



THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOEMOTIONAL STRESS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE

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Abstract. The article analyzes the impact of psychoemotional stress on the performance of employees of internal affairs bodies. The physiological mechanisms of stress, its influence on cognitive processes, and its relationship with professional performance are examined. In addition, preventive measures aimed at reducing psychological strain and strengthening the psychological resilience of employees are discussed.

Keywords: psychoemotional stress, stress, service performance, internal affairs bodies, occupational burnout, cognitive functions, prevention.

Introduction. In modern society, internal affairs bodies are entrusted with important responsibilities, including ensuring public safety, preventing offenses, combating crime, and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens. The effective implementation of these duties depends not only on employees' professional competence but also on their physical and psychological well-being [1].

The professional activities of internal affairs officers are characterized by a high level of responsibility, risk, rapid decision-making, and constant psychological pressure. Under such conditions, the occurrence of psychoemotional stress is a natural phenomenon. However, prolonged exposure to stress may reduce the adaptive capabilities of the organism and negatively affect professional performance [2].

Today, the problem of stress and psychoemotional strain is regarded not only as a medical or psychological issue but also as an important social and occupational

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problem. According to the World Health Organization, chronic stress is one of the major factors contributing to reduced work capacity and decreased professional effectiveness [3].

International studies indicate that law enforcement officers experience stressful situations more frequently than representatives of many other professions. In particular, life-threatening situations, encounters with offenders, high responsibility, and the need to make decisions under uncertainty significantly increase psychological strain [1].

Psychoemotional stress is accompanied by changes in the functioning of the central nervous, endocrine, and cardiovascular systems. Although these changes initially serve as adaptive reactions, their long-term persistence may lead to various functional and organic disorders [4].

Therefore, studying the physiological foundations of psychoemotional stress among internal affairs officers, assessing its impact on professional performance, and developing preventive measures are of considerable scientific and practical importance.

Theoretical Foundations of Psychoemotional Stress

Psychoemotional stress is one of the adaptive reactions of the human organism to environmental influences and develops as a result of the interaction between emotional and physiological processes. In scientific literature, this concept is closely associated with stress. The founder of stress theory, Hans Selye, emphasized that any strong stimulus triggers a general adaptation syndrome in the organism. According to Selye's concept, the stress response proceeds through three stages: the alarm stage, the resistance stage, and the exhaustion stage. If stressors persist for a prolonged period, the functional capabilities of the organism decrease, leading to various physiological and psychological disorders [5].

The professional activities of law enforcement officers are characterized by





significant mental and physical workloads. Tasks such as crime prevention, maintenance of public order, response to emergencies, and protection of citizens' safety create constant psychoemotional pressure.

Stress factors in professional service can be divided into external and internal categories. External factors include dangerous working conditions, the possibility of confrontation with armed offenders, irregular working hours, night shifts, and high responsibility. Internal factors are associated with personal characteristics, emotional stability, stress resistance, and professional preparedness [5].

Research demonstrates that regular exposure to life-threatening situations leads to persistent activation of the sympathetic nervous system. This condition increases the workload on the cardiovascular system and gradually reduces the physiological reserves of the body [9].

In addition, law enforcement officers frequently encounter conflict situations while interacting with the public. Communication with aggressive individuals and witnessing traumatic events can significantly increase stress levels. Long-term exposure to such conditions contributes to emotional exhaustion and psychological fatigue [10].

Physiological Mechanisms of Psychoemotional Stress

The physiological basis of psychoemotional stress is associated with the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathoadrenal system. Under stress conditions, the hypothalamus releases corticotropin-releasing hormone, which stimulates the pituitary gland to secrete adrenocorticotrophic hormone. As a result, the adrenal glands produce increased amounts of cortisol.

During short-term stress, cortisol enhances adaptation by increasing blood glucose levels, mobilizing energy resources, and supporting vital physiological functions. However, prolonged elevation of cortisol levels may suppress immune function, increase blood pressure, and contribute to metabolic disorders.





