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MODEL OF POSITIVE PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF SOCIAL PROFESSIONS

Abstract: the research is based on theoretical and empirical conclusions obtained in the course of studying the problem of positive functioning of the individual in social professions. The needs of specialists in optimal positive functioning at different levels: personal, group and social are identified. Dialogue and discourse are considered as productive agents of an individual's daily and professional life, social and professional expectations, ideals, and positive constructive experience.

Keywords: positive functioning, integration, self-realization, model, professional activity, development, well-being, dialogical interaction.

MODEL POZYTYWNEJ OSOBOWOŚCI FUNKCJONUJĄCY W ŚRODOWISKU PRACOWNIKÓW SOCJALNYCH

Streszczenie (abstrakt): badania opierają się na teoretycznych i empirycznych wnioskach uzyskanych w trakcie badania problemu pozytywnego funkcjonowania jednostki w zawodach społecznych. Identyfikowane są potrzeby specjalistów w optymalnym pozytywnym funkcjonowaniu na różnych poziomach: osobistym, grupowym i społecznym. Dialog i dyskurs są uważane za produktywne czynniki codziennego i zawodowego życia jednostki, społecznych i zawodowych oczekiwań, ideałów i pozytywnych doświadczeń konstruktywnych.

Słowa kluczowe: pozytywne funkcjonowanie, integracja, samorealizacja, model, aktywność zawodową, rozwój, dobre samopoczucie, interakcja dialogowa.

INTRODUCTION

Modern people live in a rapidly developing world and the ongoing socio-economic changes are increasingly drawing the attention of scientists to the problem of the importance of helping professions. Socionomic or helping professions (from Lat. - society) are professions that, in the process of their activity, involve a special type of interaction – «helping behavior». According to K. Rogers, helping should be called relationships in which one of the parties intends to help the other party in development, personal growth, in the ability to

get along with other people and better life¹. It is not surprising that representatives of these professions are subject to increased demands, since the object of work is other people. The specifics of such professions characterized by stressful and difficult working conditions, high staff turnover, etc. Therefore, it is very important to build relationships with others in a new (changing) reality, to find productive ways of self-realization in various situations as one of the main parameters of the positive functioning of the personality. In this regard, the question arises of finding ways of optimal functioning and those factors that affect the formation of the process of an integral, positive personality. This applies not only to an individual, but also to social systems. The problem of optimal functioning of the individual in modern conditions is particularly acute for representatives of social professions, where the object of work is a person with his various problems and difficulties. Theme coincides with the major direction of modern psychology-positive psychology. The focus of research is on positive personality traits, in particular, resources and potential associated with successful activities and adaptation to the conditions of the modern world.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In studies of recent decades², the professional development of a person as a subject and personality is understood as a kind of individual process of self-determination, as an active interaction between a person and the social environment. However, the resources, dynamics, and temporal characteristics of these processes relatively poorly understood.

Since the mid-twentieth century, psychology has been developing concepts of human-environment interaction. The role of biological factors in the formation of individual and psychological differences, ways and options of interaction between the individual and the environment, and corporate culture of organizations is considered. Since the second half of the twentieth century, the issues of the effects of social interactions of people in conflict situations, in the processes of leadership, decision-making, the formation of management teams, solving creative problems, etc. more and more consistently developed. In recent years, the topic of resources of human success actively developed in psychology³.

The positions of positive psychology⁴ are conceptually important for this study. According to them, the subjective level of personality is associated with valuable subjective experiences: well-being and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (in the future); "flow" and happiness (in the present). At the individual level, we are talking about positive personality traits: the ability to love and vocation, optimism, interpersonal interaction, aesthetic sensitivity, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, foresight, spirituality, talent and

¹ C. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapists View of Psychotherapy*, Boston 1961.

² R. Mitchell, *What is professional development, how does it occur in individuals, and how may it be used by educational leaders and managers for the purpose of school improvement?*, „Professional Development in Education” 2013, P. 387–400.

³ D.A. Leont'ev, *Samoregulyaciya, resursy i lichnostnyj potencial*, „Sibirskij Psihologicheskij Zhurnal” 2016, P. 18–37.

⁴ M. Seligman, M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Positive Psychology. An introduction*, „American Psychologist” 2000, №1(55), P. 5–14.

wisdom. At the group level, it is about responsibility, care, altruism, courtesy, tolerance, and work ethic. In our opinion, focusing on the strengths of the individual, its creative potential, and the healthy functioning of both the individual and the human community are particularly important here⁵. Developed by M. Seligman, the PERMA plus model (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment + physical activity, nutrition, sleep and optimism) carries the concept of individual and social actions to develop new cognitive and emotional tools for well-being⁶.

