

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER: INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, 2020

1. Introduction

The research topicality is conditioned by the fact that under modern socio-cultural conditions human life activity is impossible without maximally intensive and extensive loads, acute rivalry, strained struggle, permanent feelings of success or mischance, all that form semantics of the notion "stress". Continuously changing conditions of the social environment cause the necessity to form qualities that increase the stability of psychics to the effect of intensive internal and external irritants that is to the effect of stressors of different intensity. A great importance is acquired by the sensitivity of each person to the effect of the growing number of different stress-generating factors that often result in stress situations, moreover often with negative consequences.

Stress (as a synonym of *pressure*, *strain*) is a condition of an individual, appearing as an answer-reaction to diverse extreme influence types of the external and internal environment (informational overload, situation of offense, threat, uncertainty and so on) that take human psychic or physical functions out of balance. At a stress moment an essential amount of adrenaline is thrown in blood, and all organism reserves mobilize; human possibilities abruptly grow, but only for some short time. It is known, that a little intensive and short stress may be even useful for activating operation, mobilization of forces, and is not harmful for a person, but a long and essentially strained stress transforms in a harmful *distress*.

Three *stress deployment phases* are separated [1, p. 28–29]:

1. *Anxiety phase*. The strain grows, the human organism *mobilizes* for facing a threat. Biological reactions, conditioning a possibility of fight or escape, appear. At the level of physiology, the blood condenses and the pressure rises.

2. *Resistance phase*. The human organism tries to resist a threat or to cope with it, if a threat continues to affect and it is impossible to avoid it. Maladjustment lowers, the human organism gets accustomed to a stress factor and returns to the normal condition.

3. *Exhaustion phase*. If a stress effect continues and a person cannot adapt, it exhausts psychic and physical resources. Exhaustion causes tiredness, negative emotional conditions and an

PSYCHOLOGICAL PECULIARITIES,
PRECONDITIONS AND WAYS OF STRESS
STABILITY INCREASE IN ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: Based on theoretical-methodological principles of cognition, the categorical-notion analysis of main terms ("stress", "distress", "stress stability") that form the subject area of the considered problem is carried out in the paper. The study systematically generalizes main types of stress (informational, emotional, communicative) and its deployment phases (anxiety, resistance, exhaustion) and also outlines stress stability signs and its age formation peculiarities in adolescence. Stress stability is considered as a complicated integral feature of a person, mutually connected with a system of intellectual, cognitive, emotional, personal (motivational, character and other) features, providing his/her possibility to endure essential intellectual, physical, willing and emotional loads, keeping functioning efficiency at that. A level of stress stability is in the first turn conditioned by such factors as emotional stability, stress-resistance, frustration tolerance and so on. The study argues an idea that most effective ways of overcoming the destructive influence of stress of a person are:

- 1) objective elimination or lowering of the influence intensity of a cause/factor that conditioned the stress status;
- 2) internal adaptation to a stressor by transforming just an attitude to it in the subjective reality of a person (change of subjective interpretation frames);
- 3) acceptance of a problem as a given fact and conciliation with its irreversible results;
- 4) complex way as a combinatorics of the three previous variants with observance of their most optimal balance-proportion according to the psychosocial specificity of each concrete case and individual-typological features of a client.

It has been empirically established, that the psychological profile of stress-stable persons is characterized by the high level of steadiness, emotional-willing self-control, self-confidence and low level of stress-sensitivity, personal and situation anxiety. It has been also explained in the research, that the most effective formation of stress stability takes place through the psychological mechanism of self-regulation that provides the synthesis of its structural components (personal, social and behavioral) and provides an adequate reaction on stress-generating factors.

Keywords: stress, distress, stressor, stress stability, stress-generating situation, anxiety, training, relaxation, psychological trauma, Me-conception.

internal activity decline that in totality result in complete disorganization and chronic diseases.

A. Weitz described 8 stress-generating situations:

- 1) harmful environment;
- 2) necessity of accelerated information processing;
- 3) acknowledged threat;
- 4) disorders of physiological functions (as a result of a disease, insomnia);
- 5) imprisonment;
- 6) isolation;
- 7) group pressure;
- 8) ostracism (pursuit).

Let's add such psychological stressors to them: uncertainty or impossibility to change a situation, necessity to make extremely important decisions, increased responsibility, lack or excess of information, deficit of resources, fast change of a behavioral strategy or absence of control on events [2].

So, three types of stress may be separated by the criterion of determining factor [3, p. 89]:

1) *informational* (from a lack or excess of information that result to uncertainty in a given situation);

2) *emotional*, that includes three components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduction of personal achievements);

3) *communicative* (connected with problems of business communication, psychological climate in a group and inability to react adequately to critical comments) [4, 5].

