

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS FOR MANAGEMENT OF FUTURE HEALTH CARE MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

The aim: To determine the content, components and levels of formation of social and psychological readiness of future managers of the health care system for management activities.

Materials and methods: The research was conducted among students of master's programs that prepare future managers for the health care system of Ukraine. The basic motivators of their social and psychological activity as a person, the formation of metacognitive strategies, the diagnosis of communicative and characterological features of personality and signs of leadership are determined.

Results: These studies indicate the readiness of students for future activities. 80% of respondents were diagnosed with a high level of such potential, 20% – medium. The results indicate that the respondents have a significant potential of communicative and characterological abilities that can affect their further professional activity: intellectual ($4,11 \pm 0,66$) and volitional ($4,17 \pm 0,33$) traits, attitude to themselves ($4,02 \pm 0,36$), focus on achieving goals ($4,22 \pm 0,42$). The evaluation of the above characteristics was made on a 5-point scale. Future managers have formed a metacognitive "profile", identified high levels of metacognitive abilities ($47,6 \pm 4,182$ points).

Conclusions: It is established that the respondents have a high and appropriate moderate level of formation of the main components of readiness for managerial activity and have the appropriate managerial potential.

KEY WORDS: Leadership, socio-psychological characteristics, competencies, personnel

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INTRODUCTION

A modern health care manager must master a powerful arsenal of approaches and methods of effective management. In addition, in the context of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the problem of readiness of health care managers for management activities is becoming increasingly important and encourages its urgent solution. A significant role in solving this issue is played by the formation of socio-psychological readiness of managers to lead health care facilities.

Socio-psychological readiness from the standpoint of personal approach is seen as a result of preparedness of the future manager for a particular activity, which involves a combination of many components that meet the requirements, content and conditions of a particular activity and together determine its productive implementation [1].

Socio-psychological readiness for management is influenced by a number of factors. These are the following: (1) the presence of general and special abilities, motivation for management, special knowledge and skills; (2) readiness to manage risks, as well as solving complex issues, overcoming stressful situations in order to achieve goals; (3) the ability to operate under high stress; (4) willingness to act in a rapidly changing environment; (5) value attitude to professionalism; (6) the formation of the "I-concept", which includes ideas about professional activities and their own careers; (7) the development of cognitive and metacognitive processes [2-5].

Socio-psychological readiness characterizes the actual and potential resources of a person, which determine his ability to achieve mastery in the profession, includes specific actions and deeds of the individual that contribute to the productive functioning and development of the organization he manages [6].

In preparing and conducting this research, the approaches and competencies catalogue of management positions in the medical field, recommended by the Healthcare Leadership Alliance (HLA), were used. This catalogue of competencies of health care managers includes 802 competencies of health care managers in five main groups:

- communication and relation management;
- leadership;
- professionalism;
- knowledge of health care;
- business knowledge and skills [7].

Analysis of the content of HLA competencies indicates a significant role for the acquisition of socio-psychological resources of the health manager: professional and personal motivation, the formation of intellectual processes (cognitions and metacognitions), communication skills, development of certain personal characteristics.

THE AIM

The aim of the study was to determine the content, components, and levels of formation of socio-psychological

readiness of future managers of the health care system for management activities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was conducted among students of master's programs who studied at the School of Public Health of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, NaUKMA, specialization "Health Care Management", and the Institute of Business Education of Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman, KNEU, specialization "Business Administration in the field of health care": a total of 30 respondents (15 of whom studied at NaUKMA, the other 15 – KNEU). The study was conducted in March – June 2021.

The following methods were used in the research:

1. Determining among respondents the levels of such basic motivators of activity as (1) success in general, (2) desire for power, (3) tendencies to affiliation (group recognition and respect) was carried out according to the method of diagnosing motivators of socio-psychological activity of person.
2. To diagnose the level of formation of metacognitive strategies in respondents, a scale of self-assessment of metacognitive behavior was used (maximum score of 60 points).
3. Diagnosis of communicative-characterological features of personality was used to determine the basic features of personality in the process of interpersonal relationships [8], which allowed to form a profile of communicative-characterological features of respondents on 7 indicators: personality orientation, intellectual, volitional, emotional traits and attitudes to others and to oneself.
4. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was used to assess leadership competencies, including those related to transformational leadership by indicators such as influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individual approach, motivation, management, independence and overall factor of transformational leadership (total for all these factors) [9].
5. To differentiate managerial capacity by levels (low, medium, high), rapid assessment of managerial potential was used. Evaluation of results according to this method: the range of values from 1 to 6 points – a low level of management capacity, the average from 7 to

13 – average, from 14 to 20 points – high.

