



The efficiency of psychological support mechanisms for leaders making decisions under uncertainty

Eficiencia de mecanismos de ayuda psicológica para líderes que toman decisiones bajo condiciones de incertidumbre

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ABSTRACT:

The objective of the paper consists in finding out the factors of efficiency of the initial action stage in the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty. The research methods are the analysis of literature, questionnaire survey, the survey itself, structured observation, gaming modeling of managerial uncertainty, control analysis of cases, experiment, qualitative analysis of graphically depicted data; Delphi method, and the statistical comparative-contrastive analysis of data using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test of differences. Results of the research are as follows: the mechanism of psychological support is a self-developing open system whose forming elements are the psychologist's counseling performance, the event context of the uncertainty problem to be overcome, and the way the leader-client perceives the initiated by him process of counseling that develops in the course of receiving the support. The dynamically functioning structure of the mechanism of psychological support consists of four stages. It has been confirmed by experiment that counseling in the genre of client-centered approach combined with elements of cognitive-behavioral style is a factor of efficiency at the initial stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders.

RESUMEN:

El objetivo radica en detectar factores de eficiencia de la fase inicial del efecto del mecanismo de ayuda psicológica al jefe que sufre dificultades para tomar decisiones en las condiciones de incertidumbre. Métodos de la investigación: análisis de la literatura, encuestas, sondeo, observación estructurada, simulación de juego de la incertidumbre de gestión, análisis controlado de incidencias, experimento, análisis cualitativo de los datos representados gráficamente; método de evaluaciones de peritos, análisis estadístico comparativo de datos según la prueba no paramétrica de diferencias de Mann - Whitney. Resultados de la investigación: mecanismo de ayuda psicológica es un sistema de desarrollo autónomo, abierto, cuyos elementos constituyentes son la actividad asesora del psicólogo, el contexto de eventos del problema de incertidumbre a superar, la percepción por el cliente - jefe del proceso de consulta iniciado por él que se desarrolla en el transcurso de la obtención de la ayuda. La estructura del mecanismo de la ayuda psicológica que funciona dinámicamente consiste en cuatro fases. Se confirma experimentalmente que el asesoramiento en el contexto del enfoque de centrado en el cliente, en combinación con los elementos del estilo cognitivo y comportamental, es un factor de eficiencia en la fase inicial del efecto del mecanismo de ayuda psicológica

1. Introduction

The methods, forms, ways and practices of working with clients for rendering them psychological support of various level, focus and content, not only numerous but ever growing in number, are explored in an all-round manner in the works of A. Adler (2009), L. Vygotsky (1982, 2010), M. Mamardashvili (Mamardashvili et al., 1981), A. Asmolov (Guseltseva & Asmolov, 2007), B. Bratus (1997), F. Vasilyuk (2003, 2007), F. Bondarenko (1997, 2006), G. Abramova (2008), and Yu. Gippenreyter (2009). Alongside with that, the studies make little use of the metaphor "the mechanism" of psychological support that allows considering the psychological assistance as an integrative, systemic, mutually permeating and dynamic unity. The unity brings together, first of all, the psychologist's counseling efforts, secondly, the client who initiates the psychologist's efforts while also responding to them, and thirdly, the problem situation which changes under the effect of the first and the second summands. However, if it is uncertainty in resources, objectives, results expected, or the extent to which the managerial problem corresponds to personally significant values of the leader solving it that are the problem situation, in this case, the methods of counseling the leaders are extremely few in number; they are discussed in the works of De Haan, E. (2006), P. Block (2007), M. Kubra (1992), E. Schein (1969), L. M. Krol, E. A. Purtova (2004), and A. Prigozhin (2017). The client's feedback is usually analyzed as a sort of external side of the psychotechnical methods in the works of A. Bondarenko (1997), F. Vasilyk (2007), A. Kopyev and T. Topolskaya (2017), Y. Zhang, T. Meng, Y. Hou, Y. Pan, and Y. Hu (2018). Moreover, no studies on this range of topics deal with the question about using the efficient mechanism of psychological support for leaders to increase the safety of managerial decisions making. Proceeding from this, one can suppose the client's feedback is shifted to the inside of the psychological support system, and, owing to this, new theoretical and psychotechnical opportunities open up for identifying the efficiency area of the support, the latter being considered then as a single psychological mechanism. The contemporary consulting psychology has not formed a united idea about the essence of psychological support for leaders, the contradictions being represented in the works of A. Obholzer, V. Roberts (1994), L. Tobias (1996), Yu. Lapyghin (2006), W. West (2008), and V. Dudchenko (2004), so the palette of definitions of psychological support appears quite variegated (Bellman, 1990; Vasilyuk, 2007; Abramova, 2008). In most studies, clearly or implicitly, there is a trend to be noticed for structuring the counseling process, and the emphasis is placed on the first, initial stage of the counseling work with the client which largely determines the efficiency of the entire subsequent psychological support (Sidnell, 2010; Sanberk & Akbas, 2015; Kariaghina & Ivanova, 2017; Vasilyuk, 2003; Bondarenko, 1997, 2006; Dudchenko, 2004; Marasanov, 2009). The efficiency of the initial stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty decision-making under uncertainty may be associated with the following factors:

