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Self-Realization Strategies and Their Impact on Mental Health in the Context of Professional Development

Estrategias de autorrealización y su impacto en la salud mental en el contexto del desarrollo profesional

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: given the intensive development of the labor market, the study of self-realization strategies is an urgent task. In this study, the importance of mental well-being on the path of professional development is also an urgent problem for scientific knowledge. The purpose of this study is to identify key self-realization strategies, define their role in professional development, and assess their impact on mental well-being.
Method: the study is a mixed-methods research: it involves the processing of both qualitative (scientific literature) and quantitative materials (survey data). The participants of this study are 112 people who were included on the basis of pre-established criteria. The main research tool was a questionnaire consisting of open and closed questions. Most of the questions are based on a Likert scale (from 1 to 5).
Results: the results determined that self-realization, which affects the quality of life and the level of satisfaction with one's professionalism. Self-realization strategies optimize and develop various individual capabilities. They involve individual participation in professional development programs, leadership development, coaching, etc. Coaching provides emotional support and helps individuals overcome challenges. The results demonstrate the role of coach support in improving mental health and maintaining confidence.
Conclusions: in the research the positive impact of coaching on increasing motivation, improving well-being and generally improving work efficiency was noted. In addition, the acquired knowledge helped the participants of the experiment to achieve the main goals in terms of professional development.

Keywords: Realization Strategies; Professional Development; Mental Well-Being; Emotional Support; Motivation; Coaching.

RESUMEN

Introducción: dado el intenso desarrollo del mercado laboral, el estudio de las estrategias de autorrealización es una tarea urgente. En este estudio, la importancia del bienestar mental en el camino del desarrollo profesional también es un problema urgente para el conocimiento científico. El propósito de este estudio es identificar las estrategias clave de autorrealización, definir su papel en el desarrollo profesional y evaluar su impacto en el bienestar mental.
Método: el estudio es una investigación de métodos mixtos: implica el procesamiento de materiales tanto cualitativos (literatura científica) como cuantitativos (datos de encuestas). Los participantes de este estudio son 112 personas que fueron incluidas sobre la base de criterios preestablecidos. La principal herramienta de investigación fue un cuestionario que consta de preguntas abiertas y cerradas. La mayoría de las preguntas

se basan en una escala de Likert (de 1 a 5).

Resultados: los resultados determinaron que la autorrealización, que afecta a la calidad de vida y al nivel de satisfacción con la propia profesionalidad. Las estrategias de autorrealización optimizan y desarrollan varias capacidades individuales. Implican la participación individual en programas de desarrollo profesional, desarrollo de liderazgo, coaching, etc. El coaching proporciona apoyo emocional y ayuda a las personas a superar los desafíos. Los resultados demuestran el papel del apoyo del coach en la mejora de la salud mental y el mantenimiento de la confianza.

Conclusiones: en la investigación se observó el impacto positivo del coaching en el aumento de la motivación, la mejora del bienestar y la mejora general de la eficiencia laboral. Además, los conocimientos adquiridos ayudaron a los participantes del experimento a alcanzar los principales objetivos en términos de desarrollo profesional.

Palabras clave: Estrategias de Realización; Desarrollo Profesional; Bienestar Mental; Apoyo Emocional; Motivación; Coaching.

INTRODUCTION

The development of self-actualization strategies has been the subject of scholarly analysis in recent years. In particular, the importance of an internal sense of success for achieving psychological stability was analyzed in several studies [1,2], which are also relevant for understanding the level of summarization of the problem. Problems with acquiring the necessary motivation, as a component of professional development and self-realization[3] deserved no less attention.