6. A special questionnaire was developed to study the socio-psychological characteristics of respondents (age, gender, general and managerial experience, availability of medical education).
7. Methods of mathematical statistics were used to process the obtained results: descriptive analysis to determine the formation of the main components of socio-psychological readiness for management of future managers of the health care system; statistical criteria of Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test to determine the differences between the structural components of the socio-psychological readiness of future managers of the health care system to manage at different levels of its formation [10].

We considered various ethical concerns while carrying out this research. The research methodology was considered at the meeting of the NaUKMA Academic Council Committee on Research Ethics (protocol № 6 from May 27th, 2021).

The informed consent was obtained from each respondent. Information about the aim, objectives and scope of this study was provided at the beginning of the investigation. The complete confidentiality of the respondents was therefore guaranteed. All data collected for the purpose of this study was used only for the study.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows, version 25, 2017, SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA) was used for data analysis.

RESULTS

The main characteristics of the respondents are presented in the Table I. The study involved 6 men and 24 women, mean age – 37.97 ± 1.3 years (median – 33), work experience as a manager in the field of health care – 4.83 ± 0.73 years (median – 4). 50% of respondents had medical higher education (NaUKMA – 8; KNEU – 7).

The results of the study on the motivational component indicate that the need for success in all students without exception is at a high level (100% of respondents); for 73.3% of respondents such a motivator as "Desire for power" is fixed at a high level, 26.7% – average. The motive-tendency to affiliation as a group recognition and respect or desire for social prestige does not occupy such high levels as the above-mentioned motivators. 40% of master's students have a high level of its formation, 60% of master's students – medium level.

Table I. General characteristics of respondents

	NaUKMA	KNEU	General sample
Number	15	15	30
Age, years	23-44	21-45	21-45
Sex	Male	3	6
	Female	12	24
General work experience	from 3 to 22 years	from 5,5 to 35 years	from 3 to 35 years
Management experience	from 1 to 15 years	from 1 to 15 years	from 1 to 15 years
Number of people with medical education	8	7	15

Table II. Frequency characteristics of self-assessment levels of metacognitive behavior

	Frequency	Interest	Accumulated interest
33,00	1	3,3	3,3
43,00	1	3,3	6,7
44,00	3	10,0	16,7
45,00	3	10,0	26,7
46,00	3	10,0	36,7
47,00	4	13,3	50,0
48,00	3	10,0	60,0
49,00	3	10,0	70,0
50,00	3	10,0	80,0
52,00	2	6,7	86,7
53,00	3	10,0	96,7
55,00	1	3,3	100,0
Total	30	100,0	

Table III. Distribution of respondents' data by levels of leadership abilities

Components of leadership	Level					
	Low abilities		Moderate abilities		High abilities	
	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Influence	0	0	7	23,3	23	76,7
Inspiration	0	0	4	13,3	26	86,7
Intellectual stimulation	0	0	17	56,7	13	43,3
Individual approach	0	0	15	50,0	15	50,0
Motivation	0	0	9	30,0	21	70,0
Management	1	3,3	13	43,3	16	53,3
Granting independence	1	3,3	16	53,3	13	43,3

Peculiarities of the intellectual component among the respondents were studied according to the method "Scale of self-assessment of metacognitive behavior" (maximum score of 60 points). The individual results of the respondents according to this method were located in the zone of mostly high and medium values (average value 47.6 ± 4.182 points). Frequency characteristics of self-assessment levels of metacognitive behavior of respondents are presented in the Table II.

