

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

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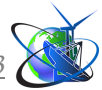
Abstract. *The article presents the results of a theoretical and empirical study of the effectiveness of management activities in crisis situations. The topic is relevant in connection with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which required managers to actively adapt to new conditions. The analysis of theoretical literature has shown that the most important for the effectiveness of management activity in a crisis situation are professional efficiency, stress resistance and tolerance to uncertainty. The correlation analysis of the empirical research results led to the conclusion that the less anxiety and fear of an uncertain future a person has, the better he or she performs management activities. Also, we observe that the higher level of actual stress performs the lower of professional effectiveness.*

Key words: *crisis, crisis situation, management activity, tolerance to uncertainty, self-efficacy, stress resistance.*

Introduction.

The current Ukrainian socio-political situation associated with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is a crisis situation, and therefore requires psychologists to study in detail the peculiarities of the functioning of all aspects of human psychological life. The current stage of development of our country is characterized by a military crisis and significant rapid changes in political, economic and social life, as well as related disruptions in the life of many segments of the population. These challenges include poverty, unemployment, forced displacement, and insufficient social protection. We emphasize that we consider the situation of Russia's full-scale invasion as an ongoing crisis that has affected and is affecting the organization and management of business. In the study, we use the definition of S. S. Guta, who notes that "a crisis situation caused by military and political factors is a violation (aggravation) of the regional or international military and political situation in a certain territory or in the state as a whole, which requires the use of prompt and effective mechanisms of public administration" [3; 120]. It is precisely what psychological factors or personal characteristics allow managers to use prompt and effective management mechanisms in crisis situations that are the subject of our study.

The analysis of psychological literature shows a variety of definitions of the concepts of "crisis", "crisis situation" and related concepts. As noted by S.S. Guta notes, "despite the widespread use of the terms "crisis", "crisis situation", "military-political crisis" and other derivative terms in the works of foreign and domestic scholars, as well as in legal acts, primarily those related to the field of national security, they are not enshrined in legal acts, their connection is not established, in particular, with such categories as "state of emergency and emergency situation", "martial law", "special period" [3; 119]. Psychological research studies other single-



vector constructs, such as "difficult life situation" (L.I. Antsiferova), "situation of social instability" (K.O. Vasilevskaya), "spiritual crisis" (S. Grof), "crisis" (E. Erikson, D. Matteson), "psycho-traumatic situation" (T.S. Kirilenko), "critical situation" (E.P. Krupnik), "critical state of being" (I.P. Manokha), "life crisis" (T.M. Tytarenko), etc.

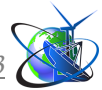
The analysis of theoretical literature on human activity in crisis situations allows us to identify the factors that scientists consider essential for the formation of a person's ability to work in such situations. These factors include tolerance to uncertainty, cognitive flexibility, resilience, emotionality (O.A. Yefimova) and self-regulation (O.A. Budnytska). Some scholars also pay attention to other factors, such as creativity, optimism (S. Karpylovska), motivation, communication skills, etc. However, others see them as a component of the factors discussed above (for example, creativity is the ability to think flexibly; motivation and optimism are related to self-regulation), so the study considers only the key aspects that affect a person's ability to adapt to uncertainty.

In addition to tolerance to uncertainty, stress tolerance plays a significant role in a person's ability to work under conditions of uncertainty. Modern psychologists widely use this term, considering it synonymous with stress flexibility and the ability to adapt to adverse stress factors and, most importantly, not to reduce the effectiveness of activities (in particular, professional ones) in the process of experiencing stressful conditions [10]. Stress resistance is defined by a set of psychological qualities that help a person not only survive stressful situations but also emerge from them as a stronger and more adapted person to the challenges around them [1].