We understand *stress stability* as a complicated integral property of a person, mutually connected with a system of intellectual, cognitive, emotional, personal (motivational, character and other) features, providing his/her possibility to endure essential intellectual, physical, willing and emotional loads, keeping functioning efficiency at that [6]. A level of stress stability is first-turn conditioned by such *factors* as emotional stability, stress-resistance, frustration tolerance and so on.

Signs of the low stress stability in adolescence may be: strong frustration, experience of an unsatisfied need; aggravation of role conflicts "student – teacher", "student – student"; value-sense uncertainty, lack of personal structure; infantilism or harmful habits. Internal contradiction and crisis of 17–18 years are mainly determined by the following factors:

- 1) crisis of professional choice;
- 2) crisis of dependence on the parent family;

- 3) crisis of intimate-sexual relations;
- 4) crisis situations in learning-professional activity.

M. Dukhnevych separates the following stages in the formation process of students' stress stability:

- 1) transfer from the external socially formed orientation on a profession to "acquaintance with some types of professional activities", that is from a social to an individual attitude;
- 2) acknowledge of a possibility to realize personal values within a chosen profession, which indicator becomes an interest and formation of the professional Me-conception;
- 3) mastering of a professional activity, reflection of a professional directionality and achievement of psychological welfare of a person; professional self-determination transforms into a professional orientation as a social setting [7].

At the same time E. Zaer outlines the following *groups of professional destruction determinants*, based on different types of stress-factors that mediate correspondent *stress-syndromes*:

- 1) objective determinants, connected with the social-professional environment (socio-economic situation, image and type of a profession, professional-spatial environment) – external stress-factors;
- 2) subjective determinants, conditioned by peculiarities of a person and type of professional relations, – internal stress-factors;
- 3) objective-subjective determinants, generated by a system and organization of the professional process, management quality, leaders' professionalism, – organizational stress-factors;
- 4) professional deformations (professionally undesirable qualities), disturbing the integrity of a person, lower his/her adaptability, stability and negatively influence the effectiveness of activity (including emotional exhaustion and burning out) [5, 8].

For correcting the insufficient resistance to stress, four *work directions* are combined:

- a) *educational direction* (information support);
- b) *physiological direction* (healthy lifestyle and physical activity);
- c) *social direction* (increase of social support and social integration);
- d) *therapeutic direction* (pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy).

According to M. Philipov, main ways of fighting against a professional stress are [9] *relaxation, concentration and autoregulation of breath*.

Main ways of stress situation management are:

- 1) *helping programs* [10] (solution of social problems of workers, help at staff reduction, production scaling back or personal misfortunes);
- 2) *adaptation and sanitation programs* (diet, healthy nutrition, yoga, physical activities, relaxation, self-suggestion, breathing gymnastics, meditation);
- 3) *professional optimization programs* (objective assessment of a work, minimization of mistakes; distinct formulation of duties and assessment criteria; rational labor distribution; checkout of cooperation and decrease of conflicts).

Research aim – the theoretical substantiation of psychological features and experimental probation of methods of raising stress stability in students of higher educational institutions (HEI).

2. Methods

Analysis of stress-generating factors and phases of stress deployment, theoretical analysis of factors and signs of stress stability, methodological generalization of working directions on prevention and overcoming of stress conditions, ranging

criteria of stress stability levels, training, psychological-pedagogical experiment, methods of qualitative and quantitative processing of empirical data.

The diagnostic complex of methods was also used in the research process: method of "Psychological welfare scale" by K. Riff; method of studying personal qualities self-estimation by Dembo-Rubinstein; self-actualizing test-questionnaire by Shostrom (SAT).

The empirical research of the stress stability of adolescent persons was carried out with students of 3 and 4 year of the faculty of law of Ternopil national economic university (specialties "Social work" and "Psychology") from September to December of 2019. The total amount of the sample is 112 persons, 19–20 years old.

At the *first (ascertaining) state* of the empirical research there were selected psychodiagnostic methods that allowed to study the components of students' stress stability, taking into account a level of their claims, personal health, professional ideas and social situation of development. Just based on the generalization and ranging of empirical indicators, three stress stability levels were determined – high, middle and low.

At the *second (forming) stage* there was elaborated the program of developing abilities and skills of students' stress stability. It is based on modern positions about harmonious development of the internal world of a person; and it provides harmonization of internal psychological features of a person – anxiety, uncertainty, claim level and integral Me-conception. Students, which psychodiagnostic results revealed a low stress stability level, were invited for participating in the correction program.

