

Ways of Ensuring, Forming and Adjusting the Psychological Security of the Personality (Corrective Aspect of Sports Activities)

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Received: 08- March -2023

Revised: 15- April -2023

Accepted: 16-May-2023

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Abstract

Introduction: The present academic paper focuses on the study of the mechanisms involved in the formation of an individual's psychological security. Given the prevalent conditions of political and socio-economic instability in modern societies worldwide, understanding psychological security is of significant practical importance. This article examines the process of acquiring psychological security, which originates from the general perspective of ensuring human development and the need for self-preservation. Furthermore, the paper explores the role of sports activities in promoting the corrective aspect of psychological security. It highlights the positive impact of physical exercise on reducing stress, anxiety levels, and improving overall mental well-being. The research findings indicate that engaging in sports activities can help individuals cope with the adverse effects of political and socio-economic instability on their psychological health.

Objectives: The main objective of this study is to identify the essential components of an individual's psychological security, with a specific focus on the perspectives of residents in occupied territories or regions affected by active hostilities. By gathering survey data, this study aims to determine the importance of psychological security in the formation of personally oriented mechanisms within these population groups.

Methods: The research methodology employed in this study is based on an integrated approach. To achieve the objectives, a survey was conducted among residents of occupied territories and regions with a history of active hostilities. The survey questionnaire included inquiries about various aspects related to psychological security, such as life prospects and the ability to manage emotional tension. The survey data provided valuable insights into the important components of psychological security from the viewpoint of the individuals under study.

Results: The survey results revealed significant findings regarding the formation of an individual's psychological security. The data indicated that the prediction of life prospects and the development of skills for managing emotional tension emerged as priority areas for adjusting the psychological well-being of individuals residing in occupied territories or regions affected by hostilities. These results shed light on the specific needs and concerns of the population group under investigation.

Conclusions: In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of understanding and promoting psychological security in individuals affected by political and socio-economic instability. The research findings highlight the significance of psychological security in the overall well-being and recovery process of individuals residing in occupied territories or regions with a history of hostilities. The study underscores the role of sports activities as a means to address and alleviate the negative impact of instability on psychological health. By identifying priority areas for psychological adjustment, such as the prediction of life prospects and the acquisition of skills to manage emotional tension, this research contributes to the development of effective strategies for deep recovery and improved psychological security.

Keywords: psychological security; Subjective content of psychological security; Objective content of psychological security; Correction, Mental health, Psychological protection; Sports activities.

1. Introduction

The research problem presented in the academic paper is relevant forasmuch as it is related to the issues of defining and improving the psychological security of the personality. Psychological security of the personality is a mandatory condition for implementing personal potential, the development of the individual in the life cycle, and the prevention of psychosomatic disorders. A person who “builds his own life in the context of unity with society, nature, the universe, implements his abilities, ideals and aspirations through a system of meaningful regulation of life, is ready to ensure his own security and health by transforming dangers into a factor of his own development” is considered psychologically protected (Hajek and König, 2018). During the ongoing hostilities in Europe, the relevance of the issue of psychological security is particularly acute, forasmuch as the danger of the influence of unforeseen consequences has increased many times, as well as the result of the impact of one-sided, sometimes humanistic manifestations of scientific and technical progress, informational and technological outbreak, numerous man-made, political and natural cataclysms. Such a load is heavy and increasingly difficult for a person.

The need to ensure psychological security arose in human civilization a long time ago. Since ancient times, it was necessary to protect oneself from dangers and threats, but until the time of the technological revolution, physical health, well-being, and inner quietness were theoretically under great threat. In the modern world, the number of dangers and threats has increased significantly and continues to grow. This negatively affects a person’s mental health and psychological security (Mauramo et. al., 2019).

