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Professional Self-Realisation of Ukrainians in Time of Crisis: Psychological Strategies for Overcoming and Achieving Success

Abstract: The relevance of this work is due to the complex socio-psychological conditions of the Ukrainian present, caused by various challenges in the context of modern crises. Prolonged war, pandemics COVID-19, economic instability, and natural disasters have a negative impact on physical and psychological health. In such conditions, people experience stress, anxiety, depression and emotional vulnerability, which affects the possibilities of self-development and professional self-realisation. The study of professional self-realisation of Ukrainians in times of crisis focuses on the psychological aspects of overcoming difficulties and achieving success. The paper examines the crises and challenges faced by modern Ukrainians, identifies effective strategies for self-realisation, factors that influence this process, and mechanisms that contribute to the successful overcoming of crisis situations. During crisis situations, a special role belongs to individual adaptation resources, which act as personal potential and allow learning, changing and developing in adverse circumstances. An important role is played by the resources of psychological resilience that arise as a result of certain dynamics of life situations and affect the further success and efficiency of life. One of these resources is resilience, which ensures rapid adaptation to change, the ability to cope with stress and difficulties and the ability to return to normal life after a crisis without harm to mental and physical health. The positive impact of coaching on increasing motivation, improving well-being, increasing work efficiency and professional development was noted. Coaching contributes to the development of personal anti-stress skills, the ability to control one's emotions, the ability to manage stress and adapt to crisis conditions, self-efficacy and resilience. Thus, coaching in the context of professional self-realization, especially in times of crisis, is an effective tool for developing personal characteristics, improving motivation and achieving success.

Keywords: professional self-realization, success, coaching, psychology, crisis.

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Професійна самореалізація українців в умовах криз: психологічні стратегії подолання та досягнення успіху

Анотація: Актуальність даної роботи зумовлена складними соціально-психологічними умовами українського сьогодення, спричиненими різноманітними викликами в умовах сучасних криз.

Тривала війна, пандемія COVID-19, економічна нестабільність, стихійні лиха негативно впливають на фізичне та психологічне здоров'я людини. В таких умовах населення відчувають стрес, тривогу, депресію та емоційну вразливість, що впливає на можливості саморозвитку та професійної самореалізації людини. Дослідження професійної самореалізації українців в умовах кризи зосереджується на психологічних аспектах подолання труднощів та досягнення успіху. В роботі розглянуто кризи та виклики, з якими стикаються сучасні українці, визначено ефективні стратегії самореалізації, фактори, що впливають на цей процес, та механізми, які сприяють успішному подоланню кризових ситуацій. Під час кризових ситуацій особлива роль має індивідуальні ресурси адаптації, які виступають як особистісний потенціал і дозволяють навчатися, змінюватися та розвиватися в умовах несприятливих обставин. Було встановлено, що на успішність людини та ефективність життєдіяльності впливають ресурси психологічної стійкості, які розвиваються після певних життєвих ситуацій. Одним із таких ресурсів є резильєнтність, яка забезпечує певдике пристосування до змін, здатність справлятися зі стресом і труднощами, а також уміння повертатися до нормального життя після кризових ситуацій без шкоди для психічного та фізичного здоров'я. Визначено позитивний вплив коучингу на підвищення мотивації, покращення самопочуття, підвищення ефективності роботи та професійного розвитку. Коучинг сприяє розвитку особистих антистресових навичок, вміння контролювати власні емоції, здатності управлінням стресом і адаптації до кризових умов, самоефективності та резильєнтності. Отже, коучинг у контексті професійної самореалізації, особливо під час кризових умов, є ефективним інструментом для розвитку особистісних характеристик, покращення мотивації та досягнення успіху.

Ключові слова: професійна самореалізація, успіх, коучинг, психологія, криза.

