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INTELLECTUAL RESOURCE AS A BASIS OF RESCUE WORKERS' COPING-BEHAVIOR

The article deals with the positions of psychologists regarding the role of psychometric intelligence in the formation of behavior in stressful conditions. Human intelligence manifests itself not only in the results of psychometric tests, but also in conditions of real interaction with the environment, assuming that the productive properties that are measured in IQ units are mental mechanisms responsible for correctness (accuracy) and the speed of information processing, and cognitive styles are mental mechanisms responsible for managing the information processing. It has been empirically proved that, in the context of professional activity and taking into account its specific character, intellectual abilities and cognitive styles are in some way interconnected, forming the "intellectual resource" of the individual. The results of the empirical research involving 168 rescuers have shown that the intellectual resource is the basis of their coping behavior. Three groups of rescuers with different levels of intellectual resource have been distinguished. The obtained results show that the subjects with higher indicators of the intellectual resource in stressful situations do not use problem-focused coping mechanisms, they apply emotion-focused and social coping mechanisms. These results are interpreted as follows: the higher the intellectual maturity of a person is, manifested in the indicators of cognitive, metacognitive, academic and conceptual abilities, the wider range of strategies he/she uses. Intelligence thus is interpreted as a mental resource, which provides mobility and variation of coping behavior.

Keywords: *psychometric intelligence, cognitive styles, intellectual resource, coping behavior, coping mechanisms, rescuer.*

Introduction

The primary task of a rescuer after arriving at a place of emergency, is an assessment of the situation in order to provide assistance to people and eliminate danger in the shortest period. Typically, working situations are always non-standard and complex, their consequences are difficult to predict, and as a result, it is necessary to analyze a large amount of information immediately, to carry out a deep and at the same time rapid processing, choose from a large number of alternative solutions, etc. Under these conditions, for the successful work of a rescuer, the intellectual factor is one of the decisive ones. If one considers a crisis situation as a problem, the core of all human resources is his or her intelligence (Shkuratova, Annenkova, 2007). The peculiarities of the intellectual sphere – style and level properties of intelligence – are the key factors of coping behavior (Aleksapolsky, 2008), it is intelligence which acts as a resource of coping-behavior (Ushakov, 2003).

It should be noted that not all scholars share this point of view, noting the controversial role of intelligence in coping behavior, and emphasizing the need for a more in-depth analysis of this issue. Thus, the results of the research by T. Kornilova show the absence of correlation between the high intelligence level and productive coping; at the same time, there is a correlation relationship of low intelligence level with unproductive coping. Those with high practical intelligence are less likely to choose a coping mechanism focused on solving the problem than those with a low level, while individuals with a higher level of verbal intelligence often refuse to use unproductive copings in contrast to those with a low index, etc. (Kornilova, 2010). Based on regression analysis it has been determined that the level of nonverbal intelligence significantly reduces the frequency of access to social support, and verbal intelligence – on the contrary. However, the value of the determination coefficient at the level of 0.12-0.15 does not allow to make a qualitative forecast, that is, the prognostic ability of the results obtained is not high. Accordingly, these data make it impossible to consider intelligence as a reliable predictor of coping mechanisms selection. It can be attributed only to resources that reduce the risk of lack of control of the situation to a certain extent (Khazova, 2006). Slovenian psychologists have found that the high level of stress-overcoming in girls correlates with high IQ, and in boys – with the aver-

age one (by P. Rican Tests of Academic Achievements). For boys, the acceptance by the group of peers plays a dominant role, and the influence of this factor is so great that even in high-intellectual adolescents, the fact of being rejected by peers reduces adaptive capability and the level of controlling difficult situations (Medvedova, 1987). In general, the relationship between psychometric intelligence and adaptation is not linear. According to the theory of "optimum intelligence", the growth of intelligence to a certain level promotes adaptation, but the excess of this norm leads to a violation of contacts with other people and the growth of personal problems (Simonton, 1976).

Thus, the scientific works review shows the complexity of the studied issue, the ambiguity of the results and, at the same time, their significance in the effectiveness of the rescuer's activity point to the relevance of studying the intellectual resource of the rescuer as a factor of coping behavior.