The most severe critical situations for a person are those which associated with the realization of one's own mortality (incurable illness, participation in hostilities, etc.), or facing the death of another (experiencing the loss of a loved one). A critical situation is experienced by a person in different ways. On the one hand, it can have a destructive effect, increasing anxiety and depression, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, which can lead to a life crisis. On the other hand, it can add meaning to life, make it more complete and meaningful. In any case, facing a critical situation changes a person's attitude to life, death, self, and values, which forms different life strategies that help a person get out of a critical situation [7].

Both theorists and practitioners believe that in a crisis situation, when trying to cope with a stressful state, a person experiences a certain type of physical and psychological overload. Emotional tension and stress can lead either to mastery of a new situation (these are the so-called coping strategies) or to disruption and deterioration of vital functions [9]. Although some situations can be stressful for all people, they turn out to be crises for those who are particularly sensitive due to individual and personal characteristics.

Agreeing with H. Sytnyk's conclusions, it should be noted that crisis situations are always characterized by a violation of the usual (normal) conditions of life at facilities, in a certain territory or in the state as a whole. Ensuring national security in the context of natural, man-made and social crises, or under martial law, is associated with the planning and implementation of a set of legal, organizational, technical and



other measures aimed at an adequate response to threats to national interests, in particular, the establishment and maintenance of a legal regime of emergency or martial law, the transfer of forces and means of the national security system to high levels of readiness, etc. The influence of psychological factors on business in times of crisis varies depending on many factors, including the nature of the crisis situation, the culture of the organization, the degree of flexibility and readiness for change (M.O. Oksyutovych, D.L. Melnychuk). Thus, psychological factors in crisis situations can be both positive and negative for management activities. It is important to understand these factors and take measures to support employees and ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the organization in the face of uncertainty.

According to O.R. Tkachyshyna, "in crisis situations, the adaptive resources of the individual are activated, which allow a person to adapt to new circumstances, changed reality, create conditions for their "acceptance" and rethinking" [8; 117]. In her study of the peculiarities of social and psychological adaptation of a person in crisis situations, Ukrainian researcher O.R. Tkachyshina identifies internal factors that allow for the most effective adaptation to the conditions of a crisis situation. In particular, these are: temperament, personality, cognitive and emotional characteristics, locus of control, self-esteem, level of claims, mental self-regulation, personal maturity, knowledge and life experience [8]. Out of such a large number of psychological factors that undoubtedly affect the behavior of an individual in crisis situations, we single out those that are most important for the implementation of managerial activities.

Thus, in our study, based on the identified psychological features of management in crisis conditions, the empirical research was aimed at identifying: 1) professional self-efficacy, 2) stress resistance, 3) tolerance to uncertainty.

The purpose of the study is to theoretically substantiate the main psychological factors that have a significant impact on the effectiveness of management activities in crisis conditions and to empirically study the peculiarities of such impact.

Sample analysis. The study involved 72 managers, of whom 33 (45.8%) were business owners who manage their own business and 39 (54.1%) were business managers who are officials. The gender distribution was as follows: 31.9% of the respondents were women, and 68.1% were men. Management experience: 1) up to 5 years - 16.7%; up to 10 years - 52.7%; more than 10 years - 30.6%. The distribution by industry was as follows: restaurant business: 27.7%; trade: 29.2%; information technology: 19.4%; beauty services: 15.4%; medical services: 8,3%.

Research design. To determine the level of professional self-efficacy, the "Professional Self-Efficacy Scale (short version)" developed by T. Rigotti, W. Schyns, G. Mohr and adapted by O. Kredenzler was used [5]. This 6-question methodology is a shortened version of the Professional Self-Efficacy Scale (W. Schyns, G. Von Collani), which contains 20 questions. Professional self-efficacy refers to the ability to act with optimal results in unpredictable conditions, which, in fact, occurs in crisis situations and is one of the conditions for an adequate response to crisis conditions in professional activities.

