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SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT AMONG EMPLOYEES OF THE SES OF UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN CHALLENGES

У статті розглянуто соціально-психологічні чинники професійного вигорання серед працівників Державної служби України з надзвичайних ситуацій (ДСНС) в умовах сучасних викликів. Зокрема, акцент зроблено на комплексному аналізі внутрішніх та зовнішніх факторів, що спричиняють емоційне виснаження, втрату мотивації та зниження професійної ефективності рятувальників. Актуальність обраної теми зумовлена зростанням рівня стресових впливів у професійному середовищі ДСНС, особливо в умовах воєнного стану, зростанням кількості надзвичайних подій, психологічної нестабільності та інформаційного тиску.

Метою дослідження є виявлення основних соціально-психологічних чинників професійного вигорання, аналіз їхньої взаємодії та визначення практичних рекомендацій щодо профілактики й подолання цього синдрому серед рятувальників. У дослідженні використано авторську анкету, яка дозволила вивчити емоційний стан, рівень мотивації, ступінь соціальної підтримки та загальну психоемоційну напруженість працівників ДСНС. У дослідженні взяли участь респонденти різного віку, статі та службового стажу, що дозволило отримати репрезентативні дані про стан ментального здоров'я в системі надзвичайних служб.

Результати анкетування свідчать про системне поширення симптомів професійного вигорання серед працівників служби. Значна частина респондентів повідомила про регулярне емоційне виснаження, зниження рівня мотивації до виконання професійних обов'язків, а також про нестачу підтримки з боку керівництва та колег. Рівень стресу, пов'язаний із сучасними викликами, таким як війна, оцінено респондентами як високий. Особливої уваги потребує той факт, що лише незначна частина рятувальників проходила психологічні тренінги чи отримувала професійну допомогу після травматичних подій.

Аналіз чинників вигорання продемонстрував, що серед основних детермінант можна виокремити такі: хронічний стрес, високий рівень відповідальності за життя інших, частий контакт із травматичними подіями, недостатність ресурсів для психологічного відновлення та знецінення професії у суспільній свідомості. Дослідники відзначають, що в умовах постійної небезпеки та напруження формуються передумови для розвитку вторинної травматизації, що також є частиною синдрому професійного вигорання.

У роботі наведено огляд сучасних психотерапевтичних підходів до профілактики та корекції вигорання. Зокрема, розглянуто ефективність когнітивно-поведінкової терапії, яка фокусується на зміні деструктивних мисленневих патернів; гуманістичного підходу, що акцентує увагу на пошуку

сенсу професійної діяльності; психодинамічної терапії, яка дозволяє опрацювати глибинні конфлікти та травми; а також організаційно-соціального підходу, що пропонує зміну умов праці, покращення комунікації в колективі та розвиток системи заохочення.

Окремо підкреслено важливість створення в ДСНС сталих структур психологічної підтримки, впровадження регулярних профілактичних заходів, організації кризових втручань після складних виїздів, а також налагодження ефективної співпраці між психологами, керівниками та рятувальниками. Практичні інструменти, такі як релаксаційні техніки, арт-терапія, майндфулнес-практики та інтерв'їзійні зустрічі, вже довели свою ефективність у зниженні рівня професійного напруження та покращенні загального психоемоційного стану працівників.

Узагальнюючи результати, автори стверджують, що профілактика та корекція професійного вигорання має бути системним і багаторівневим процесом, у якому поєднуються індивідуальні, групові та організаційні заходи. Впровадження таких підходів сприятиме збереженню психічного здоров'я рятувальників, підвищенню їхньої ефективності та стійкості до стресу в умовах постійної загрози та надзвичайних ситуацій.

Ключові слова: професійне вигорання, ДСНС, стрес, рятувальники, психологічна підтримка, емоційне виснаження, мотивація, профілактика, психотерапія, соціальні чинники.