Aim and Tasks

The paper aims to study the intellectual resource as the basis of the coping behavior of rescue workers.

Objectives of the study are as follows:

1) performing a theoretical analysis of the issue of the interconnection of intelligence with the coping behavior of a person.

2) theoretically substantiating and empirically verifying the model of the individual's "intellectual resource".

3) exploring the features of rescue workers' coping mechanisms depending on the levels of their intellectual resource.

Research Methods

The study is based on a set of psychodiagnostic techniques, which included: The Intelligence Structure Test by R. Amthauer was applied in order to study productive characteristics of rescuer's intelligence; Thurston's Hidden Figures Test, Matching Familiar Figures Test by J. Kagan; The Stroop Color and Word Test was used for studying cognitive styles of a personality: field dependence / field independence, impulsivity / reflectivity, rigidity / flexible cognitive control; The Cope Inventory by R. Lazarus was applied in order to identify dominant coping mechanisms.

The empirical data processing was carried out using Student's t-test, cluster and confirmatory factor analysis. The study involved 168 employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

Research Results

Before presenting research results it should be noted that within the framework of this study, an "intellectual resource" construct was considered as a combination of productive and stylistic properties of intelligence (Kholodnaya, Aleksapolskiy, 2010; Khazova, 2006, etc.).

Moreover, it is not just about a "set" of certain intellectual abilities and cognitive styles, but also about the existing correlations between them. We believe that, in the context of occupation and taking into account its specifics, intellectual abilities and cognitive styles are in some way interconnected, forming the "intellectual resource" of the individual. It is a ratio of stylistic and productive properties of intelligence.

The verification of the above theoretical hypothesis was carried out using the Confirmatory Factor Analysis as a kind of statistical method for latent variables modeling using linear structural equations. The results are presented in Fig 1.

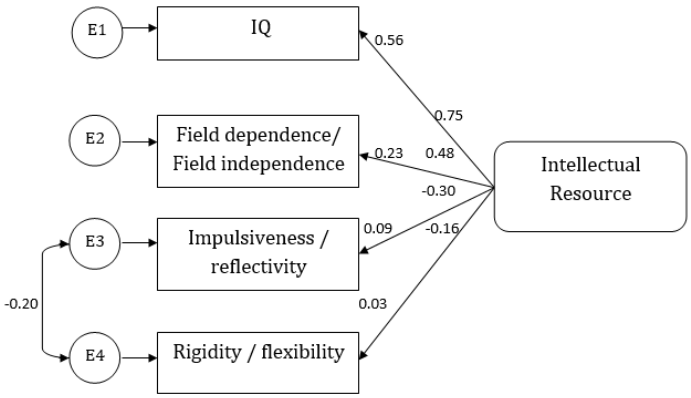


Figure 1. Structural Model of Personality Intellectual Resource

In the presented model, the consistency indices correspond to the established standards (CMIN / DF = 0.55; RMSEA = 0.00; CFI = 1). This means that the theoretical model rather accurately reflects the nature of the primary data interconnections. Other parametric estimators of this structural model are standard regression coefficients. Of these, it is noticeable that the greatest intellectual resource affects the variability of psychometric intelligence and the field dependence / field independence cognitive styles. The determination coefficients in them make 0.56 and 0.23 respectively, that is, the "intellectual resource" latent variable explains more than half of the dispersion of psychometric intelligence variance and a quarter of field dependence / field independence. In other cognitive

styles, the determination coefficient is not so significant, which is indicative of the influence of other unrecognized factors on them.

Consequently, the style approach to the study of intelligence complements the test. It adds new dimensions to the description and understanding of intellectual personality. The correlation analysis also revealed the existence of stable reliable interrelationships between productive characteristics of intelligence and general indicators of cognitive styles. Field independent, reflective and flexible rescuers are more productive in intellectual activity.