Methodological issues of personal development and understanding, conditions for the formation of positive interpersonal, group and social relationships cannot be considered without the role of the Dialogic paradigm. The phenomenon of dialogue indicates multidimensional connections with various aspects of personality and consciousness: empathy, openness in communication, goodwill, acceptance of oneself and others, building a dialogic climate of cooperation⁷.

As we can see, the problem of positive functioning is a multi-factor construct characterized by a complex relationship of social, cultural, economic, psychological and spiritual factors. In our opinion, the topic of success resources is most relevant in social professions. However, there is practically no comprehensive research in modern psychology that examines human behavior due to individual and professional needs and the peculiarities of his life world. According to our research⁸, the development of the emotional sphere of the individual is explicated through personal, interpersonal and organizational aspects of professional activity. There is also reason to say that the way an individual reacts emotionally to the social environment based on perception and significantly affects future actions and interactions. Consequently, the construction of a socio-psychological model of positive functioning in the professional environment is due to the following circumstances: the need for optimal positive functioning at different levels: *personal, group and social*.

Research aim. Rationale for the development of a model of positive personality functioning in the environment of social professions.

The model in this study is a psychological representation of real, hypothetical, or imaginary situations, the structure of which corresponds to the structure of the represented system. The purpose of the simulation is to consider the dynamics of the system over time and under various conditions.

RESEARCH METHODS

The material of this research is a set of concepts, data of theoretical and empirical conclusions, obtained in the course of studying the problem of the positive functioning of a per-

⁵ C. Peterson, W. Ruch, M. Seligman, *Strengths of character, orientations to happiness, and life satisfaction*, „The Journal of Positive Psychology” 2007, №2, P. 149–156.

⁶ M. Seligman, *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being*, Atria Books 2011.

⁷ M. M. Bahtin, *Zametki. Sobranie sochinenij*, Moskva 1996.

⁸ S. L. Bogomaz, M. M. Morozhanova, *Qualitative research of emotional phenomena of professional activity of nurses*, „Eunomia – Rozwój Zrównoważony – Sustainable Development” 2019, №1, P. 117–123.

son in a professional environment. The research methods used: theoretical methods of complex and systemic, comparative, critical-reflexive analysis of methodological approaches and scientific concepts, categorization, thematic analysis, modeling. We also used the results of a semi-structured interview (n = 6), obtained by us in the study of the perception of medical workers of their professional activities.

THE PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTING A SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL OF POSITIVE FUNCTIONING

Theoretical analysis and research results form the basis of the model and suggest that both personal, group, and organizational resources can play a role in protecting against burnout and forming positive experiences. Each level in the developed model will promote certain content and dynamic constructs, which we will consider later.

The *personal level* of the model based on the strategy of cumulative continuity of personal development. So, the study of the reasons for *self-efficacy* is important from the point of view of the development of personality stability. Self-efficacy defined as the ability to use both personal and professional resources to successfully complete any task. People with high self-efficacy tend to trust their abilities, show perseverance in difficult situations, and they see emerging problems as challenges and opportunities for growth⁹. Self-efficacy and *self-determination* closely related to the functioning of intrinsic motivation: maintaining self-efficacy through the experience of success stimulates continued progress, a sense of autonomy, responsibility for one's choices and actions¹⁰. If a person finds his or her job meaningful and challenging enough, it strengthens his or her optimism and ability to work, so the motivation of a specialist affects the entire working community.

The study of the role of *professional identity* in the process of professional development of a personality involves the acquisition of new positive role models of behavior and new ideas about oneself, and is a multiple, dynamic, relational phenomenon. This integrative development process involves establishing core values, morals, and self-awareness¹¹. Formation of professional identity is a measure of development in which a specialist learns a complex and self-defined understanding of their professional role, themselves through feedback from others. Such interaction provides opportunities for mutual coordination of identities embedded in various professional contexts, which leads the individual to positive life and professional self-realization, subjective well-being.

The content of the components of the personal level is determined and directly related to *constructive thinking*: various aspects of constructive thinking will have a significant impact on the performance of tasks and adaptation to changes in their nature. Constructive

⁹ J. P. Meyer, E. R. Maltin, *Employee commitment and well-being: A critical review, theoretical framework and research agenda*, „Journal of Vocational Behavior” 2010, №77, P. 323–337.

¹⁰ R. M. Ryan, E. L. Deci, *Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being*, „American Psychologist” 2000, P. 68–78.

¹¹ B. Hopson, J. Hayes, *The Theory and Practice of Vocational Guidance: A Selection of Readings*, Pergamon Press ltd. 2014.

thinking helps to focus on current tasks, and not on the negative emotions accompanying the work performed. Failure does not affect confidence, but perceived as an important part of the learning process¹². From the point of view of the phenomenon in question in professional activity, it is productive to abandon the initial emotional reaction and consider the problem and its solution from a different angle - more optimistic, but at the same time realistic.