The article examines the socio-psychological factors of professional burnout among employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES) in the context of modern challenges. In particular, the emphasis is placed on a comprehensive analysis of internal and external factors that cause emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation and a decrease in the professional efficiency of rescuers. The relevance of the chosen topic is due to the increasing level of stress in the professional environment of the SES, especially under martial law, the growing number of emergencies, psychological instability and information pressure.

The aim of the study is to identify the main socio-psychological factors of professional burnout, analyze their interaction and determine practical recommendations for the prevention and overcoming of this syndrome among rescuers. The study used the author's questionnaire, which allowed us to study the emotional state, level of motivation, degree of social support and overall psycho-emotional stress of SES employees. The study involved respondents of different ages, genders, and length of service, which allowed us to obtain representative data on the state of mental health in the emergency services system.

The results of the survey indicate a systemic spread of symptoms of professional burnout among service employees. A significant number of respondents reported regular emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation to perform their professional duties, and a lack of support from their superiors and colleagues. The level of stress associated with current challenges, such as the war, was rated by respondents as high. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that only a small proportion of rescuers have undergone psychological training or received professional help after traumatic events.

The analysis of burnout factors showed that the main determinants include chronic stress, a high level of responsibility for the lives of others, frequent contact with traumatic events, lack of resources for psychological recovery, and devaluation of the profession in the public consciousness. The researchers note that in conditions of constant danger and tension, the prerequisites for the development of secondary traumatization are formed, which is also part of the burnout syndrome.

У роботі наведено огляд сучасних психотерапевтичних підходів до профілактики та корекції. The paper provides an overview of modern psychotherapeutic approaches to the prevention and correction of burnout. In particular, the author examines the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy, which focuses on changing destructive thought patterns; humanistic approach, which focuses on finding the meaning of professional activity; psychodynamic therapy, which allows working through deep conflicts and traumas; and organizational and social approach, which offers changes in working conditions, improved communication in the team and the development of an incentive system.

The importance of establishing sustainable psychological support structures in the SES, implementing regular preventive measures, organizing crisis interventions after difficult calls, and establishing effective cooperation between psychologists, managers and rescuers is emphasized. Practical tools, such as relaxation techniques, art therapy, mindfulness practices, and intervention meetings, have already proven effective in reducing the level of professional stress and improving the overall psycho-emotional state of employees.

Summarizing the results, the authors argue that the prevention and correction of professional burnout should be a systematic and multilevel process that combines individual, group, and organizational

measures. The implementation of such approaches will help to preserve the mental health of rescuers, increase their efficiency and resilience to stress in conditions of constant threat and emergency situations.

Key words: professional burnout, SES, stress, rescuers, psychological support, emotional exhaustion, motivation, prevention, psychotherapy, social factors.

Statement of the problem. In modern conditions, employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) face significant professional challenges associated with increased levels of stress, physical and emotional exhaustion, and high responsibility for the lives and safety of citizens. Constant contact with crisis situations, extreme working conditions, insufficient social support and psychological assistance can lead to the development of professional burnout syndrome, which negatively affects the psycho-emotional state, performance and personal life of employees. The relevance of the study of the socio-psychological characteristics of professional burnout is due to the need to find ways to prevent and overcome it, develop effective methods of psychological support and increase the stress resistance of SES employees. It is especially important to take into account modern social challenges, such as the growing number of emergencies, the impact of military operations, information overload and changes in the social structure of society, which increase the risk of burnout.

Effective psychological correction and psychotherapy of burnout should take into account the specifics of rescuers' work and help reduce emotional exhaustion, develop stress resistance and increase overall adaptive capacity.

The purpose of our article is to provide a theoretical and empirical analysis of the socio-psychological factors of professional burnout among employees of the SES of Ukraine in the context of modern challenges.