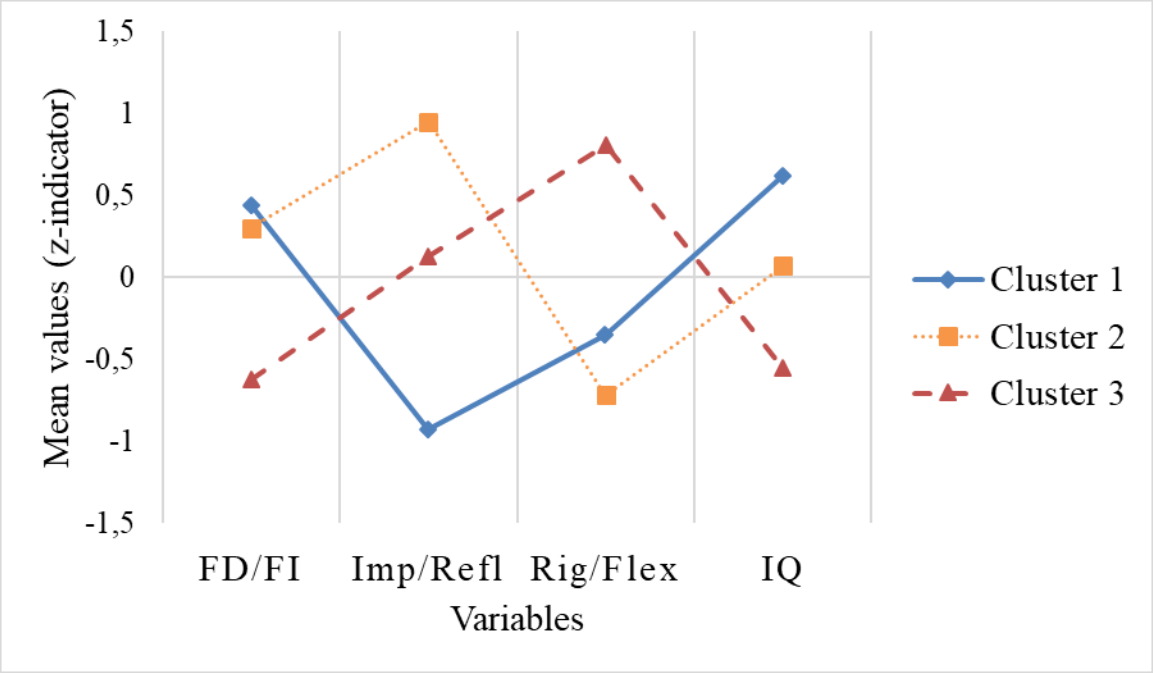
The revealed relationships of cognitive styles and psychometric intelligence can be interpreted in this way – these are interrelated but independent forms of intellectual activity. A typical point in this regard is R. W. Gardner and his co-authors' conclusion that "... intellectual abilities and cognitive controls (cognitive styles in modern terminology) are not isolated aspects of an intellectual organization, on the contrary, they are interrelated. Consequently, ungrounded categorical distinction, sometimes carried out between intelligence and a wider scale of a cognitive organization, is not factually accurate" (Gardner, Jackson, Messick, 1960). This idea is illustrated by the results of the empirical study by E. N. Bottenberg. At the factor analysis level, he discovered the relationship between different cognitive styles ("cognitive attitudes" in his terminology), the indicators of the subtests of The Intelligence Structure Test by R. Amthauer and some cognitive functions. The results of this study clearly demonstrated the existence of relationships between individual cognitive styles and intellectual abilities. This allowed the researcher to conclude that the cognitive styles interact with the intelligence and certain cognitive functions. These facts, in his opinion, should be an impetus for the revision of traditional theories of intelligence (Bottenberg, 1970).

Thus, a comprehensive analysis of stylistic properties and productive characteristics of intelligence provides an opportunity to operationalize the intellectual resource construct in an empirical way, which integrates both the level of psychometric intelligence maturity, and cognitive styles peculiarities.

A hierarchical cluster analysis was used to separate the totality of the groups under investigation into the groups according to the intellectual resource signs. For data standardization, their conversion into common scale Z-transformation was applied.