At the *third (control) stage* of the empirical research there took place the repeated diagnostic examination of the students for revealing the effectiveness of the offered psychocorrection system of arrangements.

3. Results

Let's analyze the indices, obtained at the ascertaining stage:

The results were obtained by six scales of the *questionnaire of the "Psychological welfare scale"* (K. Riff): 50.8 % – high psychological welfare level; 25.4 % – middle level; 23.8 % – low level.

The results by the *method "Self-assessment of stress stability"*: very low level – 14.4 %, low – 12.6 %, lower than middle – 9 %, a bit lower than middle – 14.4 %, middle – 19.8 %, a bit higher than middle – 10.8 %, higher than middle – 9 %, high – 9 %, very high – 1.8 %.

The research results of *students' self-actualization by the questionnaire by E. Shostrom (SAT)*: 36 % – low level of self-actualization, 42.7 % – middle, 18.9 % – high and 2.4 % pseudo-self-actualization.

Based on the analysis of the empirical data, obtained by these methods, there were determined *three students' stress stability levels* – high, middle and low. It has been established, that 25.2 % of the examined are characterized by the low stress stability level, 46.1 % – middle and 28.7 % – high that actualized a necessity of substantiating, elaborating and verifying the effectiveness of the training program for forming stress stability abilities and skills in students.

The training aim is to develop person's stress stability by acknowledging own life position, forming effective communicative skills in the process of communication, getting skills of self-regulation and constructive revelation of negative impulses in behavior.

The program for stress stability training includes 12 lessons, each of which covers the complex of psychological exercises

(«Smile by circle», «Positive thinking», «Compliments», «Unfinished sentence», «Tree», «Artist or thinker?», «Step – one!», «Free» and other), games («Snow ball», «Guess an emotion», «Whom it belongs to?», «Obstacle», «Tukh-tibi-doukh» and so on), tests («Your stress stability level», projective illustration), mini-lectures and informational messages («Stresses in our life», «Stress and negative thinking», «Confident behavior», «Stress and emotional welfare», «Stress and health», «Failure and mistake as stimuli for self-development» and so on), group discussions and brain storms («What is stress stability?», «How to set the brain on a necessary wave?», «First aid in stress situations» and other).

By carrying out the *control psychodiagnostic examination*, there were repeatedly determined the changes in stress stability levels of the students. Especially, by the results of the second cut, 16.3 % of the examined are characterized by the low stress stability level (25.2 %), 46.8 % – middle (46.1 %) and 36.9 % – high (28.7 %) that proves the effectiveness of the offered program for developing the stress stability in adolescents.

4. Discussion

Stress stability of a person forms on the base of its multiple confrontation with stress-generating factors. Such confrontation develops as a complicated process that includes estimation of a stress-situation, activity regulation under stress-generating conditions, overcoming of a stress or adaptation to it, and also the influence of traumatizing events on a person. The stress stability formation takes place through the psychological mechanism of self-regulation that provides the synthesis of its structural components (personal, social, behavioral) and provides adequate reactions on stress-generating factors.

The idealistic-maximalist world-view («all or nothing») of adolescents, aggravates the identification crisis, connected

with a system “Me”, and contradiction between “Me-real” and “Me-ideal”, in its turn, causes self-uncertainty or aggression. Psycho-emotional stress results in students include a “chronic tiredness syndrome”, depression, neuroses, especially, hysteria and psychasthenia. Experiences of a traumatic stress for some students become a cause of *post-traumatic stress disorder* that is a non-psychotic postponed reaction on a traumatic stress.

A psychological profile of stress-stable persons is characterized by the high level of equability, emotional-willing self-control, self-confidence and low level of stress-sensitivity, personal and situation anxiety. Stress-stable persons are characterized by the high level of activity, pro-sociality, search for social contacts and social support [11, 12].

The most effective ways of *stress overcoming* are:

- 1) active influence on a problem itself (stressor);
- 2) change of views on a problem, so a change of an attitude to it or another interpretation of it;
- 3) acceptance of a problem and decrease of the destructive influence of a stress;
- 4) complex approach [1, p. 75].

Stress prevention is based on the following principles:

- 1) stress stability increase (regulation of own emotions);
- 2) getting rid of a psychic strain (constructive reaction to negative emotions);
- 3) psychic correction that covers the complex of rhythmic movements, relaxation, self-suggest, use of external relaxing factors (music, fragrances and so on).

Stress prevention is also favored by changes of a life activity style, positive thinking skills and mastering of different strategies of life tasks solving [7, p. 27, 2]. The main role at that is played by not just knowledge itself, but flexibility that give a possibility to timely change own behavior, in such a way normalizing it.

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