The study of the profile of communicative-characterological features of personality included such basic features of personality as orientation, intellectual, volitional and emotional traits of character, attitude to activity, to others and to oneself. Among the respondents, orientation as one of the communicative and characterological features of personality, which determines all the behaviour of the individual, attitude to oneself, others and work, has the highest level (4.22 ± 0.42). Among the communicative and characterological features of the respondents, the most important character traits are those that describe the intellectual (4.11 ± 0.66) and volitional traits (4.17 ± 0.33) of the character, as well as the attitude to oneself (4.02 ± 0.36). Emotional traits (3.77 ± 0.46) have a lower weight, which

characterizes future managers mainly as more restrained in emotional manifestations. The lowest rate is the attitude towards others or service to others (3.65 ± 0.56).

Leadership abilities of future managers were investigated using a standardized questionnaire "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire" [9] to identify three levels of 7 factor-scale associated with transformational leadership indicators: influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individual approach, motivation, management and representation of independence. The results for the levels of individual components related to leadership are presented in Table III.

In general, such socio-personal competence as leadership among respondents is formed at the appropriate level. The highest results were obtained on the scales "Inspiration" (diagnosed in 86.7% of respondents), "Influence" (76.7%) and "Motivation" (70%). The results between the average and high levels were almost equally distributed according to other factor-scales: "Intellectual stimulation" and "Granting independence" (high levels in 43.3% of respondents, medium – 56.7% and 53.3%, respectively), "Individual approach" – distribution of 50: 50% between moderate and high levels of ability.

Table IV. Data of statistical analysis of managerial potential of respondents

Socio-psychological characteristics		N	Middle rank	The sum of the ranks	Manna-Whitney U test	Wilcoxon signed-rank test	Standard score, z-score	Asymptotic 2-sided significance
Age	Medium level	6	18,25	109,50	55,500	355,500	-,857	,391
	High level	24	14,81	355,50				
	Total	30						
General work experience	Medium level	6	16,08	96,50	68,500	368,500	-,182	,855
	High level	24	15,35	368,50				
	Total	30						
Work experience in a managerial position	Medium level	6	15,67	94,00	71,000	-,052	,958	,980b
	High level	24	15,46	371,00				
	Total	30						
Motivator of activity: achieving success	Medium level	6	12,50	75,00	54,000	-,961	,336	,374b
	High level	24	16,25	390,00				
	Total	30						
Motivator of activity: the desire for power	Medium level	6	16,92	101,50	63,500	-,446	,655	,667b
	High level	24	15,15	363,50				
	Total	30						
Motivator of activity: the desire for affiliation	Medium level	6	13,75	82,50	61,500	-,550	,582	,595b
	High level	24	15,94	382,50				
	Total	30						
Leadership: influence	Medium level	6	14,17	85,00	64,000	-,435	,664	,705b
	High level	24	15,83	380,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: the ability to inspire	Medium level	6	13,50	81,00	60,000	-,640	,522	,561b
	High level	24	16,00	384,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: intellectual stimulation	Medium level	6	14,67	88,00	67,000	-,266	,790	,820b
	High level	24	15,71	377,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: individual approach	Medium level	6	14,00	84,00	63,000	-,483	,629	,667b
	High level	24	15,88	381,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: motivation	Medium level	6	20,17	121,00	44,000	-1,486	,137	,158b
	High level	24	14,33	344,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: management	Medium level	6	13,85	132,50	32,500	-2,083	,037	,038b
	High level	24	22,08	332,50				
	Total	30						
Leadership: giving independence	Medium level	6	19,17	115,00	50,000	-1,155	,248	,273b
	High level	24	14,58	350,00				
	Total	30						
Leadership: transformation	Medium level	6	14,90	107,50	57,500	-,754	,451	,462b
	High level	24	17,92	357,50				
	Total	30						

