

The Concept of Emotional Stress, Its Theoretical and Conceptual Issues

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Abstract. *This article analyzes the essence of the concept of emotional stress and its psychological and sociological foundations. Factors influencing the formation of emotional stress and their manifestations in individual and social contexts are explained.*

The article also provides analytical insights on the interrelationship between stress and professional burnout in modern society, as well as their impact on human health and social activity. This article serves to develop a deeper understanding of emotional stress and strategies for its prevention.

Key words: *Emotional stress, Stress, Psychological balance, Professional burnout, Theoretical model, Social psychology, Stress syndrome, Emotional health, Psychodynamic approach, Stress management.*

INTRODUCTION

In modern society, the number of external and internal factors influencing human psychology is rapidly increasing. Technological progress, the intensification of information flow, changes in the social environment, and various pressures encountered in everyday life can directly or indirectly disrupt a person's mental state. In particular, psychological pressures arising from professional activities, studies, family relationships, or social interactions cause various psychological reactions in individuals, including a state of emotional strain.

Emotional strain is a condition that disrupts a person's emotional balance, arising from external influences, stress, and mental overload, which poses a serious threat to human health, work productivity, and quality of life. This state negatively affects not only mental health but also social activity, communicative relationships, and decision-making processes.

In recent years' scientific research, analyzing an individual's emotional state, identifying stress factors, and developing methods to eliminate them have become important issues. In foreign literature, the concept of emotional strain is examined from various aspects - based on psychodynamic, cognitive, neuropsychological, and socio-psychological approaches, the causes, stages, and consequences of this phenomenon are deeply analyzed.

Emotional states are an integral part of the human psyche. Human thinking, memory, attention, and decision-making mechanisms often operate in close connection with emotional states. Therefore, the fact that cognitive processes are not devoid of emotional components in most cases enhances their significance in everyday life.

This study scientifically and theoretically analyzes the theoretical foundations of the concept of emotional strain, the psychological and sociological factors leading to its formation, as well as the practical mechanisms for overcoming it. An in-depth study of this topic is an important step towards achieving personal well-being, a healthy environment, and social stability.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

According to the analysis of numerous psychological literature sources, attempts to explain the causes and manifestation mechanisms of emotional stress have been made in various concepts. In modern research (V.A. Ababkov, M. Perret, D. Bright, F. Jones, F. Murray, and others), stress is viewed as an emotional state that arises in extreme situations and has biochemical, physiological, psychological, and social manifestations. As D.E. Feodorov and E.V. Shetinina point out, according to the differential psychological concept, the emergence of stress in an individual is primarily associated with their adaptive resources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Today, along with the recognition of the universality and importance of the emotional sphere, there is an increase in emotional disorders, primarily anxiety and depressive disorders. The concept proposed by E.P. Ilyin plays a significant role in analyzing the structure of emotional spheres. According to E.P. Ilyin's concept, emotional stress is classified as an emotional state [1;36].

According to researcher R.S. Rubin, emotional stress is characterized as an assessment of events occurring in a person's life, the degree of satisfaction of their needs, as well as an uncomfortable emotional state [2;205]. Analysis of scientific research within the framework of the problem under study showed that when describing the concept of emotional stress, researchers also use terms such as "emotional disorder," "emotional tension," and "stress."

Researcher S. Folkman characterizes the concept of "stress" as a type of acute and variable emotional state. Stress (as a state), in his opinion, is assessed as tension, imbalance, and a feeling of readiness to change behavior in certain threatening situations. He believes there is no need to add the word "emotional" to "stress," since any tension cannot be imagined without emotion.

In contrast to this approach, one can cite the research of N.I. Nayenko and O.V. Ovchinnikov. These researchers distinguished two types of emotional stress: operational and emotional. They note that operational stress arises as a result of the subject's neutral attitude towards the activity process and is characterized by the predominance of motive in the activity. An operation is an internal object-oriented action that is repeatable and grouped within a system. Operational stress is directly related to a high pace of work under conditions of harmony between the motive and purpose of the activity. Emotional stress arises under conditions of a sharp "rise" in the purpose and motive of the activity, which leads to a discrepancy between the objective meaning of the activity and its personal meaning for the subject [3;76]. It should be noted that in both cases, the study authors emphasize that emotional stress in personal activity is stronger than operational stress.