By means of the dendrogram of hierarchical clustering and the staged intercluster distance change plot there have been distinguished three clusters, which helped to divide rescuers using McQueen's k-means algorithm (fig. 2.).

Thus, the representatives of the first cluster (52 rescuers) are characterized by field independence, reflectivity, moderate interference (flexibility) and high level of intelligence. This is a high intellectual resource group, which is expressed in the ability to distinguish the most essential characteristics of a problem, flexibility of information processes and the ease of attitudes changes. In tense situations, they rely on their own experience, preferring to analyze the situation and make decisions independently. They are active, confident, can express and control their emotions, easily switch from one kind of activity to another, have a high level of cognitive functions automation, etc. In addition, a high level of intellectual maturity helps such rescuers to acquire new knowledge and skills faster and easier.



Note: FD – field dependence; FI – field independence; Imp – Impulsiveness, Refl – Reflectivity; Rig – Rigidity, Flex – Flexibility

Figure 2. Mean Values of Intellectual Resource According to Clusters

Cluster two involved rescuers with field independence, impulsiveness, rigorous cognitive control and a moderate level of intellectual maturity. This is a group with relatively average indicators of the intellectual resource (49 respondents). They are characterized by the intuitive perception of situations. Rigid persons are less patient in difficult situations. They consider themselves as excitatory, sensitive, less resistant to obstacles. In addition, the effect of interference is positively correlated with neuroticism. Although these rescuers have a more structured system of representations of the surrounding world.

Rescuers who have make up the third cluster (67 respondents) are characterized by field dependence, average impulsivity / reflectivity, rigidity and low IQ. This is a low intellectual resource group. From the psychological point of view, this means that they use the global approach to the field, it is difficult for them to overcome the difficulty of a situation, they are passive, anxious, insecure, prone to make decisions without a detailed reflection of the issue, they show less patience when facing problems. They have a more pronounced tendency to risk as a consequence of avoiding situations of uncertainty. The high interference level of these rescuers indicates their sensitivity to obstacles, the time and number of errors increase in the process of processing information. And the low level of intellectual abilities prevents them from adapting quickly to new life and professional conditions.

Using the iterative method of data clustering, three groups of rescuers with different intellectual resource levels were distinguished: the first – high, the second – middle and the third – low. The obtained results provide an opportunity to consider the behavioral features in details depending on the level of intelligence (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Comparison Results of the Groups of Rescuers with Different Levels of Intellectual Resource by Indicators of Coping Behavior

Coping mechanism	Intellectual resource			t (1.2)	t (1.3)	t (2.3)
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3			
Confrontation	9.98	9.94	9.72	0.08	0.60	-0.46
Distancing	9.29	9.75	8.57	1.28	-0.95	2.23*
Self-control	12.69	12.39	12.90	0.56	-0.48	1.09
Social support search	11.42	11.29	10.30	0.29	2.56**	2.17*
Accepting responsibility	7.29	7.14	6.88	0.35	1.04	-0.65
Avoidance	9.27	10.14	10.87	-1.23	-2.45*	1.16
Problem solution planning	13.40	13.39	13.04	0.03	0.72	-0.66
Positive reassessment	13.42	14.27	13.69	-1.55	-0.47	-1.07
*$p \leq 0.05$; **$p \leq 0.01$; ***$p \leq 0.001$.						

The results presented in Table 1 show that at a statistically significant level, rescuers with a relatively average level of intellectual resource are more likely to use the "distancing" coping mechanism in contrast to those with a low level ($t = 2.23$, $p \leq 0.05$). It can be argued that these specialists prefer to detach from the traumatic situation with the help of certain efforts. This way of overcoming stress is not always effective. That is, the growth of the intellectual resource leads to a more frequent use of emotion-focused coping mechanisms.

In expressiveness of "social support search" type of reaction in a stressful situation, the lowest results are noted in a group of rescuers with a low level of intellectual resource. A number of differences were found in the use of this coping mechanism ($t(1.3) = 2.56$, $p \leq 0.01$; $t(2.3) = 2.17$, $p \leq 0.05$). From the psychological point of view, the individuals with mature intellectual abilities (because of their flexibility, analyticity, and tactfulness) are easier to obtain the necessary information and emotional help in the immediate environment, from their colleagues. They are more self-confident and as a result more actively counteract problems, focusing on external assistance. Such a reaction of rescuers to stress-factor effects is regarded to be rational and effective.