- the leader-client's readiness to ask for psychological support;
- to the client's request according to the client-centered approach canons;
- the counselor's being oriented to generating jointly with the client various ways for overcoming the uncertainty, to making sense of clear and implicit consequences of each of possible decision options and their correspondence to the client's life values, which creates prerequisites for making the subjective perception of the world and self-perception of the leader-client more complicated.

If the factors involved are identified, the objective of the research will be achieved – finding out the efficiency factors of the initial stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty.

The following definitions became the theoretical and methodological basis of the research: "psychological mechanism", "uncertainty in managerial decisions", and "psychological support" as the valid theoretical notions in the current scientific use. The theoretical model of the research requires finding out and providing theoretical grounds for the external

conditions, the internal factors, essential characteristics and conceptual criteria of efficiency of the mechanisms of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty. Identifying the essential characteristics and conceptual criteria allows making more specific and describing the essential characteristics of the mechanisms of psychological support in any stage of their action having found out their structure and functional features. Each action stage has to be described and singled out on its own, equally as the mechanisms of support engaged during each stage. Based on the theoretical model, the empirical model for developing and backing up the research program is constructed. Special empirical study in the form of questionnaire survey is the initial section of the program and it is aimed at studying the way leaders perceive the uncertainty situations. The framework elements of the empirical model for studying the efficiency of mechanisms of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making managerial decisions under uncertainty are the indicators of counseling performance and general attributes of the counselor's role. They are shaped as a system as a result of a certain process the characteristics of which can be identified by questionnaire survey. The efficiency of a mechanism of psychological support can be identified using the experimental study involving the development of experiment program and the series of experiments included into it, such as gaming modeling in an uncertainty situation and the analysis of cases. It makes sense to present the results of the experiments and conclusions on the experiment program as data and interpretation thereof. Practical recommendations are of the applied type and can be used in the counselors' working with leaders.

2. Literature review

The notion of psychological support belongs to the field of psychological practice. Theoretical and methodological bases of understanding and putting into actual practice the ways, forms, kinds and methods of rendering psychological support have been developed by many researchers, practicing counselors, and methodologists of psychotechnical aspects in psychology. Among them, there are A. Adler (2013), L. Vygotsky (1982, 2010), M. Mamardashvili (Mamardashvili et al., 1981), A. Asmolov (2015), B. Bratus (1997), F. Vasilyuk (2003, 2007), A. Bondarenko (1997), G. Abramova (2008), Yu. Gippenreyter (2009) and many others. As F. Vasilyuk (2003) has demonstrated, suggestion and hypnosis of F. Mesmer (1980), and Sh. M. Sharko (Bogousslavsky, 2011) as the means of psychological support were supplemented with psychoanalytical comprehension of the unconscious by S. Freud (1997), K. G. Jung (2010), A. Adler (2018), S. Ferenczi (1995) in the late 19th – early 20th century. Then, tools enriching the arsenal of psychological support means were developed, such as initiating the client's spontaneity as a prerequisite for creativity and creative search in overcoming the problems, presented in the works of L. Moreno (1934). Next, it was learning (Skinner, 1988; Bandura, 1973), and then emotional experience (Allport, 1937; Rogers, 1959; Frankl, 1960; Vasilyuk, 2003) considered as a kind of activity (Vasilyuk, 2007) opening for the clients the possibility to "rework" the problem on their own, to undertake the responsibility in decision-making, that became the prevailing ones in "relying" on the effect of support. At present, the eclectic approach suggested and developed by J. Prokhazka (2007), J. Norcross (Norcross & Goldfried, 2005), L. Framo (1976), R. Lerner (Baltes et al., 2014), A. Lindsay, M. Langevin (2017) is becoming more and more noticeable and widespread in the actual practice of rendering psychological support. Given that leaders being clients of a counselor psychologist tend to project their own personal problems onto the problems of the object controlled by them and as if "de-psychologize" their difficulties, so the management counselors by and large, too, are trying to separate themselves from psychology in every respect (Marasanov, 2009), presenting themselves as organizational development advisors, management ones, systemic business processes re-engineering consultants, organizational counseling specialists, managerial skills trainers, coaches and the like.