Introduction

Across the globe, the challenges of our time—wars, pandemics, hunger and natural disasters, socio-economic crises—are having a significant impact on the physical and psychological well-being of the population. The global COVID-19 pandemic and military aggression have fundamentally altered not only the everyday lives of millions of people in Ukraine, but also their professional activities. In times of crisis, the disruption of the regulation of negative emotions such as fear, anger, hatred, disappointment, sadness, humiliation, uncertainty, and hopelessness affects an individual's mental state and their professional self-realisation. Specialists across various fields are faced with questions regarding the possibility of continuing career development and professional skills, and the challenges and obstacles they may encounter in their professional paths (*Cosic, et al., 2024; Lass-Hennemann, et al., 2024; Quintero, et al., 2024*).

Self-realisation is a process of self-awareness and self-improvement, reflecting personal growth, which involves an endless series of situations requiring free choice and responsibility for that choice. The relevance of the issue of personal self-realisation is determined, on the one hand, by significant economic and, consequently, professional changes occurring in today's world, and on the other—by an individual's subjective perceptions of the specifics of self-development and self-realisation within a particular profession (*Lass-Hennemann, et al., 2024; Bedan, et al., 2021*).

An analysis of scientific studies indicates that the gradual mastering of professional skills encourages individuals to utilise not only their psychophysiological resources but also their potential personal capacities—self-realisation, self-development, self-actualisation, and the

purposeful application of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for further personal development within their profession and the achievement of success (*Zburavleva, et al., 2024; Nerubasska, et al., 2020; Zelenin, 2024*).

Self-realisation remains a vital process for a fulfilling life in Ukraine during times of crisis, but it requires targeted psychological support to address individual problems and to develop emotional and interpersonal skills (*Chayka & Zelenin, 2024; Garay-Rondero, et al., 2022; Quintero, et al., 2024*).

The study aims to identify the characteristics of self-realisation among Ukrainians in times of crisis and to establish effective psychological strategies for overcoming adversity and achieving success.

Materials and Methods

The work was performed using scientific methods of theoretical generalisation, classification, analysis, synthesis, and summarisation. The provided literature review is intended to consolidate data from literary sources concerning the specifics of self-realisation among Ukrainians in times of crisis and to identify effective psychological strategies for overcoming challenges and achieving success. Scientific publications were selected through scientometric databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus. The search was conducted using the following key terms: “professional self-realisation”, “success”, “coaching”, “psychology”, and “crisis.”

Results

Self-realisation is an integral part of the social dimension of sustainable development, as it enables individuals to strengthen their mental health and well-being through the achievement and enhancement of their potential, life goals, and success (*Milyutina, 2008; Stoliarchuk et al., 2024*). For the process of self-realisation to be effective, it is essential for a person to form and continuously develop both personal and professional skills. This is particularly important in light of numerous contemporary challenges and constraints. Circumstances such as economic crises, rapid technological advancement, pandemics, and wars require individuals to possess flexible thinking, the ability to adapt quickly to new conditions, motivation, high personal values, and a commitment to ongoing self-development (*Kandink-Lebid et al., 2024; Weierstall-Pust et al., 2022; Mirza & Mahboob, 2021*).

The war in Ukraine has triggered negative processes within the economic sphere, leading to an economic crisis, financial system instability, accelerated inflation, and the intensification of destructive processes in various sectors. As a result, people experience stress and depression, feelings of fear and anxiety, negative emotions, and uncertainty about the future (*Cosic et al., 2024; Lass-Hennemann et al., 2024; Quintero et al., 2024*).

In terms of professional self-realisation, self-improvement, the search for new opportunities to realise one's abilities and personal potential, plays a significant role. Additionally, personal anti-stress skills, the ability to control one's emotions, manage stress, adapt to crisis conditions, self-actualisation, self-fulfilment, self-efficacy, and resilience are of great importance (*Table 1*). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to cope with new situations, difficulties, and challenges, and is particularly important in responding to global crises. A negative correlation has been identified between levels of anxiety and self-efficacy (*Lass-Hennemann et al., 2024*).