Searching for information is a very important cognitive ability, especially when dealing with uncertainty (Bodrov, 2006). Rescuers with a low level of intellectual resource often deliberately avoid problems, which can have a negative impact on their self-esteem and self-efficacy. It should be noted that according to the expressiveness of the "avoidance" coping mechanism between the first and third groups of rescuers, a significant difference was found at the level $p \leq 0.05$. The highest rate of this coping mechanism was recorded in the group with the lowest intellectual resource level.

This type of behavior is not always focused on the real environment and therefore in extreme situations can interfere with the effective overcoming of stress (Bodrov, 2006), because it represents a refusal to accept the objective reality as it is. The problem is that these rescuers cannot find a constructive coping-response; they cannot adequately assess the stressful situation and the degree of their ability to overcome it.

Thus, rescuers with a high intellectual resource level often use the "social support search" coping mechanism and rarely "avoidance". For people with a low level of intelligence, the formation of mature strategies aimed at solving problems is hampered by the limited internal

resources. The low intelligence level makes it almost impossible to assess the situation fully. And it is obvious that a person can behave regardless of the situation, only if he/she has a complete and adequate idea of it.

Discussion

Using the combination of the stylistic and productive properties of intelligence within the limits of the intellectual resource operationalization allowed in a more precise way to analyze the role of the intellectual sphere in the coping behavior of a rescuer. As a result, correlation relationships with the indicators of coping mechanisms that could not be found by other researchers using the "psychometric intelligence" construct, were revealed.

It was found that rescuers with higher indicators of intellectual resource tend to apply emotional and social coping mechanisms when facing a stressful situation. The rescuers with a high intellectual resource level do not use problem-focused copying, which requires further studying.

M. Kholodnaya and O. Aleksapolskiy (2010) suggest two radically different interpretations of this fact in relation to the intellectual resource. The first one includes a well-known explanatory scheme on the inverse relationship between the level of the so-called "general" intelligence and the effectiveness of social behavior: the higher the level of general intelligence is, the less effective the person in various aspects of his/her psychosocial functioning is. Considering the results of our study, the higher the level of intelligence is, the less effectively the rescuer overcomes complex life and professional situations, relying on "unproductive" emotion-focused and social coping. In our opinion, this kind of linear type of explanation is incorrect, distorting the idea of the role of intelligence in the individual behavior regulation.

The second interpretation proposed by them is fundamentally different: the higher intellectual maturity of a person is, which is manifested in the indicators of the maturity of cognitive, metacognitive, academic and conceptual abilities, the wider the range of strategies applied by a person actively using the benefits of emotional and social copings, thereby demonstrating mobility and variability of coping behavior.

From this point of view, one can explain the lack of the tendency to choose a "problem solving planning" coping mechanism by more intellectually mature rescuers. It is not always effective, and its implementation may be accompanied by excessive psychological costs. It is also clear why these individuals prefer the "distancing" strategy, which may prove to be quite effective, since it allows one to "slow down", which is reflected in the tendency concentration on the mobilization of internal resources.

As for such a coping mechanism as "social support search", this form of active social interaction can be considered as that of a productive type, because the need for close relationships with other people can have a relaxation effect and provides opportunities for obtaining additional information about the situation. According to I. Kamynina, social support in extreme conditions is not instrumental, but conceptual, since it aims to strengthen the internal resources of the individual, rather than solve his/her problems at the expense of other people (Kamynina, 2008).

Rescuers with a high level of intellectual resource do not use the "avoidance" coping strategy. It is one of the least effective, working according to the principles of psychological protection mechanisms. Although this strategy may be effective in situations where there is a need to detach from an interpersonal conflict or "wait through" the problem because of the impossibility of resolving it "right here and now".