Presentation of the main material. Occupational burnout is a syndrome resulting from chronic work stress that has not been successfully managed. It is manifested by emotional exhaustion, cynical attitude to work and reduced performance. The phenomenon of burnout was first described in 1974 by psychotherapist Herbert Freudenberger, who observed exhaustion in fellow volunteers who worked beyond their strength. Since then, the problem has been studied in detail by Christina Maslach and other scientists who emphasize three key signs of this condition: physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (callousness towards work and people), and a decline in professional achievement. For employees of the State Emergency Service (SES), the problem of burnout is particularly relevant. Every day, rescuers face extreme events, accidents, fires, and, in today's environment, military risks. During a full-scale war, the burden on the psychological state of rescuers has increased many times over: they work under fire, often without sufficient protection, risking their lives [7]. Such conditions lead to the accumulation of mental exhaustion, latent aggression and rapid "burnout". According to a SES officer, after responding to difficult incidents, some rescuers experience strong internal tension and even aggression, which is important not to carry over either to work or home, so work is needed to overcome burnout, especially among those who perform combat missions and demining [2; 6]. In other words, maintaining the mental health of rescuers is not a luxury, but a necessity in the face of constant modern challenges.

Structuring allows us to analyze the phenomenon of professional burnout from different scientific positions, identify common and unique features, and provide more substantiated recommendations for psychological support for rescuers in modern conditions. This is an important step towards developing a holistic prevention and intervention program focused on the specifics of the activities of emergency services workers (tabl 1).

In the national psychological science, the problem of professional burnout is considered in the works of V. O. Bodrov, L. M. Karamushka, who focus on the peculiarities of emotional exhaustion among representatives of extreme professions, in particular, SES employees. It is noted that the main factors of burnout are high emotional involvement in the process of rescue operations, constant contact with danger and insufficient psychological support.

Table 1.

Interpretation of professional burnout by various psychological approaches

Approach	Burnout Essence	Key Symptoms
Classical (H. Freudenberger)	Result of chronic stress and internal conflict between expectations and reality of professional activity	Emotional exhaustion, fatigue, apathy

Cognitive-Behavioral (A. Bandura)	Consequence of reduced self-efficacy and inability to influence work outcomes	Reduced self-confidence, ineffective coping strategies
Humanistic-Existential (V. Frankl, C. Rogers)	Loss of meaning in professional activity, devaluation of values and personal growth	Depressiveness, loss of meaning, feeling of futility
Psychodynamic	Burnout as a manifestation of internal psychological conflicts, unmet needs, and traumas	Cynicism, aggression, sense of alienation
Organizational-Social (C. Maslach, M. Leiter)	Result of imbalance between job demands, lack of support, fairness, and control	Chronic fatigue, decreased productivity, negative attitude towards work
Self-Determination Theory (R. Ryan, E. Deci)	Caused by lack of autonomy, internal motivation, and social support	Loss of interest, formal attitude to work, inner emptiness
Job Strain Model (R. Karasek, T. Theorell)	Imbalance between high job demands and low control over work activities	Overload, anxiety, lack of recovery resources

Foreign studies (M. Leiter, W. Schaufele) emphasize the importance of organizational climate, in particular the impact of the level of social support and internal corporate culture on the processes of professional burnout. Studies conducted in the United States show that the introduction of a psychological support system for rescuers reduces the risk of burnout by 30%. According to the model of occupational distress developed by R. Karasek and T. Theorell, professional burnout is caused by an imbalance between the level of demands on an employee and the level of control over their own activities. For SESU employees, this balance is shifted toward high demands, which leads to an increased risk of emotional and physical exhaustion.

The psychoanalytic approach presented by F. Freudenberger considers burnout as an internal conflict between professional expectations and the reality of the work environment. This approach emphasizes the importance of psychological mechanisms of self-defense, which can manifest themselves in the form of cynicism, apathy, or aggression.

The cognitive-behavioral approach, developed by A. Bandura, emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy in the process of professional burnout. According to the researcher, the loss of faith in one's own competence and the inability to influence the results of professional activity is one of the main factors in the development of this syndrome.