Modern academic literature identifies a range of factors influencing a person's professional self-realisation. These can be conditionally divided into personality-dependent factors (such as values, goals, willpower, a desire for self-improvement, and cognitive flexibility) and personality-independent factors (such as social conditions, material status, and media influence). In times of crisis, professional fulfilment is driven by personality-dependent factors (*Kulichenko & Boichenko, 2021; Filonenko et al., 2022*).

Psychological resilience resources play a crucial role in influencing an individual's success and effectiveness in life. Resilience determines one's ability to adapt to crises. Internal resources support swift adaptation to changes, aid in overcoming stress and difficulties. Thanks to psychological resilience, individuals are capable of confronting crisis events (such as warfare, pandemics) while maintaining and even enhancing their personal resources. This leads to personal strengthening and positive reorganisation, thereby facilitating the process of adaptation. By harnessing resilience, a person can construct and reconstruct their life path, restore balance, transform themselves, and view challenges positively, using them as catalysts for growth (*Quintero et al., 2024; Kulichenko & Boichenko, 2021; Filonenko et al., 2022*).

It is now well established that motivation, as a combination of driving forces, plays a key role in the process of self-realisation. V. Bedan et al. (2021) assert that individuals with higher levels of self-realisation are primarily guided by intrinsic motivators, such as creativity and self-improvement, whereas those with lower levels of self-realisation tend to seek external rewards. This distinction underscores the importance of a balanced combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors for comprehensive professional growth and the realisation of personal potential.

Motivation may be both intrinsic and extrinsic, prompting individuals to carry out certain professional tasks. Intrinsic motivation is influenced by a stable commitment to a goal, which determines the prioritisation of a particular profession. This type of motivation activates behaviour in a specific direction and fosters the creation of favourable conditions within the social environment. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, represents a process that shapes the adjustment of self-management and self-regulation mechanisms. The characteristics of motivation suggest that it reflects the internal structure of an individual engaged in professional activity. This is facilitated by a person's desire and readiness to undertake actions aimed at satisfying specific professional needs.

As individuals develop their professional skills and competencies, they gradually come to recognise their own significance and value within the profession. They begin to treat themselves as individuals, identify and become aware of key motivations, and develop initiative and responsibility. A combination of internal qualities—such as needs, interests, and values—contributes to a person's motivation for professional self-realisation. Under the influence of a hierarchically structured set of motives, an individual's attitude towards professional activity gradually takes shape (*Zburavleva, et al., 2024*).

In their work, E. Monderna and N. Voinarovska identify personal motives for self-development, among which self-realisation, self-assertion, self-expression, and self-actualisation play a significant role. Equally important is the relationship between an individual's professional and personal activity, as well as the transformation of goals for professional development (*Monderna & Voinarovska, 2019*).

Psychological conditions are of great importance for professional self-realisation. Addressing professional challenges allows individuals to satisfy the need for self-realisation and self-actualisation, to fully utilise their personal potential, thereby enhancing the prospects for professional fulfilment (*Zhuravleva, et al., 2024*).

Among the most common strategies for overcoming the challenges of modernity and achieving self-realisation are coaching, cognitive behavioural therapy, emotional regulation, social support, adaptive coping mechanisms, personal growth, and others.

Effective strategies for coping and achieving success in professional self-realisation among the Ukrainian population amid contemporary crises include individual and group coaching. This approach is aimed at identifying and maximising the deep potential of the individual or group in the current social context. Coaching may take the form of individual or group sessions with a coach, or self-coaching—using coaching techniques to support oneself.

Utilising coaching is advisable for preventing psychological instability in active individuals. Through coaching, a person can address a range of issues related to the development of psychological resilience and the elimination of professional instability. Such tasks include as developing a strategy for professional growth; overcoming behavioural traits that cause passivity and demotivation; enhancing professional flexibility and mobility; acquiring skills for handling critical situations; focusing on positive outcomes; and learning to manage one's emotions and feelings (*Lee, et al., 2018*).