Moreover, in the modern world, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a significant threat to people's psychological security. The prolonged isolation, uncertainty, fear, and loss have caused an increase in mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Therefore, it is essential to find effective ways to improve people's psychological well-being and increase their psychological security. One of the effective ways to achieve this goal is through sports activities. Research has shown that regular participation in sports activities can have a positive impact on mental health and increase psychological security. For example, it can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression and improve self-esteem, confidence, and resilience. Therefore, promoting and supporting sports activities can be a valuable corrective aspect of ensuring psychological security and improving mental health.

2. Literature Review

Separate issues for consideration are problems in the professional field, that is, the effects of stress and psychological tension on the part of professional activity.

Currently, the issues of a person’s psychological security and the ways to ensure it are very popular in the humanitarian sphere, however, at the same time, they are extremely difficult. At first glance, an understandable topic for everyone is complex and concerns a number of fundamental aspects of human existence, and it can also be studied from scientific, theoretical, practical standpoints.

This is precisely why there is no common interpretation of the term “psychological security” nowadays. Academic dictionaries of English, French and German interpret the “personal security” concept; it is associated with feelings, experiences, and the state of a person within the current situation and according to the future development of events. The psychological security of the personality from such a position is represented in the space of the “environmental approach” concept, leading to the crowding theory (stress arising from the subjective perception of the surrounding world, discomfort and stress from the environment where a person is). Nagasu, Kogi, & Yamamoto (2019) investigated this phenomenon.

Psychological security has been the focus of a number of studies, in which several methods and ways of ensuring psychological security have been developed from different standpoints. The consideration of the “security” term in a number of scientific works has shown that it does not fully refer to the definition of “absence of threats” in public consciousness, but to a greater extent to the emotions, moods, and experiences of the personality (Shynkar, 2021). From such positions, the definition of security is associated with serenity, the absence of fear, calmness, stability and trust. Concepts have been also created focusing on the spectrum of feelings of the personality, his emotional experience of the present and his transformation from the future perspective. In this aspect, psychological security is defined as a state of social consciousness, where each personality and the society as a whole perceive the current reality as a reliable state corresponding to life. People

believe that the current situation sufficiently implements and provides existing natural and social needs; there is confidence in the future and possibilities for planning (Duchaine et al., 2017). The human psychological security is an important condition for the development of functional abilities, as well as the self-fulfilment of the personality; in addition, it is worth paying attention to preventive measures for psychosomatic disorders. A person who has mastered psychological security is a personality who is able to shape his own life in the context of unity with society, nature, the universe. Such a person implements his own capabilities, ideals and aspirations through the created system of meaningful regulation of life, and he is ready to ensure safety and strengthening of his own health, turning danger into a factor of his own development” (Afolabi and Balogun, 2017). In Slyusarevsky’s study (2020), the concept of psychological security is closely related to the functions of self-regulation of a person’s volitional activity. It occurs not only on the basis of cause-and-effect relationship, but has a complex synthetic configuration. Self-regulation is defined as a kind of internal state, character traits or abilities that are genetically inherited and self-reveal through self-reflection.

Andrushko (2017), in the course of investigating the human psychology, the concept of learning, has revealed that the human body acts as a whole system. The state of psychological security is an independent goal, and the final result of an individual’s activity to achieve the goal.

Thus, a number of concepts regarding psychological security can be grouped into 5 main directions, namely:

1. Theories based on the statement about the overload phenomenon. That is, the excess of information, the need to quickly make many decisions lead to the creation of the effect of danger. Stress and the attitude towards it depend on the level of adaptation: the less adaptation, the more intense the stress.
2. Lack of freedom or minimal opportunities for freedom of decision-making also deprive psychological security. Experiences of lack of freedom can be determined by cultural norms, psychological detachment, physical distances that are acceptable in the society.
3. The concept of the ecological approach proposed by Barker is defined by the idea of overpopulation and underpopulation. The situation when there are fewer or more social roles than their executors creates tension in the society. That is why other people begin to be perceived negatively and the sense of security is lost.
4. The concept of locus of control (individual strategy). According to studies in this direction, stress is caused by a loss of control over the surrounding world. The feeling that a person neither manages the situation nor changes it provokes stress. The point of control determines the attitude to the situation that causes stress (Cjuman and Nagula, 2021). Psychology also keeps the issue of psychological protection in the centre of attention. Psychological security of a person is perceived as “a certain protection of consciousness from influences that, contrary to his will and desire, can change mental states, psychological features and behaviour that can dramatically affect a person until he changes his life path” (Pustovojt, 2018).