The levels of psychological support have been determined in many works, metaanalysis of which given in the studies of A. Bondarenko (1997, 2000). The psych technics of rendering psychological support relies on elementary recommendations guiding the practicing counselors to friendliness, non-judgmental attitude to the clients, trying to understand the

clients' norms and values, non-disclosure of the content of counseling sessions, distinction between personal and professional relations of the counselors with their clients, etc. (Bondarenko, 1997).

Consulting psychology integrates the psychological theories aimed at detailing, describing and giving grounds for the motives of psychological work with clients (Derkach & Marasanov, 1996).

Psychological counseling is the sphere of science and practice, a branch of consulting psychology, the work with consciousness, emotional experience, and one's system of subjective psychological ideas (Vasilyuk, 2007). A number of authors consider psychological counseling as a total of procedures or a psychological process of interaction with clients, assistance to people in exploring their problems, restoring the logics of individual or organizational life (Abramova, 2008; Draskovic et al., 2017; Kornilova, 2014).

In particular, E. De Haan (2006) believes psychological support for leaders is "the temporary relations of cooperation between an individual client or an organization client and the counselor the objective of which is the improvement of the client's situation". Publishing his book "Flawless consulting" in 1981, Peter Block (2007) defines the counselor's work as "giving advice to someone who is faced with a choice". Here, it is only the reference and expert understanding of the counselor's work that is given. The counselor has provided his piece of advice, and the client may do with it whatever he or she pleases. However, there is considerably less initiative in the counselor's standpoint as interpreted by P. Block than by the previous author. M. Kubra (1992), the author of the monograph "Managerial counseling. An introduction to the profession" believes "any form of rendering support in relation to a certain task when the counselor bears no real responsibility for completing the very task" can be called psychological support. In his book "The Consultant's Calling", G. Bellman (1990) suggests that psychological support be understood as "using one's expertise for helping the clients to narrow the gap between what they now have and what they want or need". In the work "Secrets of consulting", G. Weinberg (Weinberg & Shay, 1985) writes that psychological support is "the art of influencing people at their request". In this case, it is worded so vaguely and mildly that it is almost graceful. Edgar Schein (1969) in the book "Process Consultation" calls psychological support "creating of a relationship with the client that permits the client to perceive, understand and act on the process event in order to improve the situation as defined by the client". As for A. Obholtzer (Obholtzer & Roberts, 2003), he thinks psychological support for leaders is just "licensed stupidity: asking naïve questions".

According to L. Krol and E. Purtova (2004), it is difficult to draw a line between training and counseling as the psychological support forms. The authors are convinced that both of these kinds of work "frequently merge and drift into each other" while in the work of Yu. Lapyghin (2006), a counselor is treated as both a researcher and a trainer, too. The three versions of the counselor's occupation are given by Yu. Lapyghin (2006) implicitly. Illustrating his reasoning with practical examples, L. Tobias (1996) shows that psychological support for leaders and top managers aimed at solving the problems of the client's organization in general cannot be rendered without taking into account the opportunities and data granted by the psychology of management, organizational psychology, and managerial psychology. Currently, in the psychology of management, two trends are clearly observed – the organizational and industrial one and the clinical consulting trend. According to A. Holmes (2006), psychological support for leaders is a mixture of creativity and discipline. V. Dudchenko (2004) believes a counselor is first of all an innovator, transformer, initiator and temptor of changes that can be responded to by the client.