The research findings of M. Hryshchenko and V. Zelenin (*2025*) have identified self-realisation as a factor that affects quality of life and the level of satisfaction with one's professionalism. Self-realisation strategies help optimise and develop various individual abilities. They include personal involvement in professional development programmes, coaching, and more. It has been shown that coaching provides emotional support and helps individuals overcome difficulties, has a positive impact on motivation, enhances well-being, and improves overall work performance. In his study, V. Zelenin (*2023*) highlights the significant role of coaching models—especially in wartime conditions—in developing managerial and leadership qualities among managers of business organisations.

According to researchers A. Kulichenko and M. Boichenko (*2021*), coaching enables individuals to gain a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, as well as to recognise the impact of stress and distress on their behaviour and decision-making. Coaching provides emotional support and helps overcome difficulties, facilitating both professional and personal self-fulfilment. An awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses allows a person to assess their capabilities more accurately and choose the right direction in their career and life in general. Meanwhile, the ability to recognise and manage one's own emotions, as well as those of others, contributes to effective communication and the building of relationships within a team. The drive for self-fulfilment, achieving personal goals, and deriving satisfaction from work, along with motivation, enhances productivity and resilience in stressful situations. Active engagement in career development, the pursuit of new opportunities, fresh ideas, and initiatives are essential for both personal and professional growth. Therefore, seeking support in the form of coaching practice can aid in the development of these essential skills and offer valuable assistance in times of crisis, which, thanks to coaching, can become challenges and new opportunities for professional self-fulfilment.

Conclusion

In the context of the current challenges posed by military aggression and restrictions, an individual's capacity for self-development and self-realisation becomes crucial. It is the correct choice of direction for personal growth and the identification of available opportunities that serve as key factors for success and can enhance the effective use of accessible resources to develop professional skills and increase the level of self-realisation. During times of crisis, individual resources and adaptation strategies play a particularly important role, as they support learning and development under crisis conditions. These resources include personal anti-stress skills, the ability to control one's emotions, stress management and adaptation to crisis situations, self-efficacy, and resilience.

Professional self-realisation remains a vital process for a fulfilling life in Ukraine during wartime, yet it requires targeted psychological support to address individual challenges. Coaching may serve as an effective tool for developing personal and motivational characteristics, which in turn contribute to productive professional self-realisation. When a person becomes aware of their responsibility for shaping their own life, they are better able to adapt quickly to change and fulfil their potential in both personal and professional domains.

Prospects for further research in this area may focus on exploring the specific features of professional self-realisation among representatives of different professions, investigating gender aspects of professional self-realisation among Ukrainians during times of crisis, and identifying psychological strategies for achieving success.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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Appendix

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the terms: Professional self-fulfilment, professional self-realisation, and professional self-actualisation

Term	Definition	Purpose	Result
Professional self-fulfilment	This is the process of applying one's abilities and skills in professional activity, characterised by a high level of personal potential being realised within the chosen profession, along with the development of one's abilities and professionalism. It is associated with intrinsic motivation and a sense of fulfilment in carrying out professional tasks, and may involve a creative approach to work and the pursuit of personal ambitions.	Job satisfaction and achievement of professional goals	Integration of personal interests into one's professional activity. A sense of satisfaction, achievement, and growing confidence
Professional self-realisation	The process of harmonious personal development and acquisition of professional-practical skills, which combines personal growth with professional advancement. In this context, the social aspect is of great importance, meaning that self-realisation occurs within the framework of society and the professional environment.	Identification and development of a person's potential and abilities	Applying one's skills in professional practice. Attaining a high level of competence and career development
Professional self-actualisation	The process of achieving an individual's highest potential in the professional sphere. It is an activity aimed at attaining maximum efficiency in the professional field, realising one's potential, and the capacity for creativity and innovation	Full realisation of personal and professional potential	Combining knowledge, abilities, and talents to fully express one's identity. The opportunity to influence others and reach the heights in the professional field

Source: Created by the author