According to the theory of self-determination (E. Deci, R. Ryan), lack of autonomy in professional activities, insufficient motivation and low level of social support can lead to the development of emotional exhaustion and loss of interest in work. In our study, we used the author's questionnaire "Socio-Psychological Factors of Professional Burnout in the SES of Ukraine in the Context of Modern Challenges" developed to identify factors that affect the emotional state, motivation and professional burnout of rescuers in the difficult conditions of today. It is anonymous, contains 12 questions, and is intended for employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine of all ages, genders, and length of service.

The questionnaire consists of several thematic blocks. The first block contains socio-demographic questions: age, gender, length of service and position. The second block deals with the respondent's psycho-emotional state: the level of emotional exhaustion, motivation, support from colleagues and management, and thoughts about changing careers. The third block is devoted to social and psychological factors: stress level (assessed on a scale from 0 to 10), availability of psychological support from family, influence of public attitudes towards the profession, and participation in trainings or psychological rehabilitation programs. The last question is an open-ended one, where respondents express their own opinion on the main causes of professional burnout.

The results of the survey conducted among the employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine show that there is a significant level of professional burnout among the respondents. The analysis of the data showed that most of the respondents are in the age group of 26 to 45 years, have significant

professional experience (over 10 years) and are mostly men, which reflects the real structure of the SES personnel.

About 60% of respondents regularly feel emotionally exhausted, 30% of them almost every day. More than half of the respondents report a decrease in motivation to perform their duties, which indicates the depletion of personal resources. 45% of respondents lack constant support from colleagues and management, which is a significant factor in the development of burnout. It is worth noting that 35% of participants regularly think about changing their profession.

An important component of the study was the analysis of social and psychological pressure. The average level of stress associated with current challenges (including the war) was 8.2 points out of 10, indicating a high level of psycho-emotional stress. Only half of the respondents receive psychological support from their families, while the rest indicated its partial or complete absence. The assessment of public attitudes towards the rescue profession varies: 40% consider it positive, but one in four thinks it is negative. Only 18% of respondents have undergone psychological training or rehabilitation programs, which indicates a low level of preventive work. The answers to the open-ended question made it possible to identify the main subjective causes of burnout: a high level of responsibility, constant risk to life, lack of moral support, devaluation of the profession in the eyes of society, and insufficient recognition and encouragement from the state.

Thus, the results of the survey indicate the systemic presence of signs of professional burnout among rescuers. The most critical factors are emotional and social: constant psychological stress, lack of support, and lack of systemic assistance. This requires the urgent development of measures to prevent burnout, the implementation of psychological support programs and the improvement of internal communication in SES units.

There are several scientifically based approaches used by psychologists to correct burnout syndrome in rescue service employees. Each approach has its well-known representatives and methods of work:

Cognitive-behavioral approach (A. Beck, A. Ellis). It is based on changing negative thoughts and behavioral reactions that contribute to stress. It is believed that an employee's attitudes and beliefs largely determine the level of stress and burnout. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) helps rescuers learn to cope more constructively with stressful events and develop emotional self-control skills. Studies show that CBT effectively reduces the level of professional stress and burnout by building resilient coping skills [5].

Humanistic-existential approach (V. Frankl, K. Rogers). This approach emphasizes the personal meaning of work and self-realization. It is known that rescuers often chose their profession out of a sense of duty and a desire to help people. Humanistic psychologists help employees rethink professional difficulties and restore a sense of the importance of their mission. For example, V. Frankl's logotherapy methods (search for meaning) can reduce the feeling of devastation: when a rescuer sees a deep meaning in the lives saved and understands the value of his or her contribution, it helps to counteract burnout. Self-compassion, support from colleagues, and restoring work-life balance are also key themes of this approach.