Theoretical bases acting as a sort of foundation for psychotechnical modeling and detailing the mechanisms of work of a counselor rendering psychological assistance to a client and reflecting the essence of psychological mechanisms of such support are discussed in the works of F. Vasilyuk (2003, 2007). The following stage characterized by another change of aspects to rely on, according to F. Vasilyuk (2003, 2007), was the counselor's being oriented to providing the leader-client with the required skills, abilities, practices and ways for overcoming problems and solving the "bad" (Derner, 1997) managerial problems, i.e. those

in which the lack, excess or corruption of the input data, information and resources create the condition of uncertainty. That is, elements of learning, programmed learning, the use of active methods for improving the leaders' managerial expertise were extensively being integrated into the process of rendering the psychological support. In F. Vasilyuk's opinion (2007), it was the idea of freeing leaders from obstacles blocking the access to their own personal resources for them that formed the backbone of the psychological support development vector directed from relying on suggestion to relying on emotional experience.

3. Research methods

The objective of the research is to identify the efficiency factors of the initial stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty. The following tasks were set for achieving the objective: to give a definition of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders as a single systemic process; to find out elements of this system; to provide a characteristic of the counselor; to show particularities of uncertainty being reflected in the leader's consciousness and the difficulties the leader has choosing a decision; to perform analytical review of a number of scientific works on this range of topics; to show the effects of psychological support for leaders; to present the functional and structural diagram, the theoretical and experimental model of psychological support, and recommendations on rendering it.

The research methods used in the work are as follows: the analysis of literature, questionnaire survey, survey, structured observation, gaming modeling of managerial uncertainty, control analysis of cases, experiment. Alongside with these, qualitative analysis of graphically depicted data; Delphi method, and the statistical comparative-contrastive analysis of data using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test of differences were employed in the empirical part of the research.

4. Results and discussion

Theoretical analysis has shown that turning to the notion "the mechanism of psychological support" is methodologically justified, and the working definition for the notion can be worded as follows: the mechanism of psychological support is a single process of a self-developing, open system ensuring the optimum conditions for leaders-clients which contribute to their successfully finding the most efficient managerial decision in the uncertainty situation. The forming elements of this system are: consulting efforts of the psychologist who responds to the leader-client's initiating the request of psychological support in overcoming the uncertainty problem; the content-related, event context within which psychological support is generated and provided; means and methods of rendering such support targeted at the client's request and in the initial stage corresponding to the humanist approach canons combined with elements of cognitive-behavioral concepts of rendering the psychological support. The counselor's characteristics ensuring the efficiency of psychological support include:

