

SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВНУТРІШНЬО ПЕРЕМІЩЕНИХ ОСІБ

The article is devoted to the social and psychological characteristics of internally displaced persons (IDPs). This issue is currently of particular relevance in Ukraine since hostilities in the east of the country and the annexation of Crimea caused a significant displacement of the population of the specified regions to other regions. This category of people has lost some of the social ties established and developed over a long period. However, one of the effective ways of accelerating the integration of internally displaced persons into the new social environment is the restoration of their usual way of life, and therefore the usual way of using social contacts, due to which economic, professional, household and personal problems are solved. Therefore paying attention to the role of social capital in the process of restoring life efficiency of internally displaced persons and accelerating their adaptation and integration is a promising direction in solving this urgent task. Scientific research has not yet fully resolved the issue of the specifics of the psycho-emotional state of internally displaced persons, which is of great importance for understanding the problem and developing effective psychological support strategies. Therefore, the relevance of this study will contribute to the development of modern scientific knowledge about the psychological consequences of the traumatic experience of war, as well as the development of recommendations for improving and preserving the mental health of Ukrainians.

Key words: social and psychological characteristics, internally displaced persons, hostilities, depression, social capital.

Статтю присвячено соціальним та психологічним особливостям внутрішньо переміщених осіб, що нині має особливу актуальність в Україні, оскільки бойові дії на Сході країни та анексія Криму спричинили значне переміщення населення вказаних регіонів до інших областей. Частину соціальних зв'язків, установлених та розвинутих протягом тривалого часу, у зазначеній категорії осіб було втрачено. Проте одним з ефективних шляхів прискорення інтеграції внутрішньо переміщених осіб у нове соціальне середовище є відновлення звичного способу життя, а отже, звичного способу використання соціальних контактів, за рахунок котрих вирішуються економічні, професійні, побутові, особисті проблеми. А тому звернення уваги на роль соціального капіталу у процесі відновлення ефективності життя й діяльності життєдіяльності внутрішньо переміщених осіб та прискорення процесу їх адаптації й інтеграції є перспективними напрямками у вирішенні цього питання. Наукові дослідження ще не повною мірою вирішують питання про особливості психоемоційного стану внутрішньо переміщених осіб, що має велике значення для розуміння проблеми та розроблення ефективних стратегій психологічної підтримки. Тому актуальність даного дослідження сприятиме розвитку сучасних наукових знань про психологічні наслідки травматичного досвіду війни, а також розробленню рекомендацій щодо покращення та збереження психічного здоров'я українців.

Ключові слова: соціально-психологічні особливості, внутрішньо переміщені особи, збройний конфлікт, депресія, соціальний капітал.

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Problem statement. The process of migration is widespread all over the world, but in Ukraine, it is quite a frequent phenomenon. The majority of residents of eastern Ukraine have been actively migrating to other regions of the country and abroad for several years. Some people have been in the epicenter of an armed conflict and migrates to escape it, while others have not witnessed hostilities, but fears persecution because of their political views. In any case, people are forced to change their surroundings for various reasons, but the very situation in the region of their living has forced them to do so.

The analysis of latest research and publications. M. Sliusarevskiy and O. Blynova pay attention to the classification of types of migration. Scientists distinguish migration as “internal and interstate, permanent and temporary, sovereign and forced” [2, p. 33]. Forced migration is of special relevance in this work, since part of the territory of Ukraine is at the epicenter of the armed conflict. This conflict is the main reason for the migration of a large part of the population from the eastern region to other territories.

R. Shamionov notes that voluntary migration increases a person's general stress resistance, promotes tolerance and quick adaptation to a new place of living. Displacement caused by external negative circumstances devalues a person's own activity. It undermines people's belief in ability to control their own life, and makes it difficult to adapt to a new social environment [5].

V. Sokhranov singles out the problem of “meaning creation as a process that guarantees the development of the individual as a meaningful subject of the cultural and historical processes of the social community, as a criterion for the formation of the social community” as an important problem of migration [12, p. 184].