The researcher separates a person’s psychological security from the manipulation of his consciousness, where the concept of “manipulation” means the psychological influence carried out on the consciousness of a person against his will.

Wang et al. (2019) in their own study presented the author’s concept of psychological security through determining the level of subjectivity (cognitive, perceptual and emotional processes), as well as objective factors (the level of development of the environment). In the scientific work of Pustovojt (2018) personal security is defined as “the formation of a set of legal and moral norms, social institutions and organizations that allow him to develop and implement socially significant skills and needs without feeling the opposition of the state and the society”.

Slyusarevskyy (2020) examines the structural components of psychological security from two standpoints: psychological security of the personality and psychological security of the environment. The social aspect is represented in relation to psychological security as a state of the environment that ensures free interaction of people in the absence of coercion and violence, contributes to the satisfaction of basic communication needs, provides psychological protection and has a reference value of the environment. On the other hand, the psychological security of the personality is based on the fact that the individual has resistance to destructive internal and external influences, including traumatic influences (Slyusarevskyy, 2020). Abbas et al. (2019) have represented a proposal for the classification of psychological security. The scholars classify environmental

hazards according to the purpose, course and result of influences, perception, level of consciousness and reflection, the ability of an individual to resist threats.

Psychological safety is also connected with a person's professional activity. The study of Cjuman and Nagula (2021) is devoted to industrial psychology, problems of professional activity. Ensuring psychological safety is related to the prevention of accidents at work. It is proposed to consider psychological security as "not as a branch of industrial psychology, but as a separate branch of psychological science that studies the psychological aspect of security at various jobs". The authors note that the issue of psychological security should be an essential part of engineering, sports, military and other sections of psychology: "there is a general psychological problem – the study of the process of formation of human life in conditions of psychological danger and the search for ways to ensure it, in the centre of which there is a person – the subject of activity, and not the means of production" Cjuman and Nagula (2021).

De la Fuente et. al. (2020) have conducted the investigation and introduced psychological security as a separate section of psychology: "Psychology of safety is a field of psychological science that studies the psychological causes of accidents occurring during work and other activities and suggests ways in which psychology can be used to improve safety".

Therefore, two research directions with two types of terms and their meanings were created in psychology, namely:

Psychological security is represented as environmental safety.

Psychological safety from the standpoint of an individual's psychological state or level of being, which involves the ability to resist threats and dangers.

Psychological security of a person can be interpreted as the protection of the psyche from external and internal threats and destructive influences. Danger and various types of threats can be both external and internal. All the above-mentioned authors emphasize this circumstance. This means that destructive influences, threats can appear in a person from within, from the depths of his psyche, deformations in life (induced or self-induced fears, prejudices, unfounded social fears, gross distortions of reality, protective factors, etc.).

Psychological security refers to various types of human activity that are associated with danger in different ways. This direction is the subject of studies, which determines the mental processes triggered by human activity and affecting his safety; characteristics of a person that affect his security; mental states of the personality influencing the safety of his activity. According to the viewpoint of Berg N., Kiviruusu O. & Lintonen T, psychological security in professional activity is a set of obstacles arising in the process of meeting needs in the activity; the uniqueness of such obstacles is based on numerous factors of the external and internal environment in which a person operates (Berg et. al., 2018).