Stress also leads to increased secretion of adrenaline and noradrenaline. These hormones accelerate heart rate, constrict blood vessels, and activate muscular activity, thereby initiating the “fight-or-flight” response. In law enforcement practice, this response is often essential for survival and effective action in critical situations [6].

Nevertheless, frequent activation of stress responses gradually depletes the body’s adaptive reserves. Consequently, functional disorders, cardiovascular diseases, sleep disturbances, and psychosomatic conditions may develop [7].

Influence of Psychoemotional Stress on Cognitive Functions

Psychoemotional stress significantly affects cognitive performance. Under stressful conditions, concentration decreases, memory performance deteriorates, and information processing becomes less effective.

Law enforcement officers are often required to perform multiple tasks simultaneously. In such situations, elevated stress levels can reduce efficiency and impair operational performance. Stress negatively affects short-term memory and complicates the acquisition of new information.

Professional effectiveness depends largely on cognitive abilities such as attention, logical reasoning, memory, and rapid decision-making. Research indicates that increased stress alters the functioning of specific brain regions, particularly the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for executive control and decision-making. Reduced activity in this area limits objective assessment of situations and increases the likelihood of errors [9].

Scientific studies suggest that high levels of stress may reduce decision-making effectiveness by as much as 20–30 percent. Such reductions are particularly critical during investigative operations, public safety activities, and emergency response situations.

Psychoemotional Stress and Professional Performance

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Professional performance among internal affairs officers depends on their knowledge, practical skills, and psychological stability. Moderate stress may temporarily enhance alertness and mobilization; however, excessive stress negatively affects the quality of professional activities [8].

Chronic stress contributes to decreased concentration, slower decision-making, and a higher frequency of professional errors. It also affects organizational discipline and interpersonal relationships within work teams.

Employees working under constant psychological pressure often experience reduced job satisfaction, interpersonal conflicts, and decreased productivity. These factors can negatively influence the overall effectiveness of law enforcement agencies.

Moreover, stress may impair emotional control. In some cases, this results in communication difficulties, conflicts with citizens, and mistakes during the execution of official duties.

Occupational Burnout Syndrome

One of the most significant long-term consequences of psychoemotional stress is occupational burnout syndrome. This phenomenon was first described by American psychologist Herbert Freudenberger and is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional accomplishment [10].

Burnout syndrome is relatively common among law enforcement officers due to their continuous exposure to stressful situations. The initial stage is characterized by emotional exhaustion, followed by reduced interest in work, indifference, and the development of negative attitudes toward professional duties.

Studies indicate that employees suffering from burnout are more likely to experience cardiovascular diseases, sleep disorders, depression, and anxiety. Consequently, burnout adversely affects both professional performance and overall quality of life.





Prevention of Psychoemotional Stress

Effective prevention of psychoemotional stress requires a comprehensive approach. First, proper organization of work and rest schedules is essential. Adequate recovery periods help restore the functional capabilities of the organism [2].

Physical activity is one of the most effective methods for reducing stress hormones. Regular exercise improves cardiovascular function, stabilizes emotional states, and enhances resilience to stress [1].

Psychological training programs and psychoprophylactic measures also demonstrate high effectiveness. Developing stress-management skills, teaching relaxation techniques, and providing psychological counseling contribute to greater emotional stability among employees.

Creating a healthy psychological climate within organizations is equally important. Fair treatment by supervisors, supportive management practices, and positive motivation can significantly reduce stress levels and improve employee well-being [10].

Conclusion

Psychoemotional stress is an integral component of the professional activities of internal affairs officers. While moderate stress may enhance adaptive capabilities and readiness for action, chronic stress negatively affects both health and professional performance.

Stress impairs cognitive functions, decision-making abilities, and emotional stability, thereby increasing the risk of professional errors. Long-term psychoemotional strain may contribute to occupational burnout syndrome, cardiovascular diseases, and mental health disorders.

Therefore, the implementation of comprehensive stress-prevention programs, the promotion of physical and psychological well-being, and the continuous





development of psychological support services should be considered essential components of improving professional effectiveness within law enforcement agencies.

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