In combination, these topics open up an opportunity for a deeper understanding of psychological processes, including the understanding of success. F. Martela and A. Pessi[4] showed certain terminological difficulties in using the concepts of coaching, self-realization, mental well-being, and career development.[5] In this regard, certain aspects of the philosophical understanding of success, which are used in modern society, also became an object for scientific study.[6,7]

Thanks to this, it was possible to generalize the existing opinions of specialists regarding the existing problem of using models of improving the state of mental health through the acquisition of the necessary levels of understanding of motivation in professional life. Separate studies point to specific methods of implementing coaching strategies and other models that contribute to the self-realization of an individual. For example, F. Kaya and H. Deniz[8] traced the peculiarities of the psychologist's work in the student environment (on the examples of several universities).

Instead, Garcia and Rolls[9], using the example of a study of institutions of higher education in Colombia, indicated that work with students is not much different from work with other adult members of society. The Ukrainian experience of forming self-realization strategies was also the subject of scientific discussion:[10,11] researchers, based on empirical measurements and analysis of theoretical works, indicated the importance of understanding the psychology of people of transitional age, also taking into account the national context and psychological features of development. This indicates the need for further research into such issues, which is addressed not only to theoretical understanding, but also to the formation of certain results that will become important for practical activities in the future.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to investigate how personal self-realization strategies influence mental health.

The tasks of this study are to identify the following problems
1. Studying the main strategies of self-realization
2. Determining the role of established strategies on the path of professional development.
3. Assessment of the impact of self-realization strategies on mental health

METHOD

This study is a mixed research because it involved both literature analysis and empirical data collected from different categories of individuals. Attention was focused on those who went through self-development trainings, turned to coaches or psychologists who helped them go through a difficult path and develop professionally.

Data collection

Collection of literature

To collect literature data, such databases as Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar were initially

selected. Key words such as mental health, psychological state, professional development, strategies, coaching, leadership are entered into these databases. A total of 476 results were found with relevant mentions.

The literature inclusion criteria were as follows:

Date range: Works from the last 10 years were taken into account

Appropriateness of the topic: The topic and results of the study were rigorously analyzed

Duplicates were not allowed

The work must have scientific novelty

Therefore, 32 scientific works are included in this study.

Participations

Inclusion of participants in the study was based on clear criteria. This was done to ensure the relevance of the results.

The selection criteria included the participation of potential participants in various trainings on personal development, formation of leadership skills, career coaching, psychological practices (in particular, the development of emotional intelligence, time management or combating stress in difficult conditions), participation in specialized programs for professional growth (in particular, communication, sales or project management).

The age range

The age range was formed in such a way to cover different stages of professional growth. For this purpose: 22-55 years old.

Work experience

Work experience required at least 3 years of professional experience. This was done in order to obtain a basis for determining the impact of trainings on professional development and psychological well-being.

The level of employment of the participants was varied. Persons who were employed full-time or part-time (freelance) were included in the study. This helped to form a preliminary idea about the influence of coaching and self-development training on various forms of professional activity.

Other conditions for inclusion

An important condition for inclusion in the study was the psychological state. The study included subjects with no psychological disorders that could affect the perception of the obtained results. Based on this sample, 112 people were included in this experiment. Table 1 shows the collected demographic data from the participants.

Table 1. Description of the demographic data of the participants		
Category: professional self-development experience	N	%
General trainings for personal self-improvement	30	26,8 %
Formation of leadership skills	18	16,1 %
Career coaching	15	13,4 %
Development of psychological skills (emotional intelligence, time management, fight against anxiety or stress.	20	17,9 %
Special programs from a professional profile (management, sales, communication)	16	14,3 %
Others	13	11,6 %
Age		
25-35 years old	45	40,2 %
35-45 years old	35	31,1 %
46-55 years old	32	28,2 %
Employment		
Full	60	53,7 %
Partial	25	22,3 %
Freelance	27	24,1 %

Instruments

The main tool for this study is a questionnaire, which was conducted online by filling in Google Forms. The invitation to conduct the survey was sent out using social networks and e-mail. After obtaining informed consent, participants had the opportunity to complete the survey. The questionnaire consisted of several parts. In particular, the purpose of the first is to obtain demographic data. Other parts dealt with the role of

self-actualization strategies in professional growth and psychological resilience. The questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Most of the questions were based on a Likert scale (from 1 to 5). 1 point is a very low level, 5 points is a very high level. Table 2 presents sample questions from the survey, particularly sections 2-3. They were concerned with the role of self-realization mechanisms.