The research issues of the psychological security are of particular importance in terms of determining the optimal loader for an employee, especially if a person's profession is associated with dangers, stress, extreme conditions. The main goal in this aspect is the identification of personnel potential and ergonomic optimization of the individual. According to the studies of Slyusarevskyy (2020) there are two types of psychological security: psychological security as environmental; psychological security as an individual psychological trait of a person that determines the ability to protect oneself from dangers and threats.

The adjustment of a person's psychological security consists of several successive stages. At the first stage, information is clarified about the level of danger in the surrounding world, which arises during the formation of a subjective worldview. The phenomena of the surrounding reality are reconstructed in accordance with values, and they are coded in the human mind according to the criteria of "safety" and "danger". A person experiences a basic sense of danger and safety of his own existence in the environment, and then the basis of further activities is determined. A sense of security creates a desire to interact with others, happiness, inspiration – these are positive emotions; danger implies the emergence of a desire to self-isolate, alienation, focus on negative emotions (fear, anger, danger) (Slyusarevskyy, 2020). Notten et. al. (2016) note that the psychological security of the personality is based on the interaction of the entire complex of mental and perceptual processes, which have a number of individual features, determine the coordination of natural abilities in the context of environmental needs. Therefore, the formation of the fundamentals of the personality's psychological security is

a complex of interrelated processes of perception and assessment of the surrounding environment, as well as the detection of dangers from the standpoint of personal control.

The purpose of the research is to establish the features and components of the concept of “psychological security”; the analysis has been carried out on the basis of surveys of residents of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

3. Methods

Determination of processes of correction and adjustment of psychological security of the personality was carried out. Surveys were conducted among the residents of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, which were under the occupation of Russian troops. Survey materials were collected by psychotherapists of state medical institutions in the period from March 1 to March 29, 2021 and during March 2022. The interval between surveys was 1 year and 30 days. Those 30 days were exactly the duration of the war. The survey involved 212 patients aged 35-45 years, in particular, 106 females and 106 males.

The questionnaire contains questions regarding the standpoints as follows: assessment of the general level of psychological security; assessment of the level of individual components of psychological well-being; determination of the most effective ways of correcting the feeling of psychological danger from the point of view of the interviewees. The respondents were asked to determine the importance of certain positions of the survey as a percentage on a scale (from 0% to 100%). Then the average score for each group of respondents was calculated.

4. Results

The respondents were asked to present their own vision of their level of psychological security, in particular, the ability to be stable in an environment with a number of certain parameters, including psycho-traumatic events. The results of the assessment of the respondents’ psychological security levels have revealed as follows:

- a state of complete psychological security (successful resistance of the individual to internal and external influences);
- a lack of psychological security (tendency to disrupt life activities due to activity and behaviour);

a state of “hidden” psychological insecurity (the possibility of transition from the first to the second state due to external and internal threats and influences). Figure 1. The results of a survey conducted by psychotherapists showed that the number of respondents in a state of “complete psychological security” decreased from 17% to 2%; the respondents, who had a state of hidden psychological danger in 2021, amounted to 69%, and in 2022 - to 25%, the decrease was 49%; the state of “lack of psychological security” increased from 14% to 73%.