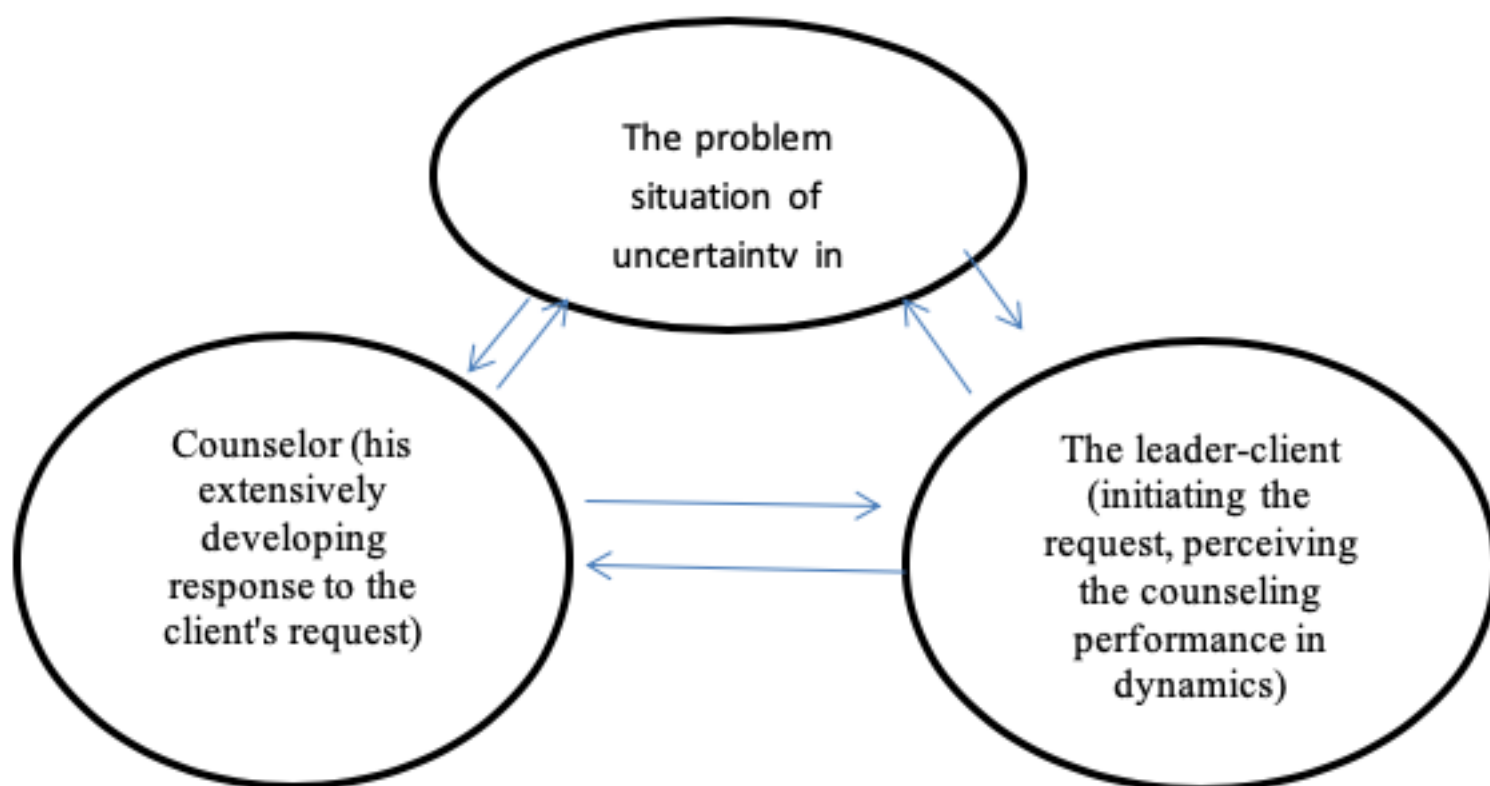
- the counselor's ability to show empathy and congruence;
- flexibility and variability of the counselor's thinking;
- the counselor's emotional intellect;

as well as having a considerable stock of knowledge about the plots of clients' problems, ways of their overcoming their own problems, and methods yielding results with various consequences.

In the process of the analysis conducted, the multidimensionality of ideas about the psychological support for leaders has been detailed. It is shown that uncertainty hindering the leaders' making managerial decisions and perceived by them as a problem is actually the way the necessity to choose from equally significant and at the same time mutually exclusive lines of overcoming the problem is projected in the consciousness of the managerial activity subject, they being not always aware of the said necessity to the full extent. This can be experienced as a stress, frustration, intrapersonal conflict or, in its extreme manifestation, as an identity crisis. The choice complexity variants imply the

relevant complexity of the psychological support mechanism. In order to achieve the objectives of the research, an analytical review of a number of the more prominent works having influenced the development of ideas about psychological support in Europe, Russia and the USA was performed. It has been shown that among the most frequently mentioned attributes and indicators registered as psychological support effects by the majority of approaches, the following are found: insight, the subjectively important clients' opening for themselves some new ways for achieving their objective, gaining new patterns of thinking and behavior as a result of social learning, expansion of the choice field of the variants of overcoming the uncertainty owing to overcoming the unconscious limitations, rethinking of values, and transformation of the global life intentions. As a result, the following functional diagram has been justified (Figure 1), and so has the structure of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty which consists of four stages that become important in sequence: the initial stage, the stage of working through objectives, the stage of working through values, and the one of designing the life strategies. At each stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support, the criterion of efficiency of this mechanism is made more specific in the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional and motivational aspects in Table 1.

Figure 1
Overview of Functioning of the Psychological Support Mechanism Hotels



Source: the authors

Table 1
Efficiency Criteria of the Psychological Support Mechanisms for Leaders Overcoming Difficulties Associated with Making Managerial Decisions in Conditions of Uncertainty