Table 2. Separate conceptual questions from the questionnaire	
General information	Please indicate the types of trainings you have attended
The relationship between professional development and mental well-being	Rate the level of stress in the workplace (from 1 to 5) Rate the role of coach support in improving mental health (from 1 to 5) How has attending these programs contributed to your confidence? (from 1 to 5)
Self-realization and career	Did self-realization strategies help you achieve your goals? Indicate skills, obtained after practical acquaintance with self-realization strategies.

Data analysis

Microsoft Excel software was used for data analysis and interpretation. First, such data as: strategy - assessment, impact on mental health - assessment, impact on career - assessment are entered into these tables. This made it possible to find an average score and assess the impact of self-actualization strategies on both mental health and professional development.

Further, such data as the frequency of implementation, mechanisms of self-realization, acquired skills are also entered. On the basis of the thematic analysis, the main markers in the system of planning and formation of self-realization strategies were implemented. The research also used the method of comparison: it made it possible to compare the obtained data with the works of other foreign scientists.

RESULTS

By realizing oneself, any person determines his or her life path, giving it direction, purpose and content. In the course of self-realization, a person forms and subsequently transforms his or her attitude towards other people or the outside world as a whole. There is also an internal development of a person who is guided by his or her implicit life philosophy.[12] Thus, in modern studies, several factors that influence self-realization are presented.[13,14,15] They can be conditionally divided into those dependent on the individual (values, purpose, will, desire to improve oneself, flexibility of thinking, etc.) and those independent of the individual (social conditions, financial situation, media influence, etc.). The main conditions for personal self-realization are psycho-ecological, psycho-physiological, educational, psychological and social factors.[12]

The influence of the psycho-ecological structure on the process of self-realization is explained by the impact of environmental factors (in particular, air pollution, increased radiation, poor quality drinking water) on the mental state of a person. This, in turn, can lead to increased aggression, decreased vitality, and depression. Psychophysiological factors include mental and physiological characteristics that are a prerequisite for the successful development of a person's nervous system and temperament.[12] The psychological conditions that influence the successful self-realization of a person include mental cognitive processes and the emotional and mental state of an individual. Education is an important basis for self-realization, which is designed to provide methods of supporting self-realization.

Self-realization strategy is an important component on the way to personal and professional development. It is determined by personal consciousness and the initiation of mechanisms that influence the formation, adjustment and transformation of life strategies.[16] When the strategy of self-realization is adequately integrated, a long-term strategy is implemented, which is aimed at realizing long-term and distant goals.[17-19] Otherwise, there may be a short-term strategy that influences a person to perceive the situation as forced and more powerful in relation to their resources. This can lead to frustration and internal conflict.

In forming a life task, a person is based on the main component "aspirations" (interests and desires). When assessing their capabilities, a person is guided by the "I can" component (self-knowledge, self-attitude, and self-esteem). At the stage of deciding "I must", such moments as self-regulation and social demand are realized.[12] All of these structures are connected to "decision-making" moments, motivation, life and value orientations (see figure 1).
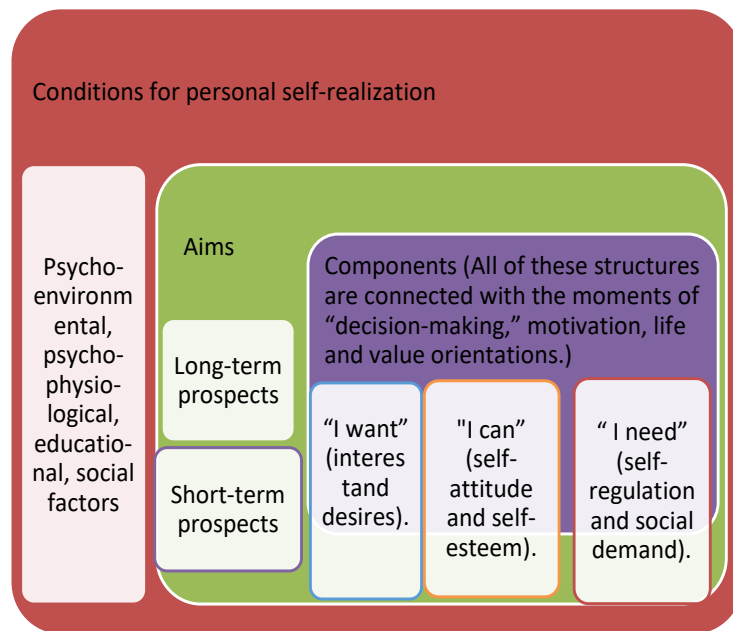
Figure 1. Conditions for personal self-realization
Source: authors' development by analysis of modern literature[12]