Psychodynamic approach (H. Freudenberger et al.). This approach considers burnout as a consequence of internal psychological conflicts, unmet needs, and post-traumatic stress. Freudenberger also noted that personal traits and motives can increase vulnerability to burnout. A psychologist working in this line of work helps the rescuer to realize their own feelings, to "talk out" traumatic incidents, and to live through the grief of loss. Crisis intervention methods and elements of psychoanalytic therapy are used to work through deep feelings. An important aspect is the provision of "psychological first aid" immediately after a critical incident to prevent long-term consequences.

Organizational and social approach (H. Maslach, M. Leiter). This approach emphasizes the role of the work environment and management decisions in preventing burnout. Maslach noted that burnout is not only a personal problem, but also a systemic one: excessive workload, lack of control over working conditions, lack of reward and support, and poor team microclimate all feed the burnout syndrome. Accordingly, the correction should include "changes at the organization level": optimization of duty schedules, clear rules for rest after extreme trips, moral and material encouragement of rescuers, and development of team mutual support. Representatives of this approach (Maslach and Leiter) propose to evaluate the "fit" between a person and a job according to six parameters - workload, control, reward, community, justice, values - and to correct imbalances to reduce burnout.

It is clear that in the actual work of a SES psychologist, these approaches are often combined. A comprehensive burnout assistance program can include individual counseling in the style of CBT, group training to develop resilience, and recommendations to management on how to improve service conditions.

The main thing is to focus on the practical benefits for the rescuer, choosing a method for a specific situation and person.

A practical psychologist of the SESU and heads of units can apply a variety of methods to prevent or correct professional burnout of employees. Below are some proven techniques available in the daily work with rescuers [10]:

Psychological education and condition monitoring. The first step is to have a frank conversation about the “symptoms of burnout” and stress. Conduct a class or talk that explains the stages of burnout, the characteristic signs (chronic fatigue, cynicism, feeling of futility, etc.) and the consequences for health and work. Rescuers need to understand what is happening to them and know that feeling exhausted in their conditions is a “normal reaction” and not a “weakness.” Introduce the practice of self-monitoring: simple anonymous questionnaires or surveys every few months to help detect the first signs of burnout.

Self-regulation and relaxation techniques. Training in quick recovery techniques right at the workplace is an indispensable part of prevention. A psychologist can teach the team simple breathing exercises to reduce anxiety (for example, the 4-4-4-4 box breathing method or slow deep breaths and exhalations). Muscle relaxation techniques by Jacobson (gradual tension and relaxation of muscle groups) or auto-training exercises that allow you to relieve physical stress after leaving are useful. Mindfulness meditation (conscious breathing, concentration on the “here and now”) is also popular: even 5-10 minutes of this practice a day increases stress resistance [3]. Setting up a special “relaxation corner” in the unit (with comfortable chairs, soothing music, perhaps aromatherapy) can encourage regular short breaks for recovery.

Crisis counseling and CISM defusing. After particularly difficult deployments (mass casualties, deaths of children, threats to the lives of rescuers themselves), it is very important to provide group psychological support. In the world practice, the method of “Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)” is used for this purpose - a structured group meeting during which participants, under the guidance of a psychologist and a trained “peer” (fellow rescuer), discuss their experiences [2]. This technique was specifically developed by Jeffrey Mitchell in 1974 for emergency services [8]. During the meeting (lasting ~1-2 hours), rescuers can share emotions, get information about typical reactions to stress and ways to cope with them. Important: CISD is not an investigation or criticism of actions, but a psychological first aid. If a collective debriefing session is not possible, a psychologist or supervisor conducts individual conversations with each participant in the event (or short “defuzzing” sessions immediately after the incident, lasting 15-30 minutes). Such interventions reduce the risk of developing post-traumatic reactions and burnout, and increase team cohesion [6].