Self-assessment of metacognitive behavior	Medium level	6	13,00	78,00	57,000	-,781	,435	,462b
	High level	24	16,13	387,00	78,000			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: orientation	Medium level	6	15,00	90,00	69,000	-,156	,876	,900b
	High level	24	15,63	375,00	90,000			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: intellectual	Medium level	6	12,58	75,50	54,500	-,937	,349	,374b
	High level	24	16,23	389,50	75,500			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: volitional	Medium level	6	10,75	64,50	43,500	-1,491	,136	,143b
	High level	24	16,69	400,50	64,500			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: emotional	Medium level	6	14,67	88,00	67,000	-,263	,792	,820b
	High level	24	15,71	377,00	88,000			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: attitude to activity	Medium level	6	11,42	68,50	47,500	-1,286	,198	,210b
	High level	24	16,52	396,50	68,500			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: attitude to others	Medium level	6	18,08	108,50	56,500	-,817	,414	,432b
	High level	24	14,85	356,50	356,500			
	Total	30						
Communicative and characterological features: attitude to oneself	Medium level	6	9,75	58,50	37,500	-1,836	,066	,073b
	High level	24	16,94	406,50	58,500			
	Total	30						

b. Not adjusted for connections.

Thus, in general, it can be stated that these studies indicate the formation of the respondents of 7 studied factors of leadership as the main characteristic of personal competence, readiness for management activities in the field of health care.

The results of comparing the levels of managerial potential between respondents studying at NaUKMA and KNEU indicate the presence of only one difference on the scale "Management" of the methodology "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire" ($p = 0.037$) (Table IV). This scale indicates the peculiarities of the formation of personal competence to the implementation of the management process, the organization of effective work of employees or subordinates.

In terms of managerial capacity, 80% of respondents were diagnosed with a high level of such capacity, 20% – average, which indicates a significant willingness of future managers to work in the health care sector.

Thus, the results of the study indicate the appropriate level of formation of all the main components of social and psychological readiness of future managers studying in the master's programs of NaUKMA and KNEU, for management activities in the field of health care.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study on the formation of the main components of readiness for management showed its proper level among all respondents. This is due to the diversification of educational training of future managers in the field of health care, their involvement in independent activities, solving professional issues, as pointed out by other researchers [11,12]. Some researchers also note that "manager" competency in the health care system was redefined as "leader" competency [13].

The need to study the main components of socio-psychological readiness of future managers in terms of leadership

qualities is confirmed by other studies [14]. According to Maddalena V., the concept of leadership belongs to teamwork with a common model of decision-making, so it should be applied and strengthened among all health care professions [15].

The presence of a high level of managerial capacity among 80% of respondents indicates their readiness for future activities, as this may affect the productivity of work processes and the activities of the health care institution [16].

These studies indicate that intellectual competence, as one of the main components of readiness for management activities of future managers, is formed at the appropriate level. According to some researchers, the developed intellectual competence expands the cognitive support of human life, the formation of his overall life experience [17], which is important for further professional activity.

Data from the study of the general profile of communicative and characterological features of students-future managers indicate that the respondents are most characterized by orientation, intellectual and volitional traits. This is an important “finding” of this study, as the role of the manager in setting the goals of the institution or its structural unit, responding to challenges and obstacles, making decisions to ensure productive activities, etc. are the key in its activities [18]. Emotional character traits have a lower weight, which characterizes future managers mainly as more restrained in emotional manifestations.

CONCLUSIONS

1. A model for determining the socio-psychological readiness of future health care managers for leading activities, which included motivational, intellectual, communicative and personal components, was used during the study.
2. It is established that the respondents have a high and appropriate moderate levels of formation of the main components of readiness for management activities and have the appropriate management potential, in particular:
 - the motivational component in terms of the need-motivator to achieve success in general is formed in all respondents at a high level, because the desire to succeed, rather than the desire to avoid failure, is an important characteristic of managerial efficiency;
 - the level of the intellectual component of the respondents is high, which is acceptable for identifying readiness for management activities;
 - communicative component, which is closely related to characterological features, is also formed, which indicates the commitment of respondents to collective forms of interaction, the appropriate level of communication, focus on the result of interaction with others, building friendly relationships with colleagues, promoting constructive interaction between people and groups in any situation;
 - personal competencies, which were considered mainly through the socio-personal competence of leadership in terms of: influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individual approach, motivation, management, representation of independence, have mostly high and moderate levels of ability, indicating that respondents are able to overcome obstacles on the way to achieving goals, build self-confidence, motivate others to achieve goals, create an environment that allows employees to show their abilities and self-realization.

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The Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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