The strategy of self-realization should optimize and develop various resources of the individual. It should be manifested both in external manifestations ("individual - world") and in the internal plan. In general, self-realization is a process of choice, which results in the way in which the choice of decisions in key areas of life is realized.[20] Within the framework of professional development, special strategies, in particular, professional development programs, leadership development, coaching, etc. can play an important role. Coaching is an accentuated paradigm of professional self-realization.[21] Therefore, it plays the role of a science and art of identifying latent talents and promoting their maximum realization. The coaching system has two important aspects:

- in-depth diagnostics, which allows you to identify the talents of a person that have been hidden until now

- identifying and applying self-realization strategies that help to maximize a person's talents).

The respondents attended various trainings, professional development classes with coaches (26,8 %), leadership skills training (16,1 %), career coaching (13,4 %), psychological practices (in particular, development of emotional intelligence time management, or stress management in difficult conditions) (17,9 %), participation in specialized professional development programs (e.g., communication, sales, project management, etc.) (14,3 %), and other professional development programs (11,6 %).

Most of the respondents reported an average level of stress (score 3 - 38,39 %). However, 18,75 % of respondents rated it as very high (see table 3). Factors influencing its occurrence included uncertainty about the future, changes in the company, high workload, financial and legal difficulties. All of these factors affected the psychological well-being of individuals.

Table 3. Assessment of the level of stress in the workplace

Level	N	%
1-Very low	0	0%
2 - Low	14	12,5 %
3- Medium	43	38,39 %
4- High	34	30,36 %
5- Very high	21	18,75 %

In general, the level of stress in the workplace plays a significant role in an individual's self-realization system, as it can directly affect their productivity and motivation. In addition, stress can have an impact on physical health. It is often accompanied by physical and psychological symptoms (for example, fatigue, anxiety, and depression). Stress can also act as a direct obstacle to personal or professional growth. In particular, when

stress is persistent, it can lead to an inability to take on new tasks. In these situations, coaching and self-development training plays a crucial role. In particular, stress management training helps you learn how to relax and control your emotions.

At the same time, coaching allows individuals to better understand their strengths and weaknesses, as well as to realize the role of stress on their behavior and decisions.[21] On the other hand, coaching provides emotional support and helps individuals to overcome challenges and promote their professional growth.[22,23,24] This is proved by the survey data, as the majority of the participants in the experiment rated the role of coaching support in improving mental health at 4 points on the Likert scale (47, 32%). In addition, there is a direct correlation between attending professional development programs and confidence support (5 points - 38, 38%) (see figure 2).
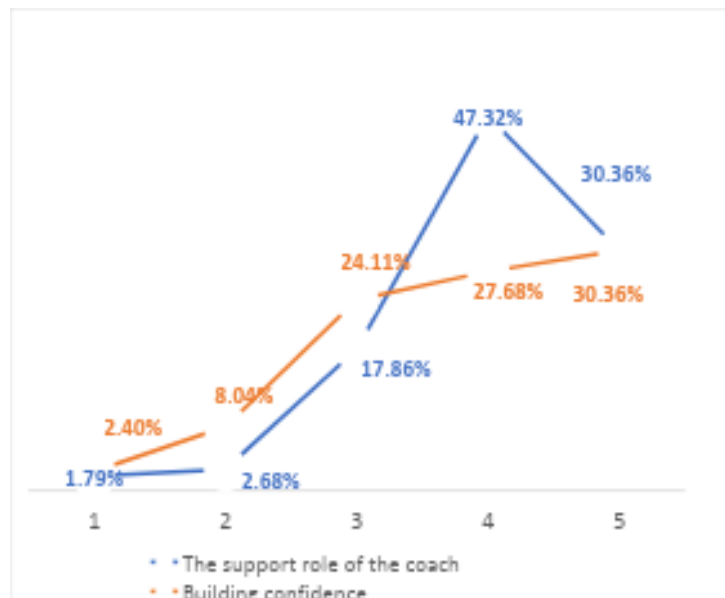

