professionally important qualities (Khilko, 2018; 2019). The main purpose of interventions is to share discoveries and experiences among colleagues and to discuss problems that have arisen. An intervention group can be led by both an experienced specialist and an ordinary psychologist who has an urgent need to open a complex topic for professional discussion and find a compromise solution.

According to European standards, supervision is the basis for the positive activity and development of psychologists, which provides professional assistance to specialists and improves their skills (Dragos and Przybytniowski, 2022). Supervision can take place individually and, in a group, during which difficulties in the course of work, internal fears or worries are revealed, and the methodological side is discussed. This type of professional assistance helps to avoid serious nervous breakdowns, mental disorders, or other manifestations of mental instability (Mushkevich and Chagarna, 2017). In Ukraine, there is no institution of supervision, but individual groups are created under the guidance of supervisors, whose help is based on various psychotherapeutic programmes. Supervision is based on three main functions that enrich the resources of psychologists (Nezhynska and Tymenko, 2017):

- educational (development of professionally relevant skills and abilities);
- supportive (development of stress resistance to negative influences that psychologists often experience from clients);
- dynamic (regular support of specialists in a specific period).

The prevention of emotional burnout and the development of stress resistance is carried out through various

approaches: psychoanalytic, psychosomatic, body-oriented, psychological, existential, cognitive. An important role is played using psycho-technology of adaptive self-regulation of stress, which is based on several levels:

- bioenergetic (nutrition, somatic regulation, physical activity);
- psychophysiological (autogenous training, muscle relaxation, meditation, breathing techniques);
- cognitive (cyanogenic and positive thinking, cognitive and rational techniques, NLP methods);
- personal (techniques for understanding needs and goals, developing communication);
- anti-stress (normalisation of sleep patterns, dream analysis, techniques for understanding night images).

The use of these psychological techniques depends on the degree of complexity of the problem faced by the psychologist and is selected individually, upon the agreement of both parties to the interaction. One of the competencies of a psychologist that affects their perception of the world around them, and the process of overcoming stress is tolerance to uncertainty. The field of psychology involves dealing with complex human behaviour, emotions and experiences that are often unpredictable and difficult to understand. Therefore, tolerating uncertainty means being comfortable with not having all the answers and being able to accept that there may be more than one explanation or interpretation of a situation or behaviour. At the same time, tolerance for uncertainty allows a psychologist to creatively comprehend various professional situations, look for more extensive solutions, master psychological challenges, and most importantly, prevent emotional burnout and thus maintain mental health (Fedoryshyn, 2022).

During martial law in Ukraine, psychological services and crisis centres are actively operating, providing education on behaviour during hostilities, dealing with post-traumatic stress, depression. For example, in Vinnytsia, the “Ветерано Хаб” (“Veteran Hub”) and “Ветеранський простір” (“Veteran Space”) psychological centres are actively helping soldiers’ families. In addition, psychological assistance is provided through a helpline, as part of the activities of the Ukrainian call centres “Варто жити” (“It’s worth living”) and “Life Line Ukraine”. Citizens receive crisis counselling from psychologists in Dnipro, Lviv, Chernivtsi, Kyiv, Sumy, Cherkasy, and other cities. The psychologists’ efforts are particularly significant in the public human rights organisation “ЛаСтрада-Україна” (“LaStrada-Ukraine”), which provides support to victims of gender-based and domestic violence and combating human trafficking. The analysis of psychological services in Israel has found some similarities with psychological services in Ukraine, as they share a common problem based on military and political realities. Having adapted to the extreme conditions, Israeli psychologists are actively involved in volunteer psychological support movements, provide face-to-face and remote consultations, and work directly with military personnel at headquarters to maintain their emotional balance, mental health, and fortitude. In Israel, “psycho-

logical stations" have gained popularity, actively interacting with the education system, and providing counselling and therapeutic techniques used for children. The main psychological techniques that are actively used in Israel are working with "invisible traumas": shock received during hostilities; post-traumatic stress disorder (Jacoby, 2018).