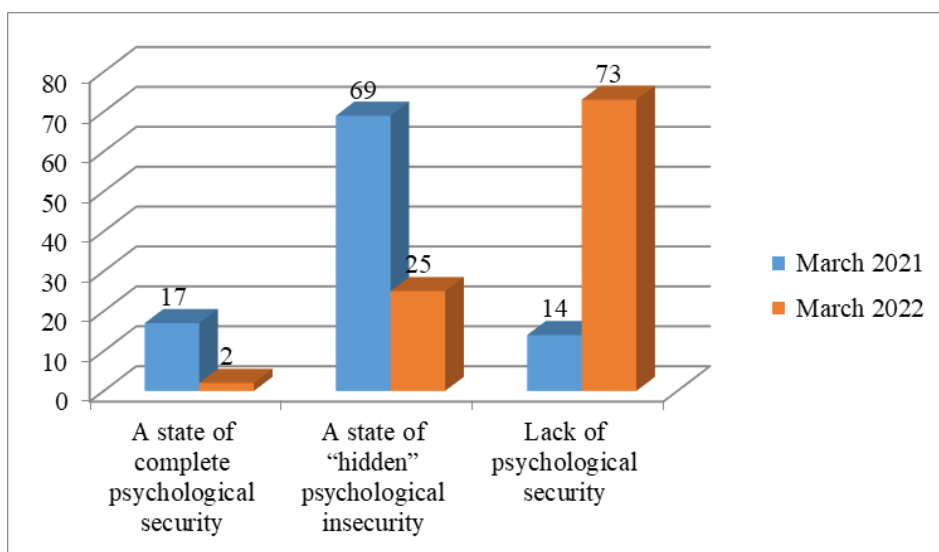


Figure 1. Assessment of the general state of the respondents’ psychological security

The survey on the components of the respondents' psychological security gave a series of results represented in Figure 2.

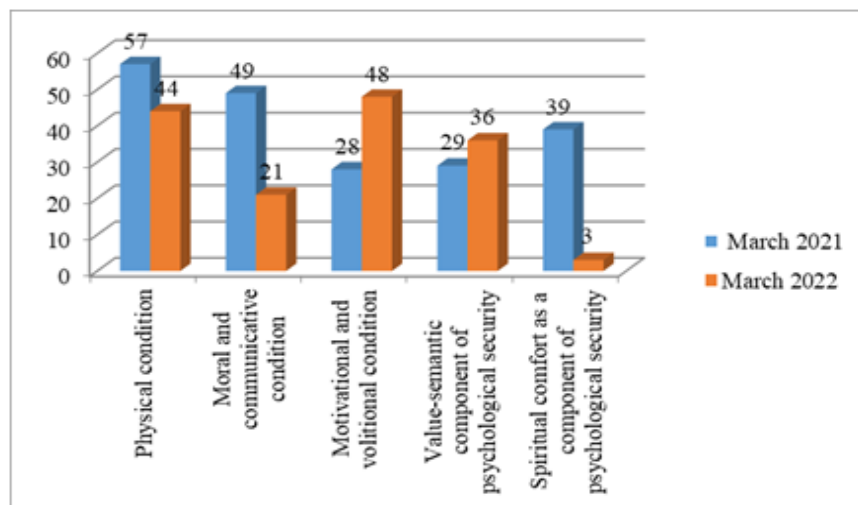


Figure 2. The respondents' assessment of the components of psychological security

Calculations are presented as percentages (%) on a 100% scale. According to the results, with the start of the full-scale war, which has been going on since February 24, 2022, the physical health of the respondents has deteriorated; the level of internal comfort has significantly decreased (by a total of 36%), the level of moral stability has fallen by a total of 28%. However, such a decrease occurs against the background of an increase in the motivational and value component of psychological security.