Thus, it is impossible to interpret coping mechanisms as productive or unproductive. It would be more correct to say that each coping mechanism involves both a productive and an unproductive component. Thus, in problem-based strategies, the feeling of self-efficacy acts as a productive one, and the "illusion of control" - as the unproductive one, when the rescuer underestimates the complexity of the difficult situation and overestimates his/her ability to overcome it; in emotion-based – the possibility of emotional release or emotional focus up to psychosomatic disorders; in social – hope for the support of other people, obtaining additional information or loss of psychological autonomy, respectively. In addition, contrasting emotionally-focused strategies to the problem-focused ones, in our opinion, is not entirely correct, since a change in the emotional state occurs when using any copying. All the more so, as an emotion changes constructively only when solving a problem, and not when changing attitude or avoiding it.

Conclusions

1. Intelligence acts as a universal mechanism for adapting to a changing external environment. However, existing studies do not allow unambiguously provide an answer to the question about the degree of influence of the intellectual sphere on coping behavior. The works in the field of the psychometric approach to intelligence reveal heterogeneity of relationships between these variables. This is due to the fact that the consideration of intelligence as a cognitive ability within this direction does not cover the entire area of its essence. The real intellectual capabilities of the individual also depend on the stylistic characteristics of his/her intellectual activity.

2. It has been found that cognitive styles and intellectual abilities are different in their manifestations, but united by their deep psychological foundations of the form of intellectual activity, united by the person's "intellectual resource" construct that characterizes both sides of the intelligence. The intellectual resource has the most significant impact on variability of psychometric intelligence and cognitive style of field dependence / independence.

3. Rescuers with a high level of intellectual resource for overcoming stressful conditions at work, apply emotional and social coping mechanisms. There is no relationship with the problem-based style of coping behavior. The rescuers with a low intellectual resource level mainly apply passive copying strategies. At the behavioral level, this manifests itself in the

use of more simple mechanisms for overcoming stressful situations. The selection of a particular coping-behavior strategy is preconditioned by the rescuer's intellectual resource peculiarities.

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ІНТЕЛЕКТУАЛЬНИЙ РЕСУРС ЯК ОСНОВА КОПІНГ-ПОВЕДІНКИ РЯТУВАЛЬНИКА

У статті розглянуто позиції психологів відносно ролі психометричного інтелекту у формуванні поведінки в стресових умовах. Було зроблено висновок про суперечливу роль інтелекту в копінг-поведінці та наголошено на необхідності більш глибокого аналізу цієї проблеми. Інтелект людини проявляється не тільки як результат психометричних тестів, але й в умовах реальної взаємодії зі своїм оточенням, припустивши, що продуктивні властивості, які вимірюються в IQ одиницях – це психічні механізми, що відповідають за правильність (точність) і швидкість процесу переробки інформації, а когнітивні стилі – психічні механізми, що відповідають за управління процесом переробки інформації. У контексті професійної діяльності і з урахуванням її специфіки інтелектуальні здібності та когнітивні стилі певним чином взаємозв'язані, утворюючи «інтелектуальний ресурс» особистості. Результати емпіричного дослідження за участю 168 рятувальників показали, що інтелектуальний ресурс є основою копінг-поведінки. Було також виділено три групи рятувальників з різним рівнем інтелектуального ресурсу. Отримані результати свідчать, що досліджувані з більш високими показниками інтелектуального ресурсу в стресовій ситуації не схильні використовувати проблемно зорієнтований копінг, а активно використовують емоційні й соціальні копінг-стратегії. Такі результати трактуються наступним чином: чим вища інтелектуальна зрілість людини, що проявляється в показниках сформованості когнітивних, метакогнітивних, академічних і понятійних здібностей, тим більш широкий спектр стратегій вона застосовує, активно використовуючи переваги різних копінг-стратегій. Інтелект при цьому трактується як психічний ресурс, що забезпечує мобільність і варіативність копінг-поведінки.

Ключові слова: психометричний інтелект, когнітивні стилі, інтелектуальний ресурс, копінг-поведінка, копінг-стратегії, рятувальник.

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