The difficult military-political situation prompted psychologists to create the "Лаборатория стресс" ("Stress Laboratory"), which aims to maintain the emotional health and harmonious internal background of both civilians and professionals. This laboratory provided favourable conditions for scientific and practical development in psychology, psychodiagnostic, and individual consultations (Alkalay and Dolev, 2019). The psychological societies operating in Israel are guided by psychotherapeutic areas and are active among them: Association of Family Therapy, Israeli Association of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Hypnosis.

Improving the system of training and advanced training of psychologists, especially in the realm of stress resistance, is paramount given the increasing demands of the profession. It is worth to design modules specifically tailored for building resilience and coping mechanisms in high-stress environments. Incorporate real-world case studies to enhance relevance. Mindfulness meditation has been shown to reduce symptoms of burnout and improve resilience in various professionals. So, psychologists could integrate mindfulness training into the curriculum. It is important to make stress resistance training a mandatory component of CPD. Periodic refresher courses can introduce psychologists to the latest tools and techniques. For example, the techniques which could help with stress are Cognitive Behavioral Techniques. These are instrumental in understanding and altering thought patterns, making them especially useful in managing stress. Progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing exercises, and guided imagery can all be instrumental in managing acute stress. Positive Psychology Interventions could be also important. Techniques such as gratitude journals, strengths-based interventions, and resilience building are becoming increasingly popular in managing stress and building positive outcomes. By refining the training programs and keeping them updated with the latest research and techniques, the psychological fraternity can ensure that its members are well-equipped to manage not just their clients' stress but also their own.

DISCUSSION

Stress is emotionally exhausting, leads to passivity, and causes a desire to withdraw, while the Ukrainian psychologists' practice has become even more extreme in the context of the military-political conflict, as everyday specialists face problems that they previously knew about in theory. Working with children, internally displaced persons, victims of tragic accidents, violence, and military personnel who have suffered an emotional breakdown requires maximum competence and stress resistance, and

the ability to avoid "emotional contagion". That is why the problem of professional stress resistance should be continued in future research at all stages of human existence and actively used in practice to improve the quality of care while maintaining the mental health of professionals.

A. Yarp (2021) defines the term "stress" as the influence of tension, pressure, and external force that can load biological, psychological, and socio-psychological systems, it is a person's mental reaction to a situation that is atypical and new. It is worth noting that stress can be both physiological, the impact of a stimulus that changes the functioning of the body, and psychological, which can cause a diverse range of emotions, both positive and negative (Terletska, 2020).

A.M. Steingraber et al. (2021) believed that professional stress can arise under the influence of novelty, a sense of threat and internal uncertainty, concerning resolving a situation that requires intellectual load, mental stress, sudden search for solutions, a sense of real danger, increased responsibility for one's actions and the quality of care. The authors of the study can agree with the statements, as the emotionally difficult experience of stressful factors, which are currently accompanied by the impact of hostilities in Ukraine, can cause one's internal experiences and reveal complexes that manifest themselves in the psychosomatic background and depressive moods. A depressed emotional state and low level of stress resistance have a destructive impact on the health of professionals, and self-confidence, and generate criticism of their skills, which are not sufficient to overcome a difficult situation, thus creating a conscious desire to distance themselves from a psychologically difficult contingent (Terletska, 2021).

Understanding the socio-political backdrop of Ukraine is crucial to contextualize any analysis of stress resistance in the country, especially in professions that are on the frontline of human interactions, such as psychology. In a controversial referendum, Crimea was annexed by Russia in 2014. This move was widely criticized and not recognized by Ukraine and most of the international community. Following the annexation of Crimea, unrest spread to the eastern parts of Ukraine, particularly the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. The prolonged military-political conflict between Russia and Ukraine, economic hardships, and political instability have undoubtedly put a strain on the society, leading to increased levels of stress and trauma (Semenenko et al., 2023). Many families have lost loved ones, faced displacement, or endured economic hardship.

T.S. Yatsenko et al. (2008) noted that past life events, unprocessed childhood traumas, unresolved conflicts, and a complex of accompanying fears contribute to the impact of stress on the current situation of an individual. The researcher also revealed stress in three stages: anxiety stage – impaired autonomic and somatic functions; resistance stage – the active use of internal reserves that ensure adaptability to stressful conditions; emotional

exhaustion stage – impaired self-regulation, lethargy, and demotivation.