Some groups of scientists (F. Berezin, V. Hrytsenko, H. Soldatova) emphasize insecurity as one of the key problems of migration.

H. Soldatova notes that insecurity haunts migrants from the beginning of migration and until the end. It has a long-term character in the lives of migrants. Anxiety is based on the uncertainty and unfamiliarity of the new environment.

The dangerous environment in which migrants find themselves is exacerbated by feelings of fear and hopelessness. These negative experiences weaken the adaptive capabilities of the migrant's psyche [6].

F. Berezin writes that people with a high level of anxiety have a distorted perception of reality, which is associated with a pessimistic view of life events and future prospects, a sense of inferiority, an expectation of rejection by others and increased emotional vulnerability. These conditions prevent IDPs from learning new norms of social interaction and stimulate their desire to seek support and help from other people. In contrast, a lower level of insecurity contributes to the formation of social activity, optimistic assessments of the surrounding realities and life prospects, initiative and behavior in accordance with existing social norms, and also does not cause a desire to involve outsiders in solving their own personal problems [6].

At the same time, V. Hrytsenko notes that increased anxiety can lead to positive changes, stimulating the inclusion of the individuals' own psychological adaptation mechanisms that harmonize them with the surrounding social environment. A manifestation of the inclusion of one's own reserve resources is the transformation of mental processes, effective behavior adequate to the situation, which contributes to the acceleration of adaptation [6].

H. Soldatova points to the systemic manifestation of psychological and mental problems of forced migrants that affect all spheres of life, including emotions, cognition, behaviour, motivation and communication. Thus, an imbalance in the emotional sphere of IDPs manifests itself in depression, anxiety and confusion which eventually transform into anger, aggression and hesitation. The level of anxiety and irritability increases, causeless mood swings occur.

Exposition of basic facts. Sleep disorders, insomnia, excessive sleepiness, dreams acquire a negative feature, waking up with anxiety [10]. Because of movement, the motivational sphere of internally displaced persons (IDPs) changes radically as the opportunities to meet various needs are sharply reduced. Basic needs satisfaction becomes more important, the value-meaning sphere of life transforms and the level of aspirations and self-esteem decreases. The inability to satisfy one's own needs leads to depression. Existential problems related to anxiety about the future and a sense of hopelessness intensify.

An imbalance in emotional and motivational spheres leads to disturbances and disorders in the migrant's cognitive sphere, i.e., cognitive impairment: "memory disorders (amnesia – loss of memory, confusion – the presence of events in the memory that have never happened to a person, memory difficulties), distraction, absent-minded-

ness, impaired perception (for example, of time), impaired thinking (slippage – unwillingness to leave the main topic of conversation, excessive detailing)" [10, p. 23].

Impairment of personal psychological sphere lead to an imbalance in interpersonal relationships. The most intimate relationships suffer significantly: relationships with loved ones, children, parents and friends, misunderstandings with members of the same group or host community [6].

However, the absence of close friends and relatives does not always have negative consequences for internally displaced persons. Sometimes it stimulates the mobilization of their internal potential and contributes to their personal development, enrichment of life experience and skills.

We should emphasize that the difficulties caused by forced migration (for example, the absence of close friends and family) do not always have only negative consequences for mental health. They can lead to positive changes. They can also facilitate positive changes such as personal growth, new experiences and new skills [6].

According to H. Soldatova, "depression, suicidality, anxiety and fear" is referred to neurotic disorders among IDPs [6, p. 41].

The risk of depression is determined by a personal tendency to depression, the number and duration of negative events in a person's life, and the lack of support [6].

The fact of forced displacement, a low level of cohesion with the host communities and a low level of financial security can provoke suicidal thoughts among IDPs. Traumatic events of forced displacement have a negative impact on the physical and psychological state of IDPs. In addition, the process of adaptation is burdened by a sharp decline in socio-economic status and the need to build relationships with host communities [10].