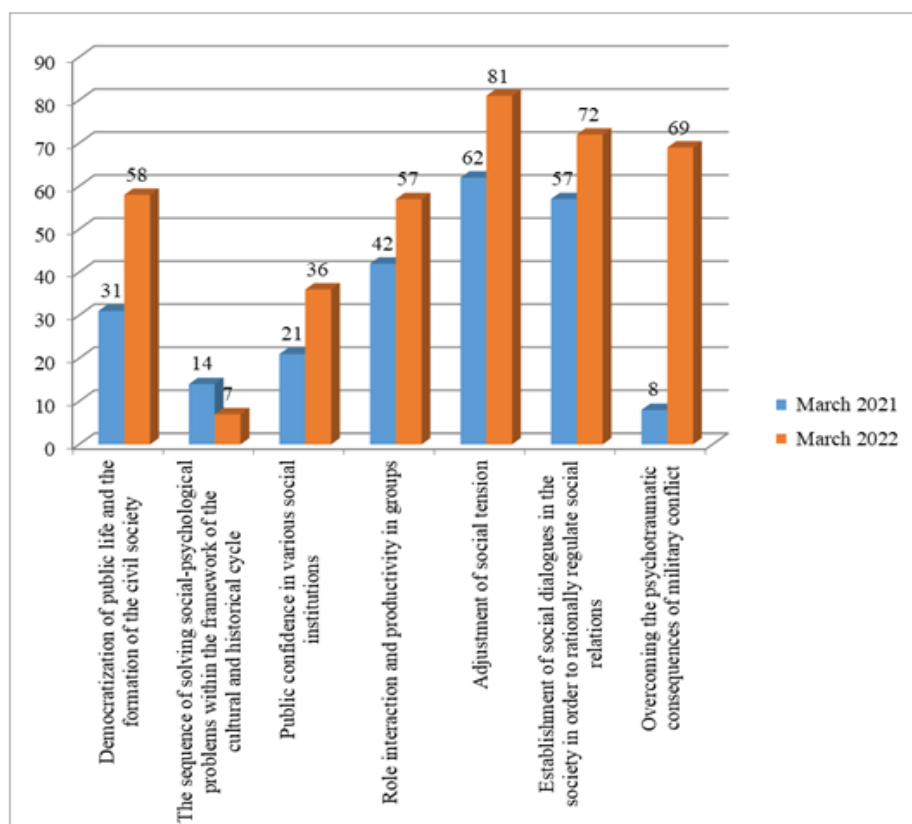


Figure 3. Effectiveness of ensuring, forming and correcting psychological security of a person in war conditions

The results of the study show that in order to maintain psychological security, particular importance should be paid to a number of aspects, namely: the presence of the civil society, the movement towards democratization in the country; productivity and role interaction of the activities of social groups; public trust in social institutions in the state; consistent solution of social and psychological problems; the ability to overcome the psycho-traumatic consequences of war; the establishment of social dialogues in the society in order to rationally regulate social relations (Figure 3). The results are represented according to the 100 percent scale.

The research group offered the survey participants to take an online course of classes as a prevention of increasing the feeling of psychological danger and with the aim of teaching to maintain a high level of psychological security.

Upon completion of such courses, data was collected and the relevance and effectiveness of the target areas of the course were analysed (Figure 4). Calculations are presented as percentages (%) on a 100% scale.