Figure 2. The relationship between attending professional development programs and building confidence

Thus, as can be seen from figure 2, the role of coaching support in improving mental health is evident, and most respondents acknowledged that attending professional development programs had an impact on their confidence. In addition, there is also a positive impact of coaching on improving performance, increasing motivation, improving well-being and satisfaction with professional activities. This is also evidenced by the received survey data, where the majority of respondents recognized the effectiveness of coaching in the system of self-development. In addition, the knowledge gained helped them achieve their professional development goals (see figure 3).
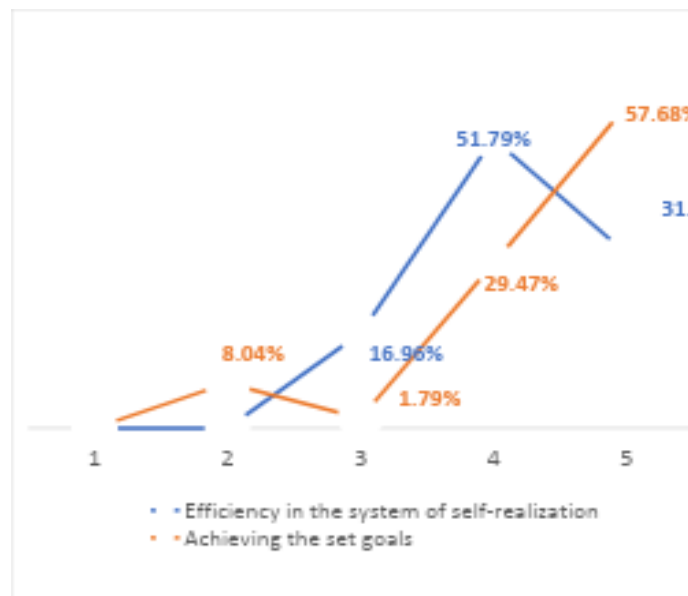

Figure 3. Linking coaching to self-realization and goal achievement

The phenomenon of self-realization is characteristic of an individual in all spheres of activity and at different stages of development. However, it also has its own specifics, which are based on personal traits, expectations, goals, desires, etc. However, practical familiarity with self-actualization strategies allows you to develop various skills that can contribute to personal and professional growth. In particular, they can contribute to a better understanding of one's own goals and values.[25] Time management and prioritization skills also become important. Coaching also develops goal-orientedness, the ability to set goals and achieve them. Self-motivation, i.e. the ability to find internal incentives and maintain high motivation regardless of professional challenges, also becomes important. Coaching helps build stress resistance, develops critical thinking, empathy, and communication skills. All of these skills help not only in self-realization, but also make a person more confident in their professional life.

DISCUSSION

An important element on the way to professional and personal growth in the modern world is self-realization, which affects the quality of life and the level of satisfaction with one's professionalism. The purpose of the proposed article was to characterize the main strategies of self-realization and analyze their impact on human development and mental state. To do this, it was proposed to investigate the main strategies of self-realization, to determine the roles of established strategies on the path of professional development, to evaluate the impact of strategies of self-realization on mental health.