Y. Pylypas singles out the following "conditions that lead to IDPs becoming unstable and losing control over their situation and their own lives":

- loss of autonomy ("I don't control the process. It takes me somewhere");
- loss of autonomy ("I don't control my life. Someone else does it");
- identity violation;
- confusion (at the level of thinking, inability to concentrate and perform usual mental tasks), regression;
- fear of rejection (identification with the enemy);
- anxiety;
- victim mentality;
- anger and search for "external enemies" (someone has to pay);
- lack of ability to predict the future;
- shame, low self-esteem; guilt;
- functional symptoms, psychosomatic diseases, abuse of psychoactive substances;

– reactions to severe stress, adjustment disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)” [10, p. 10].

Among the psychological problems faced by internally displaced persons in Ukraine, I. Trubavina names the following:

– psychological trauma as a result of military actions and violence, guilt due to the need for external help, loss of group identity, victim mentality, confusion due to loss of control over one's own life, loneliness in the host community that leads to loss of identity, low self-esteem, and low level of self-awareness. Lack of identity, low self-esteem, the need to adapt to life in a compact environment, the need to live in Ukraine;

– men's experiences: inability to provide protection and financial well-being of their family, inability to protect their homeland, feeling of guilt due to inability to find a job, difficulty in expressing and controlling their emotions, aggression due to a feeling of helplessness, feeling that they could not protect their loved ones;

– women's experiences: fear of events, uncertainty about their future and the future of their children; these experiences are compensated by increased care for children and families at the new place of residence;

– children's experiences: mental and developmental disorders caused by the traumatic experience of war, the need to part with friends from previous places of living. The process of development and socialization requires significant psychological resources, and, at the same time, significant psychological resources are necessary to overcome the consequences of forced displacement. Children have low stress resistance caused by forced migration; their psyche cannot withstand such a load and breaks down. It is difficult to not only understand and identify one's condition and feelings, but also to show and share them.

Socio-psychological problems of social-psychological adaptation of servicemen in Ukraine were studied by A. Breus, L. Humeniuk, T. Vasheka, I. Hichan, O. Zinchenko, V. Konstantinov, I. Muzychenko, A. Nalchadzhian and others. Problems of social and psychological adaptation of internally displaced persons were studied by T. Parshyna, V. Rybalko, O. Ryndzak, T. Smolina, H. Soldatova, Yu. Khachaturian, S. Chernikova, R. Shamionov, M. Yuzhanin.

Studies of the relationship between IDPs and the host population have revealed a number of aspects that shed light on the problem of adaptation. Important issues are the structure of roles and status in the new social environment, the internal orientation of IDPs for long-term or short-term interaction, the degree of contact with the same IDPs, regardless of whether they live nearby or far away, as well as the degree of social activity (external observer or direct participant). [6].

According to R. Shamionov, socio-psychological adaptation involves not only finding ways to understand the new social environment, but also accepting its social norms, models of interaction, status and communicative conformity [4].

O. Zinchenko defines adaptation as a socio-psychological phenomenon as “the process of a person's entry into a certain group, his assimilation of a certain position in the norms, relations and structures of relationships between group members and awareness of problems that may arise while entering a new environment” [2, p. 51-52]. Conscious activity aimed at constant interaction with a new circle of acquaintances and the host community helps speed up the adaptation process. It is possible to achieve it due to the awareness of oneself as a full-fledged member of the group and the coordination of personal values with the needs of the new social environment. Attitudes, enrichment of the value sphere, models of behavior in any situation, the attitude of the host environment, the balance between the level of aspiration of a person and their real capabilities, as well as new living conditions become important in this situation [2].

M. Yuzhanin emphasizes the importance of the host community's attitude to the process of IDPs' adaptation to a new environment. Host communities may show rejection and alienation towards IDPs, but more often, they demonstrate a benevolent and tolerant attitude and willingness to seek mutual understanding.