American researchers R.M. Nesse and P.S. Ellsworth propose distinguishing between the concepts of "emotional tension" and "emotional stress" related to emotional disorders [4;129]. According to the first concept, from the authors' point of view, emotional tension is characterized by the activation of various bodily functions associated with active voluntary actions, while "emotional stress" is characterized by stable mental processes and a temporary decrease in activity. It should be noted that in this case, "emotional stress" psychologically includes both intellectual and personal resources.

According to researcher A.V. Suvorov, emotional tension serves as a triggering mechanism in the emergence of "emotional fatigue." Based on this approach, it can be said that a person's constant

depressed mood and stresses affect not only their psychological and physical characteristics but also their work activity. Therefore, in revealing the essence of the concept of emotional stress, it is also necessary to study psychological states such as stress [5;102].

In psychology, the problem of stress has been deeply studied as an emotional disorder. Stress is a non-specific response of the body to various extreme factors that threaten to disrupt homeostasis and is characterized by stereotypical changes in the functioning of the nervous and endocrine systems. It is a nonspecific neurohormonal reaction that develops in the body in response to various stimuli. The term "stress" was defined and introduced into medicine by Canadian pathologist Hans Selye (1936). The scientist called the factors leading to stress "stressors," and the changes that occur in the body under their influence, the "adaptation syndrome." Stressors are divided into physical (heat, cold, trauma, etc.) and psychological (fear, loud noise, extreme joy). Adaptive biochemical and physiological changes develop in the body, aimed at overcoming the influence of these factors, which depends on the strength of the stressor, the duration of exposure, and the physiological system and mental state of the person or animal. In humans and animals with highly developed nervous systems, emotion often acts as a stressor and creates the basis for the influence of physical stressors. Stress of equal strength in a person can be both dangerous and positive. Therefore, Hans Selye said that it is impossible to live an active life without a certain level of stress, because the absence of stress is equivalent to death.

Consequently, stress can be not only dangerous but also beneficial for the body (eustress). This condition activates the body's capabilities, increases its resistance to negative influences (for example, infections, blood loss, etc.), facilitates the course of certain somatic diseases (for example, ulcers, allergies, heart diseases, etc.) or helps the patient recover from them.

According to P.V. Simonov's information theory of emotions, the emergence of feelings or emotional disorders is associated with the lack or excess of information necessary to satisfy a need. Emotional disorder, arising from a discrepancy between the received information and the needs of the individual, according to P.V. Simonov, is determined by the strength of the need for pragmatic information necessary to achieve the goal and the degree of its insufficiency. According to P.V. Simonov, "negative emotional states such as fear and anxiety are expressed by a lack of information necessary for defense, while despair develops when the probability of achieving the desired goal is low" [6;49]. In other words, the emotional formula, as the author himself admits, depends on the magnitude of the need and the lack (or increase) of information that can be quantitatively expressed in relation to emotional disorders.

In a number of works by foreign psychologists, there are views on the role of motivational mechanisms in the emergence of emotional stress. According to M.S. Neymark, "the direct adequate relationship between motive and goal ensures a person's emotional comfort, and the discrepancy between them leads to the disruption of this comfort, resulting in deep and intense emotional disturbances" [7;8]. For example, the desire for self-expression, a good reputation, or the satisfaction of the need for reputation through activity generates positive results, including positive emotions. On the contrary, the discrepancy between the motive for self-expression and the real capabilities of the individual hinders self-affirmation, which leads to the emergence of emotional tension.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of scientific literature, theoretical perspectives, and empirical research on the topic demonstrates that the phenomena of emotion and emotional tension are studied within various scientific frameworks, with different approaches to their understanding. Psychological, psychodynamic, neurophysiological, and cognitive approaches offer diverse explanations for the causes, developmental stages, and impacts of these conditions on human life.

The emergence of emotional tension is directly linked not only to an individual's psychological characteristics but also to physiological, somatic, and neurological factors. This state is complex and multifaceted, formed through the interaction of the human body and mind. Factors such as

individual personality, stress resilience, social adaptability, and emotional intelligence are key determinants of one's susceptibility to emotional stress.

Emotional tension continuously influences a person's behavior, actions, motivational spheres, and even cognitive functions. It can impair decision-making abilities, intensify conflicts in social relationships, and reduce effectiveness in work and educational settings. Prolonged emotional stress can lead to negative outcomes such as mental fatigue, depression, and professional burnout.

Consequently, an in-depth study of the theoretical and practical aspects of emotional stress, its early detection, and the development of coping strategies is one of the pressing directions in psychological science today. A comprehensive analysis of various aspects of this phenomenon plays a crucial role in maintaining psychological health, achieving mental well-being, and fostering a healthy social environment.

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