PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MENTAL STABILITY SELF-ADJUSTMENT OF STATE BORDER GUARD UNITS’ LEADERS

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Abstract: The article analyzes the process of mental stability self-adjustment of state border guard units’ leaders in management environment taking into consideration the psychological component. The question is aimed at ensuring a border unit leader’s personality forming.

Keywords: leader, professional activity, self-adjustment, mental stability.

Introduction
Currently, among the topical issues in the activity of state border guard units’ leaders there is a trend for maintaining their psychological potential through individual capabilities of personality. It should not be overlooked that the main task for a leader is a process of constant management of border units’ personnel under the conditions of their professional functioning. Leaders in their work are based on certain principles focused on ensuring of two key issues: increase of personnel’s professional activeness and professional readiness of subordinates for conducting service activities through leaders’ potential (motives, goals and effectiveness). Moreover, under the current border service conditions, an important point in the activity of leaders is the comparison of situational problems (operational and service activities) and executors’ potential (border patrol, border shift).

Method
The results of studies of professional activity of border guard units’ leaders testify about the need to increase the level of psychological training aimed at carrying out the tasks of public security problems at the state border. Analysis of managers’ self-evaluation (225 interviewed respondents) concerning readiness for implementation in their service of selected managerial functions (planning, organization, motivation, control, social and psychological function) showed that 60 % of the leaders are able to implement them in real life. At the same time, almost 90 % of respondents indicated that they experience some intellectual, emotional, volitional, individual and professional psychological difficulties. This confirms the fact that in the course of leaders’ training there is a need for development of mental stability self-adjustment.

The problem of mental stability was reflected in the scientific works of V.I. Barko, V.A. Lefterov, O.A. Mateiuk, S.B. Oleksienko, E.M. Potapchuk, O.D. Safin, O.V. Timchenko et al.). However, despite the obvious importance and topical comprehensive study of regularities, mechanisms and factors of efficient professional activity of border guard units’ leaders, there still remains a controversial problem related to the discussion of the model, algorithms and technology of mental stability self-adjustment of senior management personnel. Therefore, due to insufficient development of scientific approaches in leaders’ training, in the process of the work they experience mental stress, burnout, emotional instability, proneness to conflict, low performance level, problems of mental and physical health, reduction of professional longevity and other negative factors.

Contents of state border guard units’ leaders’ activity indicates the need to consider management as professional activity, functions of which are assigned to specially trained managerial professionals able to use scientific research results in the field of psychology (Safin, 2004).

From this perspective not only knowledge, professional experience and skills play important role in leader’s activity. Individual psychological qualities and ability of mental state self-adjustment are also essential.
Aim of the article – to methodize and deepen scientific outlooks on the issue of mental stability self-adjustment of state border guard units’ leaders from the perspective of psychology of the activity in specific conditions.

Results

Since there is no doubt in the topicality and significance of border services management, it is quite obvious that the study of psychological and pedagogical components of the common system of leader’s capacity (competence) training, namely, its theoretical level of training (obtaining of necessary skills), and practical training level (formation of skills and abilities) can be effectively provided and implemented on the basis of leader’s mental stability self-adjustment. By its contents, self-adjustment is regarded as a process of leader’s control of own mental and physiological conditions, as well as actions and behavior in professional relationships. In turn, psychical self-adjustment is independent purposeful and conscious changing by the subject of own mentality regulation mechanisms through the use of unconscious level resources (Samokhvalov, 2007, pp. 267-270).

However, the problems associated with the analysis of the peculiarities of border units’ personnel management, substantiation of leaders’ personality qualities required for that, as well as the specifics of their mental stability self-adjustment structure remain largely unresolved. It is therefore necessary to define the contents and structure of mental stability self-adjustment of a leader in the conditions of professional activity.

It is appropriate to analyze this side of the investigated problem on the basis of the following assumptions. First of all, we should clarify basic features of our main object, which requires further development of a certain algorithm and technology. Thus, we consider it important to identify the places of mental stability components in the system of overall leader’s professional competence. Systematic self-action on “professional self” and “personal self” as on the object of self-adjustment, which has mental stability in its original base, is regarded as a field for research, where a leader expands both the algorithm and technology. Therefore, having analyzed the key interdependence components of leader’s professionalism and competence, we shall reflect the most typical ways of their development.

First, it should be noted that the emotional, volitional, intellectual, personal and professional qualities of a leader, being the original basis of his mental stability, after all, determine the managerial (administrative) readiness level, i.e. professional competence. It can be reasonably argued that mental stability is largely characterized by the readiness and ability of a leader to perform administrative functions and is present here as a potential component. In general, the competence of a leader includes readiness, ability and management activity professionalism (Barko, 2003; Lefterov, 2009; Makarovych, 2001).

Therefore, increasing of the level of leader’s mental stability self-adjustment is only possible in the context of leader’s professionalization and in management environment per se.

Considering professional leader’s qualities we believe that the model of leader’s personality can be created on the basis of systematic approach that allows to select lower and higher mental functions, behavioral and gnostic components of intelligence, various aspects of personality development, trends and potentials, to consider mentality as “individual-environment” subsystem.

Results of the researches (Mateiuk, 2006; Potapchuk, 2004; Safin, 2004; Timchenko, 2004; Von Rozenshtal et al., 2013) indicate that self-adjustment of leader’s mental stability should be considered, primarily, as an algorithm including:

- preservation of productive mental functioning in the conditions of a short- or long-term border guard service stretching situation;
- negotiation of difficulties mechanism during execution of tasks in operational and service conditions;
- the ability to concentrate and distribute attention, to navigate, to use the knowledge, skills, abilities, to withstand high internal and external stress;
- formation of leader’s personality characteristics, which is provided by the control (self-control) of mental processes, states and personality traits.