Regarding host communities and their role in the process of social and psychological adaptation of IDPs, O. Zinchenko singles out the following areas of activity. In the first case, social communities tend to perceive IDPs as a threat to themselves in the social, professional and socio-economic spheres, which leads to provocative behavior towards IDPs and rejection by the community. Due to this behavior of the community, the adaptation of IDPs is delayed, and in some cases is impossible. The given model of the community's attitude towards IDPs is manifested in indifference and lack of initiative towards them, and the problems of IDPs are simply ignored. The third model of attitude of the host community indicates a desire to help IDPs feel like full members of the community. Members of the host community try to help IDPs solve their difficulties [2].

O. Blynova writes about the importance of the host population's attitude towards IDPs. Displacement is a bilateral relationship involving two parties. One of them is the migrants who take an active position, and the other – the host population with a passive position. Thus, thanks to the interaction between them, a full-fledged process of mutual adaptation takes place. If the indigenous population has a negative attitude towards migrants, then the process of adaptation, caused by the need to leave the homeland, slows down

significantly. Available empirical results confirm that there are cases of intolerant attitude towards IDPs from their social environment. Negative and aggressive stereotypes cause misunderstandings and conflicts between the host population and IDPs. In such cases, more constructive interaction can help avoid extreme polemics and take a more emotional, non-biased position [7].

Based on the received empirical data, O. Blynova notes that the criterion for the host population's favorable attitude towards IDPs is their satisfaction with their work and career. It is important that the sphere of their activity corresponds to their interests and aspirations, microclimate in work environment, satisfaction with the economic situation, and the potential for further development and career growth. The absence of these criteria in the work characteristics of the host population causes a negative attitude towards IDPs. The reason for this is that the process of forced displacement of the population from Eastern Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is perceived as a collective phenomenon.

This is due to the fact that the process of forced displacement of the population from Eastern Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is perceived as a mass phenomenon, and internally displaced persons are perceived as competitors for quality jobs. Ukrainian politics plays a negative role in the formation of such stereotypes. Ukraine actively disseminates information that internally displaced persons, unlike the general population, receive great benefits. The constant dissemination of such information affects the perception of IDPs by the host population [7].

V. Petrov considers the topic of tolerance from a different angle. Tolerance is "a feature of the relationship of displaced persons with the environment in the places of their new settlement" [8, p. 86]. We share the opinion of scientists that tolerance belongs to the internal system of human value orientations, and intolerance is a normal manifestation of a person's adaptive behavior in a situation, provided that it does not cross the appropriate boundaries of public order [4].

Life situations require an appropriate reaction and behavior: cooperation or confrontation. The first option is tolerance; the second one is intolerance. When behavior is aimed at cooperation, other people are evaluated in terms of their effectiveness and attractiveness. After their usefulness is confirmed, the boundaries of interaction are gradually narrowed and friendly relations are formed. Confrontational orientation, on the contrary, involves rejection regardless of the person's qualities. Tolerance, therefore, means taking into account the personal qualities and accepting them without trying to make everything convenient. Instead, intolerance manifests itself in the refusal or lack of desire to understand others and their individuality in interaction. Scientists empha-

size the importance of a civilized and appropriate display of both tolerance and intolerance. Tolerance should not turn into slavish sycophancy, and intolerance can be manifested in a socially acceptable form and in a civilized manner [6].

N. Luchkova defines tolerance as an important feature of an authentic civil society. It should ensure the harmonious existence of different communities, religious and political organizations and mitigate ethnic differences [3].

A mitigating factor for internally displaced persons in our country is that they enter an environment close to their own culture and language, but realize that a different social environment requires certain expenditure of internal resources to establish new social ties. Socio-psychological adaptation involves balancing the value orientations, behavior of IDPs and entering a new society, while being loyal to their own ideals. Social comfort, participation in the life of the host community, involvement in solving common problems and having a vision for the future are the signs of successful adaptation to a new place of residence [4].