Stages of action of the psychological support mechanism	Constituents of the mechanism of psychological support associated with the psychologist's consulting efforts	Criteria of efficiency		
		Behavioral constituent of the criterion	Cognitive constituent of the criterion	Emotional constituent of the criterion
Initial stage	Support in overcoming the manifestations of	The client's passing from demanding urgent expert support to testing out	The client's realizing the acute intolerability of	Support in feeling annoyed due to the opportunities lost

	stress, in making laconic exhaustive recommendations	various ways for obtaining the lacking resources	stretching out the uncertainty; making sense of causes of the need of instantly overcoming the problem	when rejecting a decision option
Stage of working through objectives	Support in overcoming the frustration, in developing variant, alternative ways for overcoming the problem.	The client's readiness for discussing paths and alternative ways of moving to the objective; passing to discussing possible actions that meet personally important values rather than objectives to a greater extent	Realizing the dependence on one's duties to follow previously set objectives, rethinking of the dependence	Support for the client in overcoming the aggression toward himself or herself and ones around him or her; going out from automatic actions, getting rid of vague fears by means of making them more specific
Stage of working through values	Support in overcoming the intrapersonal conflict by means of the dialogue about choice as refusing to fulfill any decisions that are not up to personal values.	The client's readiness for reappraisal of personally important values; the client goes on to modeling the updated image of the desired future	The client's realizing his or her dependence on values, rethinking and assumption of valid values, transforming them or rejecting some of them	Support for the client in overcoming the intrapersonal conflict; support in productive emotional experience of denying the motives in oneself that do not conform to the norms assumed
Stage of transforming the life strategies	Support in overcoming the life crisis, in designing new events and developing new objectives, personal and professional intentions of the global scale.	The client's readiness for generating certain action options contributing to exiting the life tight corner; the wish to make first steps aimed at updating one's life activity in personal and professional terms	The client's realizing the global scale of his or her life tight corner; rethinking the ultimate life meanings, which creates prerequisites for updating the personality of the client	Support in experiencing the collapse of life intentions, in overcoming the feelings of despair. Identifying any positive aspects in the tight corner situation having been formed

Source: the authors

The theoretical model of studying the efficiency of mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making managerial decisions under uncertainty encompasses three systemically interrelated focus areas, namely – conditions and factors of emergence of the uncertainty; essential characteristics of psychological difficulties of the leaders; and the psychological support mechanism. The essence of functioning of the psychological support mechanism is formed of the notions of the mechanism where the latter is treated as an open self-developing system inside which the counselor makes efforts, the leader-client acts making a decision, and the uncertainty situation is transformed under their joint action. The

structure of the psychological support mechanism as a construct consists of four stages. They are the initial stage, the stage of working through objectives, that of working through values and the stage of transforming personal and professional intentions, or life strategies. For each stage of action of the psychological support mechanism, its own variant of the way efficiency criterion is detailed has been specified. In particular, it is stated that the main, key criterion of efficiency of the psychological support mechanism will be that of development of the leader's personality, with development understood as sophistication. The initial stage of action of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders making decisions under uncertainty proves to be the determining one for the entire subsequent counseling work. Here, the efficiency will be achieved if the counselor psychologist orients to support methods being in line with client-centered concept canons combined with the cognitive-behavioral approach when responding to the leader-client's request. Based on the review of a number of studies dealing with the nature, practices, approaches and specific techniques of studying the psychological difficulties under uncertainty, the special empirical research into the leaders' perception of managerial uncertainty has been conducted. Here, psychological difficulties are understood as the reflected in the leader-client's consciousness necessity to make a choice. According to the results of questionnaire survey, it has been found that the majority of leaders (57%) realize uncertainty as a possible scarcity of resources. This involves a lack of time, information, staffing, financing, power authorities. 27% ranked first the uncertainty in technologies and work methods. 8% pointed out the problem of uncertainty of the objective for an activity required or justification of indicators to be achieved. Another 8% noted the uncertainty in correspondence of the required decisions to their professional beliefs and personally important values. Meanwhile, in gaming modeling of managerial uncertainty, the distribution of difficulties realized by the participants in relation to uncertainty in its various manifestations has featured significant discrepancy with the preliminary distribution. Hence, a justified conclusion has arisen about the essential difference between the leaders' "known" and actually valid ideas about their own ways of overcoming the uncertainty. The way of forming the indicators and attributes reflecting efficiency of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders making decisions under uncertainty has been given grounds. At the stage of questionnaire survey, 31% opted for overcoming the uncertainty problem independently and refused any support. 25% expected ready-made useful and practicable recommendations implying no debates. 21% tended to discuss the problem with ones they completely trust as people, with their professional expertise being second important here. 14% preferred to collect their immediate circle and have something like brainstorming. It was only 9% who would turn to a professional counselor. The results were compared against the data obtained in the studies of J. Framo (1976), J. Norcross (Norcross and Goldfried, 1999), J. Prokhazka (2007) et al. where the determining role of the initial counseling process stage is shown experimentally and as high or even higher efficiency of the psychological support rendered by non-professionals at its initial stage is found. The total of the theoretical analysis and survey conducted was the task of developing an experiment which would model the support received not from a professionally trained counselor but from an interested interlocutor. So, in the first series of the experiments, the "counselor" knew the correct way of overcoming the problem while he did not in the second one. Guidelines regulating the style, manner and genre of rendering the psychological support for the leader-clients and the association of these guidelines with efficiency indicators of the psychological support mechanism are given in Table 2.