Each component of this algorithm, being in relationship with others, provides systematic achievement of the common goal - correspondence of leaders’ mental stability to applicable requirements of their professional activity. This algorithm also enables the most effective engagement of leaders’ mental stability self-adjustment technology and, as a result, makes it possible not only to improve the latter, but also accelerates or intensifies the development of their professional competence, thus contributing to finding better solutions for situational problems.
When determining the possibilities of creating the algorithm and implementation technology of leaders’ mental stability self-adjustment we also take into account the possibility of increasing their psychological reliability and professional competence in solving professional tasks in general and during applying of the complete set of functional elements of management. The latter include: cognitive, prognostic, constructive, regulatory, developmental and communicative ones. The cognitive element provides a leader of state border guard unit with the knowledge necessary for effective mental stability self-adjustment for the benefits of successful professional activity; the prognostic one allows a leader to plan all the aspects of such self-adjustment, predicting and anticipating the results; constructive element allows for consistency and effectiveness of self-adjustment on the basis of the transformation of the results obtained by the cognitive and prognostic components; the regulatory and developmental elements take direct actions or acts aimed at direct development of military leader’s mental stability self-adjustment; communicative component provides informational support of functional process of leader’s mental stability self-adjustment.

When forming self-adjustment of mental stability (in the system of professional training) based on analysis of these sources (Barko, 2003; Mateiuk, 2006; Makarovych, 2001; Samokhvalov, 2007; Safin, 2004; Timchenko, 2004) the following should be implemented:

- training of leaders as qualified users of psychological knowledge;
- development of the skills of assessment and accounting of psychological features of personality; learning psychotechnics of business communication; awareness and practical use of psychological patterns of human management;
- training sessions that involve the formation of diagnostic skills of their psychological and physical condition. At the same time, their sphere of self-awareness is expanding, active enhancement and streamlining of mental stability for professional actions and personal growth are observed;
- development of volitional qualities (endurance and stamina), self-adjustment skills, which involves construction of appropriate trainings with the use of psychological and pedagogical technologies.
- adjustment of professional interaction skills, which involves the formation of structural interaction attitudes, acquisition and improvement of those communication skills, which meet the highest professional standards;
- active involvement of professionals, leading and successful experts to implementation of the program of training, retraining and professional development. By this, the effect of professional interaction optimization is achieved;
- counseling involves assistance in the use of the relevant psychological knowledge, psychotechnologies or prepared recommendations and instructions;
- facilitation in establishment of personal contacts between leaders, managers and subordinates on both formal and informal relationship levels.

Conclusion

Summing up, it is necessary to recap the main points:

1. Mental stability plays important part in all the aspects of social life of state border guard units’ leaders. When developing theoretical and methodological foundations of leaders’ mental stability studying, essential issue is systematization of scientific views and substantiation of several fundamental concepts. Thus, to describe this phenomenon, researchers use different synonymous terms: "stress stability", "stress tolerance", "tolerance to stress", "reliability", "operational reliability", "operational stability", "interference resistance", "psychological readiness", "emotional stability", "mental stability", "psychological stability". The lack of meaningfulness of these terms indicates the absence of unified, methodologically substantiated concept of psychological stability of a person in professional activity. Instead, there is a generally accepted ability of activity subjects to successfully withstand the conditions that negatively affect their performance, which is confirmed by its sufficient stability and development of subject-activity, personal, distinctive and individual characteristics.

2. Despite the considerable interest of scientists in the problem of mental stability, theoretical elaboration of this concept is insufficient today. There are sporadic attempts to clarify the concept of "mental stability". In most cases, the study of this phenomenon does not go beyond the ability or inability of an individual to resist the pressure of a social group. Together with that, directivity, attitudes, relationships and other characteristics related to the contents of individual psychological stability are analyzed. In addition, the theory of group activity reveals a significant difference in organizing of the forms of stable behavior in a team and on
individual ones. Besides, the problem of improving the stability of a person occupies an important place in organizational psychology and psychology of activity in specific conditions where individual and personal, social and psychological aspects are developed and namely this feature, together with activeness, focus and directivity, is marked as attributive trait of personality.

3. Mental stability limits are defined broadly as: a) person’s potentiality b) objective requirements in a particular situation. In any case, it is the condition for maximum efficiency of any activity, including the activity of a leader of state border guard unit. It is the ability to provide and maintain functional ability and compliance of psychical and psychological functions to the requirements of effectiveness support in different and, crucially, extreme situations.

4. Psychological stability is a relatively stable system of mentality components which have a clear focus, showing a balance in the relations of a person with the world in particular circumstances of his or her life. The highest degree of this stability is harmonious development of intellectual, emotional, volitional, individual and professional traits of personality, which finally provides success of professional work and daily behavior of an individual. Mental stability in the administrative activity of a state border guard unit’s leaders is a complex formation of their mental qualities. It provides situational display of its components with their inherent directivity and intensity. Suggested model of psychological structure of mental stability is quaternary system (emotional, intellectual, volitional and professional qualities), which is crucial for a leader of state border guard unit as a top ranking professional.

Further research within the specified range of problems may consider the development of training programs for managerial staff aimed at building of administrative competence of state border guard units’ leaders on the basis of personality mental stability self-adjustment.

References