K. Preet (2019) identified the main stressors of professional activity in her study: the organisation of professional conditions (overload, tense psychological atmosphere and working conditions); career prospects (unsatisfactory achievements, unattainable goals, monotony, redundancy, lack of competence); remuneration (lack of clear regulations on remuneration and salaries); interpersonal communication (misunderstandings, conflict situations, desire for autonomy, restrictions in professional actions); individual aspects (family problems, internal complexes, doubts, value system).

Sh. Johnson et al. (2005) noted in their study that different occupational groups have their intensity of stress. Based on long-term observations, the researchers ranked extreme activities according to the degree of stressors, indicating the strength of the impact from 0 to 10 points. Thus, the researchers assigned 5.2 points to the activities of psychologists, which indicates an average level of professional stress. The researchers also noted that the consequences of occupational stress can include heart attacks, musculoskeletal problems, depression, asthenia, frustration, decreased efficiency, suicide, cancer, and ulcers. However, physiological symptoms can be psychosomatic in nature, which should be diagnosed in more detail (Berdibayeva et al., 2021). This study is of great scientific importance in considering the problem of stress resistance, but it loses its prominence in the context of ranking stressful professions of today. A repeated study should be conducted to identify the current positions of the most extreme social professions, according to which the activities of psychologists may be at a much higher risk of exposure to stress factors.

H.S.J. Dahl et al. (2017) and H. A. Nissen-Lie et al. (2022) argued that psychologists face the problem of countertransference that occurs during consultations. Countertransference is the transfer of unconscious feelings and reactions of a specialist to a client. In general terms, this concept characterises the emotional attitude of the psychologist to the client and reactions to the mental state. Past experiences of life can be activated in the memory when interacting with a client who is going through a similar situation (Mun et al., 2016). As a result, a psychologist may experience the prevalence of complexes, internal fears, and resistance. Thus, countertransference does not allow for high-quality and independent implementation of the professional plan. This manifestation is the reason for the consideration of past traumas in psychoanalytic directions, but it is mechanically capable of evoking an emotional reaction in specialists of any direction (Lashkova et al., 2018).

H. Liu et al. (2018) and R. L. Gould et al. (2021a) explored the biological and psychological perspectives of stress resilience, using animal models for scientific explanation at the early stages. The researchers noted that the main factors aimed at actively overcoming stressful influences depend on optimism, cognitive reassessment, behavioural strategies, and social support. Three criteria

were used to assess the positive performance of specialists and to check their emotional state: psychobiological, socio-cultural, organisational, and behavioural. The researcher considered stress resistance as a trait, process or result that is developed gradually based on one's own experience. It is possible to agree with the approach to the study of stress resilience by the researchers, as the above study of coping strategies that form the idea of adaptability to stress is reflected in the work of researchers, pointing to the experience in a certain period, which formed the overall picture of behavioural reactions to destructive stimuli.

M.A. Almazrouei et al. (2022) studied the peculiarities of stress in the professional activities of social workers and healthcare professionals and found that professionals experience significant shock because of feedback from dissatisfied individuals about their interaction, but it is not about the poor performance of their tasks. The reaction to the feedback caused anxiety and self-criticism, which became the main moderator of stress (Messina et al., 2023b). In general, among 120 respondents, an average level of stress resistance was determined, which is a completely optimal result within the normal range. The study has common points with the results of this research work since the psychodiagnostic survey obtained an average indicator of stress resistance, which indicated the body's natural reaction to situational sudden influences, but they can be adjusted in a positive way to improve the emotional state and competence of specialists.

T.V. Dutkevich and O.V. Savytska (2020) note the importance of the Code of Ethics that regulates the professional activities of psychologists. Its main essence is the strict implementation of regulations, compliance with standards and boundaries that are prohibited to cross. This normative act has become a guarantee of professionalism, humanity, high morality, and respect for the interests of clients. The rules and regulations governing psychological activities play the role of a regulator that ensures comprehensive and ethical care. The Ethics Commission is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Code of Ethics in Ukraine, which explains and implements the relevant rules, and ensures that psychologists have a favourable attitude to these requirements and their perception. The professional career of psychologists may suffer in case of violation of one of the clauses of the code, despite the strength of the stimulus that could affect the competence or stress resistance of the specialist in a situational way (Sapargaliyeva et al., 2023).