Table 2

Guidelines Regulating the Style of Psychological Support for "Counselors" in the Experiment
(their Associations with Efficiency Indicators of the Psychological Support Mechanism)

Efficiency indicators of the psychological support mechanism related to counseling performance	General attributes of the "counselor's" role	Guidelines on the manner of communication in the set role
1. Elements of cognitive-behavioral	Motivating for <i>group debates</i> –	Put questions, suggest answer

style (transformation of beliefs into hypotheses)	moderator	options to them, noting the benefits and costs of each option, ask the client's opinion
2. Directive approach	<i>Supporting in the form of ready-made recommendations</i> – advisor	Recommend in an assured manner, claim your variant is the only true one
3. Client-centered approach	Emotional support, active listening – interlocutor	Listen in an active manner, sum up, and return the meaning of what you hear
4. Expert approach, offering the choice options for overcoming the uncertainty	<i>Variants of decisions with "for" and "against" reasons</i> – expert	Suggest that the client should either fail or use your pieces of advice. Prepare two decision options
5. Enhancing the client's self-esteem directly	Supporting by means of <i>compliments, positive evaluation improving one's confidence of oneself</i> – inspirator	Praise the client. Find specific grounds for positive statements. Persuade the client he or she is able to overcome the problem independently

Source: the authors

The first series of experiments is built on the basis of gaming modeling of the uncertainty situation. The game was centered on the "prisoner's dilemma" (Kreps et al., 1982). The participants playing the part of counselors in the first series of experiments were informed about the most efficient problem overcoming way. The second series of experiments involved the participants' completing the task of analyzing a case. In this experiment series, the "counselor" participants were not informed about the most correct option of overcoming the problem.

The results of the empirical research are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3
Preferences of Leaders in Choosing Various Forms of Psychological Support Rendered if Decisions Have to Be Made under Uncertainty

The role of counselor – the variant of psychological support	"Known" preferences chosen from the variants suggested in the questionnaire		Actually valid preferences (ones that got expressed in the gaming situation)	
	The quantity of participants having chosen each of the variants	% of the total quantity of participants of the experiment	The quantity of participants having chosen each of the variants	% of the total quantity of participants of the experiment
1. Moderator – group debates	24	8	80	<u>27</u>
2. Advisor – ready-made recommendation	169	57	48	16
3. Interlocutor – joint	27	9	83	<u>28</u>

search for a decision				
4. Expert – offering the variants of actions	32	11	56	19
5. Inspirator – suggestion of confidence of success to the client	27	9	21	7
Refused from support	18	6	9	3
Σ: =	297	100%	297	100%

Source: the authors

The similar data have been obtained in the second series of experiments, too, where it was case analysis that was used instead of the gaming situation. The data are given in Table 4.

Table 4
Preferences of Leaders in Choosing Various Forms of Psychological Support Rendered if Decisions Have to Be Made under Uncertainty

The role of counselor – the variant of psychological support	"Known" preferences chosen from the variants suggested in the questionnaire		Actually valid preferences (ones that got expressed in the experiment "Case analysis")	
	The quantity of participants having chosen each of the variants	% of the total quantity of participants of the experiment	The quantity of participants having chosen each of the variants	% of the total quantity of participants of the experiment
1. Moderator – group debates	29	8	90	<u>26</u>
2. Advisor – ready-made recommendation	201	57	50	14
3. Interlocutor – joint search for a decision	31	9	105	<u>30</u>
4. Expert – offering the variants of actions	39	11	72	20
5. Inspirator – suggestion of confidence of success to the client	31	9	21	6
Refused from support	20	6	13	4
Σ: =	351	100%	351	100%

Source: the authors

The significance of differences was evaluated by the non-parametric method because the

empirical total made up of so few as four or five indicators not corresponding to the normal distribution can be discovered clearly and easily without special calculations. It suffices to present it graphically.