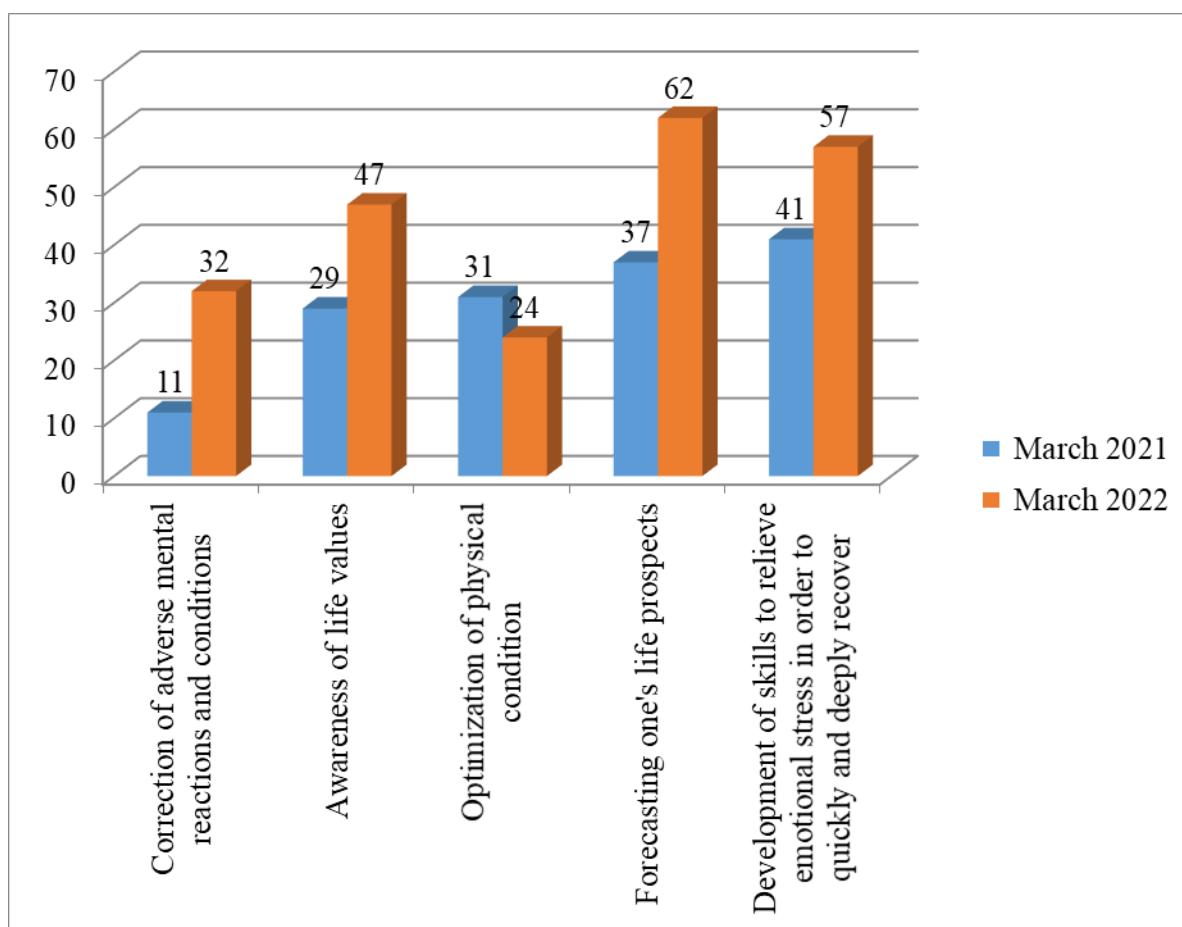


Figure 4. Target areas of ensuring and correcting the psychological security of the personality

According to the results of the survey, the respondents consider the following measures to be the most important steps towards correcting the level of psychological security, namely: the ability to relieve emotional tension, make predictions for the future with the possibility of a quick and reliable recovery. The corrective aspect of sports activities lies in their ability to promote physical and mental health, reduce stress and anxiety, foster social connections, and provide opportunities for personal growth and development. Incorporating regular sports activities into one's routine can be a valuable tool for achieving and maintaining psychological security.

5. Discussion

Researchers of methods of psychological influence on people presented their own vision of the problem of defining the concept of psychological security: "the state of the information environment and living conditions

of a particular person, group, society as a whole, which does not contribute to the integrity, adaptability and development of social actors (individual, group, society as a whole)” (Viertiö et. al., 2021).

In the study of scholars, the social aspects of human security are considered; they are represented as a dynamic balance found between external conditions and the internal potential of the personality, which is possible due to the correlations of the components responsible for satisfaction and safety (state without injuries, deformations, stresses) (Geisler et. al., 2019). Tolerance and democratic social relations are also significant, which allow implementing the mental abilities and spiritual potential of a person in life, where the main goal is to preserve the integrity of this personality (Geisler et. al., 2019). In Andrushko’s studies (2017), an analysis of the protective mechanisms of the personality has been carried out regarding the possibility of achieving psychological security, which is based on the skills and ability of subjects to overcome life obstacles and stressful situations. The scientist suggests determining psychological security from the standpoint of personal growth and development. It is also worth paying attention to the conditions under which a person has to “process” challenges and problems into tasks, then into opportunities in self-education, and then into development.