During active hostilities in Ukraine, ethical requirements require even more careful consideration in the activities of psychologists, it is important to comply with all the principles of the code, due to the public discussion of sensitive topics that may be prohibited in the open use of the traumatic experience of the victim without his or her consent, to achieve their own, social or political goals. For a psychologist working with victims, the rule of psychological hygiene should be in the first place. Loss of energy, a desire to distance oneself from work, responsibilities, and constant pessimism are the main signs of professional

burnout (Messina et al., 2023a). The feeling of inner emptiness provoked by the influence of a strong stressor can completely impair psychologists' activity, motivation, quality of tasks, and unconscious violation of the code of conduct. Rather "exhausted" specialists are removed from performing tasks for a certain period, undergoing psychotherapeutic recovery techniques (Zhang et al., 2020).

An analysis of scientific research has shown that any area of the human-human system can be exposed to the dangerous effects of a sudden stressor (Gould et al., 2021b). However, researchers focused on the development of stress resistance, which should begin within the walls of educational institutions and professional organisations. According to scientists, the skill of stress resistance should be equal to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge that a specialist will apply in practice in the future, but excessive emotionality, anxiety and weak will undermine the process of competent formation of psychologists. The results of previous studies have shown that stress can be exhausting, leading to professional burnout, loss of interest in work, passivity to self-development, a desire to avoid, and alienation, which cannot be overcome by oneself, and this is something that should be accepted. Early studies have also shown that stress is caused not only by negative emotions but also by positive emotions that occur unexpectedly and with great intensity. By comparing the results of this study with previous research, it was possible to identify similarities in the results and the ability of stress to progress as a result of being in unfavourable conditions. Psychological practice is one of the extreme areas that actively fights for the stable mental health of society in times of war, in conditions of excessive pressure from the client, manifestation of countertransference, despite the feeling of similarity of their own experiences and fears, disorganised process, unfavourable environmental conditions. It was also found that a certain group of professionals has difficulties in their work due to stressful factors, but the available knowledge and experience allow them to reflect, assess their state, and resort to self-observation. The negative side of such professional skills is the avoidance of real help, conducting low-quality psychological sessions, passivity in decision-making, and demotivation.

CONCLUSIONS

The conducted empirical study shows the importance of disclosing the problem of psychologists' stress resistance during their professional activities. This is since the negative impact of external stimuli can destabilise the emotional state of specialists and cause psychosomatic disorders that will affect the quality of psychological care. Today, Ukrainian society needs the help of highly qualified professionals who have a stable potential for stress and the ability to adapt to new and extreme conditions. Currently, the experience of Israeli psychologists is being gradually transferred to Ukrainian specialists to be able to actively counteract the "invisible stimulus" on the battlefield.

The results of previous studies have shown that stress resistance is a mandatory skill for every practising psychologist, which is equated with competence, self-control, and positive contact. However, its absence causes professional exhaustion, internal imbalance, passivity, and disinterest in clients' problems. Early studies have shown that stress is not only negative: it can often arise because of joyful periods of life that have caused a positive emotional shock. As a result of "post-stress" rehabilitation, professionals can rethink their capabilities, realise their own mistakes, and find weaknesses that they can work on to improve themselves. Through empirical research, the goal was achieved, and indicators were obtained regarding the situational availability of stress resistance in psychologists, coping strategies in unusual conditions, and assessment of psychological services and areas operating during the war. However, the indicator of psychologists' stress resistance requires a comprehensive and further study of approaches that will be focused individually on each psychologist to identify "weaknesses" that should be addressed therapeutically.

The practical significance of this research article is in coverage of the problems of psychologists' stress resistance in their direct activity. This study contributes to the development of the profession of psychology and the improvement of psychological services in Ukraine.

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