Calculation of U-test (Mann-Whitney) for evaluating the statistical validity of distinctions between the "known" and actually valid preferences in selecting the communication genre has shown the differences are not valid both for the gaming part of the experiment ($U_{emp.} = 19$, at $U_{cr.} 0,05 = 7$) and for the case analysis experiment ($U_{emp.} = 21$, at $U_{cr.} 0,05 = 7$).

Hence, in each case $U_{emp.} > U_{cr.} 0,05$ is obtained.

At the "known" level, the leaders tend to turn to **an advisor**. As for the gaming situation, they prefer to choose an **interlocutor** counselor. The counselors showing the **moderator's** part have landed second in importance. What confirms the research hypothesis experimentally is the fact that the counselor to leader-client communication genre being up to the client-centered approach (the role of **interlocutor – 28% and 30%**) combined with elements of cognitive-behavioral style (the role of **moderator – 27% and 26%**) has turned out to be more preferable significantly. If the roles are united in one conventionally eclectic style of the counselor's work, the style was preferred by 55% of the participants in the first series of experiments, and by 56% - in the second series.

Practical recommendations can be brought down to the fact that primarily, psychological support at the initial stage can be rendered not only by a professional counselor but also by an **interlocutor** who is merely interested in rendering such support and invites the leader's confidence. The assistance will be efficient if the interlocutor wraps his or her mind around the problem being discussed at the cognitive and emotional levels and shows readiness to discuss costs and benefits of each of the uncertainty problem overcoming ways being considered and generated.

5. Conclusion

Thus, specific practices and ways of manifesting a psychologist's counseling efforts have been found and tested out in the experiment. They are psych technical constituents of the initial stage of the psychological support mechanism, in particular, empathic understanding of the essence of the problem and the emotional response to the emotional experience emerging with the client, and recommendations expanding the field of choosing the managerial decisions that allow overcoming the uncertainty. In terms of science and methodology, the set of detailed practical recommendations on rendering the efficient psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making managerial decisions under uncertainty has been developed and tested out. The following statements appear to be the main results of the research.

Uncertainty in the management situation implies the relevant complexity of the mechanism of psychological support. Uncertainty hindering the leaders' making managerial decisions and perceived by them as a problem is actually the way the necessity to choose from equally significant and at the same time mutually exclusive lines of overcoming the problem is projected in the consciousness of the managerial activity subject, they being not always aware of the said necessity to the full extent. This can be experienced as a stress, frustration, intrapersonal conflict or, in its extreme manifestation, as an identity crisis. The plurality of choosing the ways for overcoming the uncertainty encompasses choosing the ways for achieving the objective; choosing the objectives; choosing the values determining the objectives; and, ultimately, choosing (updating) the life-meaning references and personal and professional intentions of the leaders. The mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty is a single process functioning as a self-developing, getting more sophisticated and open to any new for it actions system, its forming element being:

- consulting efforts of the psychologist who responds to the leader-client's initiating the request of psychological support,
- the content-related, event context within which psychological support is generated and provided,
- means and methods of rendering such support, in the initial stage corresponding to the humanist

- approach canons combined with elements of cognitive-behavioral concepts of rendering the psychological support,
- the leader-client's perception of the initiated by him process of consulting communication with the assisting psychologist which is getting more sophisticated and developed in the course of receiving the support.

The efficiency criteria of the psychological support mechanism at each subsequent stage of its action will be:

- expansion of the field of choosing the paths for achieving the objectives;
- passing on to the new levels of experiencing the uncertainty;
- rethinking, enrichment and transforming the palette of life and professional objectives;
- reappraisal of values towards sophistication thereof;
- refusal from activities that contradict to personally important values, adopting or adjusting them;
- and, ultimately, transformation of global personal and professional intentions as a result of consciously overcoming the life crisis having arisen.

A high probability of efficiency of the initial action stage of the mechanism of psychological support for leaders who have difficulty making decisions under uncertainty will be achieved if the counselor psychologists act within the canons of the humanist, client-centered approach while also combining it with elements of cognitive-behavioral methods of psychological support.

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