The study of *personality strengths* has emerged in the focus of positive psychology in the past few decades. Strengths can be defined as pre-existing capabilities for a particular way of behaving, thinking, or feeling that are genuine and that ensure optimal functioning, development and performance of an individual. Some studies show that people take their strengths for granted and focuses on weaknesses, hence the frustration in their activities¹³. Identifying, strengthening, and appropriately applying personality strengths and using them in new ways can lead to desirable outcomes such as positive and supportive social relationships and lower stress levels.

Among the results obtained in the course of the study, the most interesting is the fact that, realizing their problems, a person is not ready to change. As stated above, a key component of resilience is the ability to respond flexibly to changing emotional circumstances. Emotional *flexibility* positively correlated with cognitive flexibility and psychological well-being. An emotionally flexible, adaptable person is confident that they can adjust their thoughts and actions depending on the circumstances and feel comfortable expanding their boundaries¹⁴. Thus, mobility and readiness for change, the desire to develop, facilitate adaptation to the changing requirements of the working environment.

The need to be able to *relax, get rid of excessive emotional load* is expressed by the need to ensure stability, complete rest, and a healthy approach to the work performed as part of the recovery process. Strategies include minimizing or eliminating alcohol and caffeine, following a healthy eating plan, and relaxation techniques.

The formation of a *group level* in the modeling process is due to the specific nature of a set of interpersonal variables, such as interpersonal conflicts, lack of emotional support, impoliteness and strained relationships with colleagues, and one-sided communication on the part of management.

Of particular importance to this study is the evidence that support from managers and colleagues can protect health care workers from the negative impact of the emotional demands of the profession. Participants argued that *emotional support, a tolerance* characterized by having close and trusting relationships in the workplace, can be particularly useful in professions that are emotionally stimulating. We highlight several explanations for such effects. The focus on articulating emotions aimed at re-evaluating and changing the per-

¹² S. Epstein, *Cognitive-Experiential Theory: An Integrative Theory of Personality*, Oxford University Press 2014.

¹³ A. Linley, S. Joseph, *Positive psychology in practice*, Wiley 2004.

¹⁴ F. W. Bond, P. E. Flaxman, D. Bunce, *The influence of psychological flexibility on work redesign: Mediated moderation of a work reorganization intervention*, „Journal of Applied Psychology” 2008, № 93(3), P. 645–654.

ception of the situation, or at getting emotional support from friends or family. Communicating personal problems and difficulties to others without fear of judgment can directly reduce the risk of emotional exhaustion and / or act as a resource that helps professionals cope with the emotional demands of the professional environment. Management support indicates that it can provide informal opportunities for staff to create space for reflection, discuss emotional responses to the work environment, and reaffirm core values of the work performed.

From the point of view of teamwork, there is evidence that a strong and supportive team culture, a climate of authenticity, and a *work ethic* can help build stable personal and interpersonal relationships and practice repetitive *positive personal interactions* in the professional process¹⁵.

The *social level* represents elements of the characteristics of a positive and healthy work environment. The workplace is an important contribution to individual well-being, particularly because it creates the potential for positive relationships.

Since social interactions are the means by which professional social activities performed, any organization must create high-quality relationships in the workplace, improve material resources, develop social confidence, and remain relevant in the profession. In this regard, it is necessary to take measures to prevent and eliminate stress at work and organizational development, aimed at reconciling the experience of a specialist in the workplace with the factors of the professional environment, as well as to reduce the gap between the current and desired environment.

This role consists of providing *social support* – assistance that the organization provides to the specialist. The instrumental type of support refers to something that is material, such as improving *material resources*. Emotional and informational type of support as a discussion of joint actions. Through group discussions, employees help identify problems in the organizational structure, analyze their perception of psychological, physical, and behavioral problems related to work, processes, policies, practices, and remuneration structures in advance, and help develop, implement, and evaluate successful solutions, providing social confidence and a *positive relationship environment*¹⁶.

The significance and value of the profession considered by us as a guideline for motivating professional behavior and *relevance to stay in the profession*. Motivation can be both internal and external, but the key to both is the sense of achievement associated with the goals and expectations of the specialist¹⁷. The values of the profession reflect personal, social and organizational values; therefore, within the organization there are opportunities

¹⁵ L. R. James, C. C. Choi, P. K. McNeil, M. K. Minton, M. A. Wright, K. Kim, *Organizational and psychological climate: A review of theory and research*, „European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology” 2008, № 17(1), P. 5–32.

¹⁶ J. I. Harris, C. Robitschek, S. K. Moritzen, *The comparative contributions of congruence and social support in career outcomes*, „The Career Development Quarterly” 2001, №4, P. 314–323.