In the results of the proposed study, it was established that psycho-ecological, psycho-physiological, educational, psychological and social factors are important conditions for the self-realization of an individual. Important elements of such a structure are also social determinants - institutions of socialization that make it possible to promote or hinder the self-realization of an individual. Among them, education is singled out, which is designed to provide methods of supporting the self-realization of the individual. This confirms the conclusions of other scientists who noted the importance of education in the modern world, precisely as a certain element of psychological self-affirmation.[12,24,25] As scientists have established, we are talking not only about higher education, but also about practical knowledge that can relate to the production sphere or agriculture.[24,25]

In the results, it was noted that the strategy of self-realization is an important component on the path of personal and professional development. It is formed by personal consciousness and the initiation of mechanisms that influence the formation, adjustment and transformation of life strategies. This confirms the conclusions of other scientists that the individualization of the strategy of self-realization is a necessary part of the modern understanding of personality development and professional development.[26] In addition, as rightly noted in the works of scientists, special strategies, such as professional development programs and the formation of leadership qualities, are important.[27] Special attention is paid to coaching, as a popular element in the modern paradigm of professional self-realization of an individual. It is obvious that further focus on this direction will contribute to the improvement of self-realization strategies. As a result of the survey, it was established that the respondents had different experiences of improving professional self-realization, although they primarily worked with coaches and underwent relevant professional trainings. This confirms the conclusions of other scientists regarding the popularity of such ways of working on oneself and one's professional qualities.[21,28,29,30] Besides, an average level of stress was noted, which also corresponds to the findings of other studies, in which, in particular, fear of the future and high workloads are mentioned as extremely negative psychological challenges.[28]

As a result of the proposed measurements, it was established that stress can also be a direct obstacle to personal or professional growth, especially if it is constant. Counteraction to such manifestations as a result of the implementation of coaching is an effective phenomenon, which was also noted by other researchers. Against this background, the opinions of scientists regarding the fact that stress management trainings have low effectiveness are premature.[31,32] As established, such trainings, on the contrary, allow you to learn to relax and control your emotions.

As a result of the conducted research, it was possible to establish that attending professional development programs affected the confidence of the interviewees. There is also a positive effect of coaching on increasing productivity, increasing motivation, improving well-being and satisfaction with professional activity. Such conclusions confirm the data obtained from other scientific works.[31,33,34,35] The future formation of the necessary conditions for influencing mental health will also consist in the training of coaches, their training and professional development.[36,37,38]

The proposed methodology used in the article has its limitations. First of all, we are talking about subjectivity in conducting surveys, namely, the answers received. Despite the maximum tendency to put forward well-founded statements and answers, it is worth noting that the survey shows a certain discrepancy even when conducted among several respondents. It is said that individual ratings are provided using one's own experience, which is subjective and consists of many elements. The use of scientific literature, which demonstrated common practices, became a marker for evaluating certain judgments of respondents. At the same time, the literature

proposed in the article is primarily English. Such a selection is quite thorough, but leaves room for relevant opinions recorded in non-English-language publications. The proposed limitations do not diminish the results of the study, but rather open perspectives for its further improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, strategies of self-realization are characterized by a person's conscious choice. As a result of initiating self-realization mechanisms, the phenomenon of forming, adjusting, and changing life strategies takes place. Self-actualization strategies optimize and develop various personality resources. Special strategies can play an important role in professional development: professional development programs, leadership development, coaching, etc. Coaching helps to identify latent talents and influences their maximum expression.

Coaching enables individuals to better understand their strengths and weaknesses, provides emotional support, and helps individuals overcome challenges on the path of professional development. The study identified the role of coaching support in the system of mental health improvement (47, 32%). Besides, there is a direct link between attending professional development programs and maintaining confidence (38, 38%). Thus, the role of coaching support in improving mental health is important. There is a direct link between self-realization strategies and mental health in the context of professional development.

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FINANCING

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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