

PROBLEM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA DURING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

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Historical events helped us to find out how trauma can affect the whole society and what consequences can be expected in the future. K. Erickson focused on examining the properties of trauma in the context of communities that have become starting point for the study of collective trauma. The concept of historical trauma is determined by a set of emotional and psychological impressions that accumulated during the life path of a specific person and his descendants [2].

After some time and conducting various studies, the concept of «trauma» was recognized as an illness and included in the category of mental disorders in the manual, receiving the official name «post-traumatic stress disorder».

Problem statement of the research:

- war causes significant and lasting psychological trauma for combatants, civilians, and communities, often leading to long-term mental health conditions;
- the uniqueness of war-related trauma, the challenges of the wartime environment, and the complexities of mental health diagnosis necessitate specialized research to understand the impact and develop effective support;
- a lack of targeted research can lead to inadequate treatment methods, underprepared professionals, and a continued strain on individuals and societies even after the active conflict ends.

Main tasks of article and future research are: identify the nature of wartime psychological trauma, determine risk and resilience factors, create and evaluate treatment interventions, prepare mental health professionals.

Research possible methods:

- Quantitative studies: questionnaires, analysis of existing data to establish prevalence, risk factors, and treatment efficacy.
- Qualitative studies: interviews, focus groups, and case studies to gain deeper insights into individuals' experiences and the subjective nature of trauma.
- Longitudinal studies: follow individuals over time to understand the long-term consequences of war on mental health.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has unleashed a humanitarian crisis on a staggering scale. Beyond the physical devastation and immense loss of life, the war is inflicting a devastating psychological toll on the Ukrainian people, leaving wounds that may take years to heal.

From soldiers defending their homeland to civilians caught in the crossfire, Ukrainians are experiencing a range of traumatic events that can lead to long-term mental health consequences.

Ukrainian soldiers witness the horrors of war firsthand, risking their lives daily and facing the constant threat of death or injury. Air raid sirens, shelling, displacement, and the loss of loved ones shatter the sense of safety for countless Ukrainians trapped in the conflict zone. The psychological toll of displacement when people are forced to flee their homes is profound, including upheaval, uncertainty, and a deep sense of loss, adding to their psychological burden.

While individual responses to trauma vary, research suggests many Ukrainians are at risk of developing serious mental health conditions in the wake of the war, including:

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – with its flashbacks, nightmares, and hypervigilance, PTSD is a common reaction to overwhelming and terrifying experiences.
- Depression and anxiety – the unrelenting stress, fear, and grief associated with the conflict can lead to chronic anxiety, feelings of hopelessness, and difficulty finding joy in life.

- Coping with grief – the loss of family members, friends, and the familiar routines of normal life can leave Ukrainians with profound grief, further impacting their mental well-being.
- The trauma of children – witnessing war erodes a child's sense of safety, leaving them vulnerable to anxiety, behavioral changes, and lasting emotional scars.
- Substance abuse – the desire to numb emotional pain can lead those with war trauma to turn to alcohol and drugs, increasing the risk of addiction and further health problems.

Despite immense challenges, Ukrainian psychologists and international aid organizations are working tirelessly to provide mental health support to those affected by the war.

Crisis hotlines offer immediate crisis intervention and psychological support. Where possible, psychologists provide therapy to help individuals process trauma and develop coping mechanisms. Special child-centered programs focused interventions help children express their fears, deal with loss, and begin the long process of healing. Building resiliency programs that foster community connections and cultivate a sense of hope aim to bolster resilience within war-ravaged communities [4].

The psychological scars of the war in Ukraine will linger long after the conflict subsides. Addressing these invisible wounds is crucial for rebuilding lives and fostering a healthy future for Ukraine. This requires to train Ukrainian professionals, local psychologists and social workers that will create a long-term mental health support network for Ukrainians. Campaigns are needed to reduce the stigma around seeking help within Ukrainian society.

Psychological trauma is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has many aspects and depends on individual and social factors. The definition of psychological trauma is the subject of discussion among scientists and may vary depending on the approach and context of the study. Psychological trauma has serious consequences for mental and physical health of a person, as well as for his

social functioning and quality of life. Understanding psychological trauma is essential to development effective methods of prevention and treatment of psychological problems, related to this phenomenon.

The fight for Ukraine is not only waged on the battlefield; it is also a battle to heal the deep psychological wounds inflicted upon its people. Understanding the nature of war-related trauma is the first step in providing crucial support, enabling Ukrainians to overcome these immense challenges and rebuild their lives.

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