¹⁷ E. E. Lawler, C. Worley, *Management Reset: Organizing for Sustainable Effectiveness*, Jossey-Bass 2011.

for professional growth and development, through recognition of values, promotion of career development, support and control.

Thus, responsibility for the positive functioning of the personal divided between the specialist, the organization and society and implemented through a participatory nature. Combining these elements graphically gives the following basic structure of the developed logical model (figure 1).

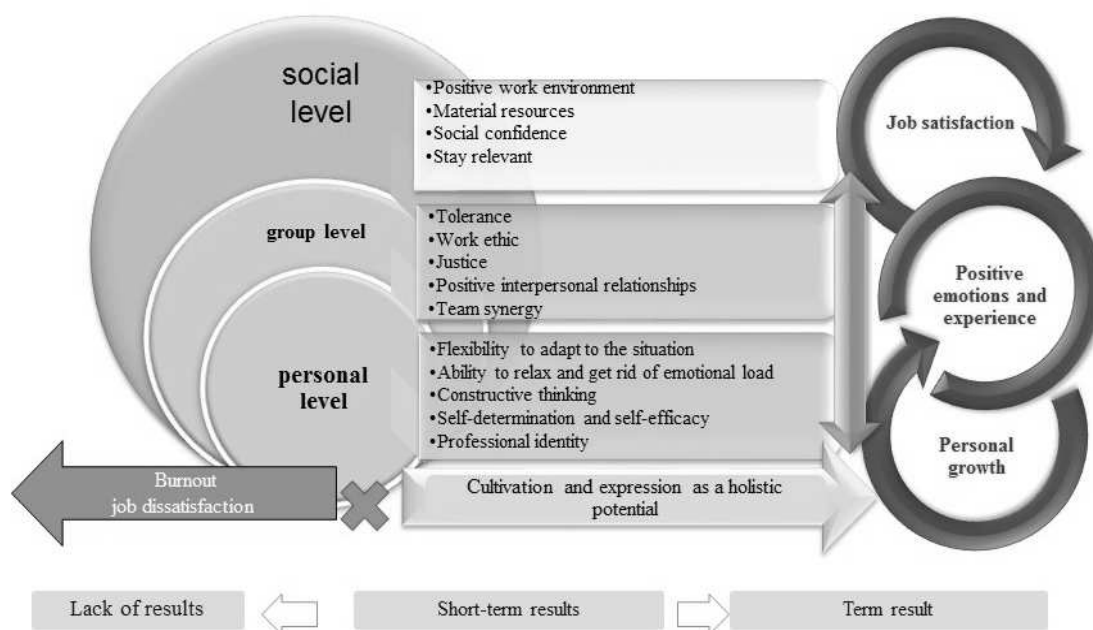


Figure 1 - model of positive functioning in the professional environment.

DISCUSSION

The developed model indicates how its elements will lead to the desired changes. The arrows between the elements indicate that verification and adjustment is a continuous process. The dynamic vector illustrates the dichotomous nature of this process: its implementation can have both positive and negative directions. The problem of optimal, positive functioning is a problem not only for the specialist, but also for the professional community and the organization. The implementation of the model, focusing only on the personal level, will lead the entire system to temporary results if organizational and group factors not taken into account. At the same time, the work environment is becoming more fluid, uncertain and complex. Organizations, in order to be successful, require employees to be resilient, innovative, and creative. When the content of levels changes, the goals of employees, their activities and their results change – and, as a result, the model itself. Consequently, various development options can disrupt the formed dynamic balance or change its quality.

The implementation of dialogic interaction is central to the model. The success of interpersonal interaction and activity in social professions significantly depends on an adequate knowledge of the "other" person. This process implies that people's expression of their ideas through dialogue and microdialog constantly generates a discourse (a system of ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and practices), forms both their own ideas and those of others, and allows them to see themselves and others. Consequently, dialogue and discourse seen as productive agents of a person's daily and professional life, social and professional expectations, ideals, and positive constructive experiences. Thus, the dialogue of people who are interested in the success of joint activities, involved and passionate about it, provides a continuous process of movement and development of the organization has an inexhaustible energy of mutual support.

CONCLUSION

In recent decades, many countries around the world have taken an orientation towards the humanization of professional activities, the adaptation of working life to human needs and consider safety and health in the workplace as a fundamental human right. Unfortunately, the problem of the effectiveness of positive functioning is not sufficiently demanded in professional social activity. In addition, the question of the criteria for its assessment and favorable conditions remains undeveloped. The arguments presented in the article make it possible to theoretically and empirically substantiate the three-level construction of the model and outline the ways of forming a positive personality functioning.

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