Perception of life’s difficulties, obstacles and threats as opportunities changes the emphasis of perceiving the world; that is, it shifts the emphasis from the personal destructive impact of the problem to the search for its solution. Pustovojt (2018) described the mechanics of the psychological personality process and its potential from the standpoint of changing the structure of alternatives in the problem of choice and its analysis.

In the scientific works devoted to the issue of psychological security, two directions can be distinguished: subjective interpretation and objective approach. Objectivity in studying psychological security aims to perceive the personality as an object of psychological security in certain life conditions. The subjective approach involves the interpretation of the personality as an active subject that ensures psychological security. All this involves the study of psychological aspects of ensuring the safe behaviour of an individual in various life situations.

Hiesinger and Tophoven (2019) distinguish the factors of psychological security of the personality, based on a number of preliminary investigations, namely: objective-subjective factors (psychological security of a person as a social personality); factors of the objective level (ensuring psychological security at the individual level due to the cultural and historical development of the society); the personal ability to adapt and accept socially significant norms of behaviour, morality; the ability to tolerate accepting and appreciating others, performing a social role and being appreciated by other members of the group, society; the subjective level (ensuring and correcting the psychological security of the personality through moral and meaningful attitudes).

In particular, it is worth emphasizing the self-sufficiency of the subject, which arises in an extreme situation and is based on the achievement of mental control over endogenous and exogenous parameters, as well as searching for and maintaining a dynamic balance with the surrounding world at the information, energy and somatic levels, achieving the set goals.

Hiilamo et. al. (2019) have investigated ways of adjusting psychological security in the process of a complex interaction of perceptual and mental processes, thanks to which awareness and mastery of the world occurs through one’s own experience according to the criterion of safety / danger for a person. Ensuring psychological safety depends on the process of human categorization of the environment, creation of an individual picture of the world with the help of markers of security and danger. Acceptance and awareness of the opposition security - threat in life helps to level up the adaptability of a person, increasing opportunities for development and self-fulfilment.

The productivity of strategies for building personal security may depend on the autonomy and maturity of the individual, the ability to structure one’s own behavioural scenarios in accordance with the system of moral values and goals. The social-psychological self-education, improvements aimed at increasing personal subjectivity, life satisfaction, self-regulation and self-perception are effective tools of improving psychological security. An important component of psychological security is the ability to tolerate in the society, to be ready for the challenges of mastering the unknown and to scale personal heights.

6. Conclusion

Based on the above-mentioned, it can be concluded that the psychological security of the personality in the general sense of this concept includes the components as follows:

a high level of theoretical and practical training of a person, thanks to which the harmonious development of the personality and the implementation of the set life goal are possible, regardless of awareness; provision, correction and use of environmental resources to achieve one's own goal; the ability to satisfy one's own needs and create conditions for harmonious development; the ability to protect oneself from threats and harmful influences.

In this context, sports activities can be considered as one of the effective tools for the correction and maintenance of the psychological security of the personality. Sport provides an opportunity to increase self-esteem and develop a sense of self-control and self-confidence. It also contributes to the development of social skills and positive social interactions, which are important components of psychological security. Regular physical activity reduces stress levels, anxiety and depression, which are common symptoms associated with the negative impact of armed conflicts on mental health. Therefore, the corrective aspect of sports activities can be an effective way to improve the psychological security of individuals affected by war and conflict.

The research project has revealed that the full-scale war in Ukraine, caused by Russian troops, had a negative impact on the general level of psychological security of citizens, in particular, on its formation, maintenance and correction. A person's moral state and emotional comfort were especially negatively affected.

It should be noted that one research project is not enough to show the tendency towards the development of this problem. Directions for future studies should focus on developing comprehensive integration approaches to adjustment and ensuring the psychological security of the personality.

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