According to the resource approach, adaptation is adjustment to the loss of a significant part of the resources that IDPs had prior to their displacement, as well as access to resources in a new location. I. Titter notes that forced displacement can lead to the loss of many resources that were available earlier (house, other material benefits, places for activities, family ties, communication with friends and acquaintances, etc.). The reduction or loss of resources does not necessarily occur after the displacement, but may occur before that. The supplies that were available in the previous place of living may lose their value in the conditions of a military confrontation. The criterion for the adaptation of internally displaced persons to a new social environment is the recovery of resources that were lost because of displacement. Thus, "IDP's adaptation is a process by which individuals try to satisfy their own needs, realize their own goals and meet the requirements of a new post-migration society" [4, p. 60-61].

D. Holovchenko writes that along with the term "adaptation" the phenomenon of "readaptation" is mentioned in the scientific literature. This reflects the process of transformation of a person's worldview in the context of significant changes in the conditions of their life and environment. A person who does not experience such changes is maladaptive. The difference between adaptation and maladaptation lies in the degree of personality restructuring. Excessive adaptation is characterized by changes in the sphere of personal values and meanings, norms and motivations, desires. Changes may occur in their hierarchy, means of satisfaction and implementation [7].

Socio-psychological adaptation has a dynamic character and is a manifestation of

the individual's reaction to changes in the conditions of the external environment. The effectiveness of adaptation is determined by the ease with which an individual's ideas and behaviour change in response to changes in the environment, the adequacy of the assessment of one's own qualities, and the constructiveness in building new social relationships. According to I. Holovchenko, a prerequisite for social and psychological adaptation is the desire to behave in accordance with specific life conditions. This is the desire of the person. The position of a person in relation to the surrounding reality, whether behaviour is a model of active participation in interaction with the environment, or whether it is just enough to take the position of an external observer are of particular importance [7].

O. Blynova points out that different attitudes towards difficult life situations have been revealed. She emphasizes the importance of taking into account individual characteristics in the attitude towards difficult life situations. If some IDPs have a high level of peace and ease in finding the optimal solution in each specific situation, while for others, crisis caused by forced displacement is a serious test. Therefore, researchers emphasize the importance of studying the role of the IDP personality, identifying key psychological qualities and tendencies to overcome crisis situations, ensuring a balance between various psychological functions and further development of the IDP personality in a more harmonious way [6].

Among personality qualities that negatively affect the adaptation process O. Blynova highlights introversion. It reduces the likelihood of seeking psychological help, increased nervousness as a manifestation of emotions, increased excitability, and reduced tolerance to the environment. To provide psychological assistance to migrants, it is important to stabilize their emotional state and stimulate internal resources to overcome stressful situations and accelerate adaptation. At the same time, migrants will voluntarily seek ways to restore lost connections via social networks that will help them find work, improve their own well-being, and receive emotional, informational, and social support [6].

T. Stefanenko made an attempt to describe the psychological portrait of a person who is most adapted to life in a new community. That is a "professionally competent person with high self-esteem, sociable, very committed to universal human values, tolerant of other views that differ from their own, interested in others and chooses strategies for cooperation in resolving conflicts" [11, p. 93].

The author notes that certain personal qualities are not effective in any community, and successful adaptation largely depends on the extent to which an individual's behavior is adapted to the current life situation.

An important condition for facilitating human adaptation is social support from the environment. It has a significant impact on the psychological well-being of displaced persons. Support from family, friends, colleagues is extremely important. They understand the seriousness of the situation in which the displaced people find themselves, encourage them and help them survive life crises. The positive impact of inclusion on interpersonal relationships is manifested in the fact that access to a wide range of social contacts, diversity and positive coloring of social contacts improves psychological well-being. It also increases the activation of a person's well-being and increases a person's own protective mechanisms to overcome difficult situations [10].