The Uncertainty Intolerance Scale test in its short version by N. Carleton (IUS-12) is designed to measure emotional, behavioral, and cognitive reactions to



uncertainty. The reliability of the test has been confirmed by the high internal consistency and stability of the results obtained in various scientific studies. The peculiarity of the Uncertainty Intolerance Scale, short version by N. Carleton (IUS-12), is its predictive value in determining the risk of occurrence and aggravation of posttraumatic conditions, which makes it useful for preliminary diagnosis. This questionnaire is one of the most popular validated tests in foreign publications. .

The results help to determine the level of tolerance to uncertainty in the emotional-behavioral and cognitive dimensions. Due to the popularity and clear structure of the IUS-12 test and its value for analyzing the tendency to fixate on negative emotions and maladaptive behavior, we have identified it as the most appropriate tool for studying uncertainty intolerance [2].

T. Holmes and R. Page published the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS), which is now actively used to assess the level of current stress resistance [4]. The researchers proposed a scale in which each important event corresponds to a certain number of points depending on the level of its stressfulness. Respondents receive a form with 43 important events and have to mark "yes" to those events that have happened to them in the last year of their lives and calculate the total number of points (each event has a corresponding number of points in relation to its stressfulness). The total score of the respondent indicates his or her degree of stress resistance. The result is interpreted as follows: 150-199 points is a high level of resilience to stress, 200-299 points is the threshold level, and 300+ points is a low level of resilience to stress, which indicates high vulnerability and the threat of emotional and psychological overload. This methodology helps to diagnose the current state of stress and social adaptability of respondents, which we consider to be one of the main components of the effectiveness of management activities in crisis situations. The results of this methodology allow us to draw conclusions about the extent to which the level of current stress affects other indicators. In our sample, the average score was 325.3 points, which indicates a high level of vulnerability and low stress resistance and ability to social adaptation. This indicates that most respondents have a low degree of coping with stress at a particular stage of life due to a number of factors that provoke background stress and anxiety. Among the respondents, 58.4% of managers demonstrated low coping capacity and high vulnerability (over 300 points), 34.7% of respondents are on the verge of the threshold level of coping capacity (200-299 points), and only 6.9% of respondents have a high level of coping capacity and adaptation to social changes in the environment (199 points and below). Given the crisis situation in the country, these data do not seem unrealistic.

The results of the psychological diagnostics were subjected to correlation analysis, which revealed the relationships between different aspects of efficiency, as summarized in Table 1.

According to the results of the correlation analysis, there is a positive statistically significant correlation between the level of professional self-efficacy and tolerance to uncertainty ($r=0.573$). That is, the less anxiety and fear of an uncertain future a person has, the better he or she performs his or her activities, in this case, managerial ones.



Table 1. Correlation between aspects of management effectiveness in crisis situations.

	Professional self-efficacy	Stress resistance	Tolerance to uncertainty
Professional self-efficacy		-0,637**	0,573**
Stress resistance			-0,327*
Tolerance to uncertainty			

Authoring: *- correlation statistically significant at the level 0,001; ** - correlation statistically significant at the level 0,01.

Also, we observe an inverse correlation statistically significant relationship between the level of general stress and the level of professional effectiveness ($r = -0,637$) - that is, the higher the level of actual stress, the lower the professional effectiveness.

As can be seen in the table, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the level of stress and predictive anxiety (as an indicator of tolerance to uncertainty). The correlation coefficient ($r = -0,327$) indicates that the less anxiety a person has about the unknown future, the lower the actual level of stress.

Summary and conclusions.

Our study revealed a correlation between management effectiveness and the current level of stress and tolerance to uncertainty. It was found that managers who are confident in the future and perceive uncertainty not as a threat but as a field for opportunities are the most effective. The more self-effective a person is in general, the less susceptible they are to predictive anxiety. Conversely, the more tolerant of uncertainty a person is, the more effective he or she is in managerial activities.

We can conclude that stressors in crisis situations do not directly affect the effectiveness of professional activity, but are mediated by personality anxiety, which is the leading construct of the phenomenon of "tolerance-intolerance to uncertainty".

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