Regular group support meetings (intervisions). It is useful to introduce monthly or quarterly meetings of rescuers in the presence of a psychologist to discuss accumulated difficulties. The format can vary from formal trainings to an informal “cup of tea” after a shift. The goal is to provide an opportunity to speak out, find solutions to problems together, and support each other. Colleagues who understand the specifics of the job can provide effective emotional support. For example, the “buddy system” program: managers encourage rescuers to form pairs to monitor each other's well-being and notice signs in time [9]. These meetings can also be used to train stress-resistance skills - to simulate crisis situations and practice responses together (similar to fire drills, but for the psyche).

Individual psychological counseling and therapy. Some employees may need individual assistance, either short-term (several supportive meetings) or longer-term therapy. The SES employs full-time psychologists whom rescuers can contact confidentially. These sessions use cognitive-behavioral therapy methods to correct negative thoughts (“I don't care about anything,” “My job is meaningless”), guided visualization techniques (to work through traumatic memories in a safe environment), methods to improve self-esteem and restore motivation. If an employee has symptoms of anxiety disorder or depression, the psychologist will recommend that they see a psychotherapist or psychiatrist for additional help. The main thing is to build trust so that the rescuer is not afraid to seek support when he or she feels “on the edge.”

Body-oriented and art therapy techniques. The work of a rescuer is very “bodily” - constant physical stress, injuries, overwork. Therefore, methods that help to “let off steam” through the body or creativity have a good effect. For example, sports and physical activity: team games, jogging together, a gym at the unit - all this helps to reduce the level of stress hormones and switch attention. Art therapy in various forms: drawing stressful images and then discussing them; clay therapy (clay modeling), which helps to symbolically “mold” and get rid of your feelings; keeping a personal diary or writing stories about cases from practice. Such methods are especially appropriate when words are difficult to convey emotions - creativity opens a safe channel for discharge.

The practice of combating burnout in the emergency services has accumulated many successful examples, both abroad and in Ukraine. Let's look at a few of them to see how the theory is translated into real action. Mental Health Support Program of the Ministry of Internal Affairs "Are you okay?" and "Psychological Practice Point" (Ukraine). Ukraine has begun to implement systematic measures to support the psychological well-being of rescuers and police officers. Thus, the prevention and correction of burnout is a common task for both rescuers and psychologists and managers. If all levels work in harmony - an employee knows how to help themselves, feels supported by the team and sees that the organization cares about them - the negative effects of chronic stress can be significantly reduced. Given the current challenges that Ukraine is facing, the psychological stability of our rescuers is the key to their efficiency and safety. Taking care of them today is an investment in the service's ability to respond to any emergency tomorrow. Thus, by implementing the approaches and methods described above, we not only help individuals avoid emotional.

Analysis of scientific literature and practical experience allows us to conclude that professional burnout is a complex phenomenon that develops under the influence of organizational, personal and socio-psychological factors. The peculiarities of the professional activity of the SES employees, in particular the high level of stress, physical exhaustion and frequent contact with crisis situations, contribute to the accelerated development of this syndrome. In this regard, there is a need to implement systemic measures to prevent burnout, which should be aimed at increasing the level of stress resistance, improving working conditions and ensuring proper psychological support for employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

The conducted research points to a high level of relevance of the problem of professional burnout among the employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine. The results of the survey showed that most rescuers daily face emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation and lack of support. The main factors of burnout are constant stress, danger in the service, low level of social and psychological support. Especially critical is the situation during hostilities, when the burden on workers increases significantly. It was found that some respondents do not receive help after severe incidents, which increases the risk of post-traumatic disorders. Scientific literature confirms the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, psychodynamic and organizational-social approaches to the prevention of burnout. Practical tools such as relaxation, art therapy, crisis counseling and support programs have proven their effectiveness. The introduction of a systematic approach to the mental health of rescuers should become a priority at the state level. The activities of psychologists in the structure of the SES require the expansion and strengthening of the resource base. Prevention of burnout not only increases the efficiency of the service, but also preserves the life and health of workers. Successful implementation of the recommendations will ensure the resilience of the SES to modern challenges and emergencies.

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Review received 18.03.2025