N. Mahina notes that Ukraine is currently in a state of instability. Therefore, social and political institutions lose a significant part of their regulatory influence and are no longer able to guarantee a decent standard of living for the population. Thus, the success or failure of individual adaptation largely depends on the individual's ability to adapt to unstable social conditions. Under such circumstances, social capital becomes more and more important [6].

According to an international review on IDPs, "social capital is one of the factors that facilitate their integration into the host community, and is particularly important in the context of access to information and services" [9, p.98-99]. Thus, the importance of social capital for IDPs is beyond doubt.

Research at the national strategic level in Georgia shows that the low level of IDPs' social capital does not facilitate their integration, which leads to their isolation and less participation in community processes and formal social structures. The frustration of many IDPs can lead to social passivity, lack of initiative and dependence on external assistance [9].

S. Maksaiel and L. Manderson found that internally displaced persons indicate a breakdown in their social ties after displacement. Grief, insecurity and selfishness are often caused by the breakdown of social ties. A necessary condition for renewing the sense of community is the formation of new relations and interaction in unstable situations of displacement. In this case, effective integration will be ensured not only by forming new contacts, but also by saving social connections from the previous place of living [9].

The conclusions made by N. Mazina also testify to the partial loss of IDPs' social capital. The purpose of this study is to determine the structure of social capital and its role in shaping the adaptation potential of IDPs. The results showed that about 10% of respondents were determined to overcome life's difficulties on their own and did not turn to their social contacts for help, despite the lack of self-resources due to forced migration, for example, low material wealth. At the same time, the above results indicate that the interviewed

IDPs turn to their social contacts for help. Trust and authority of the communication partner stand out as criteria for effective interaction. The decisive criterion for the formation of new social ties is first of all personal qualities, not resources. In interaction, preference is given to horizontal social ties [3]; Yu. Sereda emphasizes that “the situation of forced migration leads to a decrease in social capital due to the growth of distrust and loss of social cohesion. It leads to social isolation and lack of desire to build new social networks” [11, p. 30].

Donbas residents have a low level of trust in state institutions, including legislative bodies, local self-government bodies, executive power, and state institutions managing the unoccupied territories of the eastern region. On the other hand, residents of the eastern regions trust their family and friends the most [11].

In general, Ukrainians lack cohesive social capital. The most effective social ties are family and friends, who demonstrate the highest level of trust. These connections play an important role in solving a wide range of life problems, such as finding an educational institution or a job, but the role of NGOs in solving urgent life problems is not important and is rarely taken into account. Forced migration, however, led to an impoverishment of the potential for social ties.

Familiar surroundings, close ties at the previous place of living do not facilitate integration at the new place of residence. Of course, they are important from the point of view of psychological support, but still ineffective for finding a job in a new environment. In this situation, social contacts with public and political organizations are more valuable for IDPs [11].

This explains the obvious benefit for IDPs from integrating their social capital in order to quickly integrate into a new social environment. Privileging ties of social capital creates a situation where they lack resources to improve livelihoods [11].

Conclusions. Thus, IDPs who prefer the closest social ties with family and friends are exposed to the risk of integration into a new social environment. The restoration of cohesive social networks in new settlements can accelerate the process of integration of IDPs into new communities. For this, it is necessary to constantly monitor the existing strategic goals of IDPs, motivate them to participate in the development of programs that directly affect them, ensure awareness of the existence of such programs and encourage them to consciously choose activities that are familiar to them and bring them pleasure.

Therefore, countries with a high level of IDPs, including Ukraine, have a low level of economic development, which necessitates the need for the long-term state support, not to mention the limited possibilities of providing assistance to IDPs even in short-term crisis situations. In such situations, it is important that IDPs are able to integrate

into the new social environment with as little external support as possible. Therefore, it is important to help IDPs gain confidence in their own abilities and promote the development of competencies that will be of practical use in the host community. This is the basis for their own efforts to integrate into the new environment.

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