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ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO DEFINING A DIFFICULT LIFE SITUATION

Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of scientific approaches to the definition of the concept of "difficult life situation" and the conceptualization of such a definition. **The objective** of this work is to reveal the concept of "difficult life situation" with the help of scientific tools. To analyze the connection of a difficult life situation through the prism of general scientific and specific scientific approaches within the framework of modern psychology. To single out a difficult life situation as a phenomenon that is a driving force in the formation of a person's vitality. The research **methodology** consisted of general scientific research methods such as observation, methods of analysis and synthesis, a comparative analysis and generalization of theoretical data presented in scientific sources was carried out. Also, specific scientific research methods were used for comparative analysis. **Scientific innovation.** The concept of "difficult life situation" is distinguished from a number of the following related concepts: hard life situation, extreme situation, difficult life circumstances, stressful situation, frustrating situation, situation of uncertainty and others. The foundations of study are laid for more thorough study of this concept as a phenomenon. Also this article reveals the meaning of the concepts of "situation" and "life situation" as complementing the understanding of the concept of "difficult life situation". The concepts are described in view of the current situation of this problem in connection with the military actions taking place throughout the territory of Ukraine due to the military aggression of the neighboring state of Russia. The article presents the results of a theoretical analysis of the main scientific approaches in psychology for investigating the problem of a difficult life situation, namely, the key general scientific and specific scientific approaches are considered in depth. From the general scientific approaches, the existential and behavioral approaches were investigated and from the specific scientific approaches are systemic approach, resource approach and ecopsychological approach. Our vision of the problem of defining a difficult life situation in the paradigm of modern science is described. **Conclusions.** The definition of a difficult life situation in today's conditions is given with taking into account the state of war in Ukraine. The psychological factors influencing the personality which are contained in a difficult life situation are highlighted. The meaning of the concept of a difficult life situation is revealed on the basis of general scientific and specifically scientific approaches in psychology such as existential approach, behaviorist approach, systemic approach, resource approach and ecopsychological approach and their main aspects are described deeply.

Key words: difficult life situations, approaches to defining difficult life situations, hardiness, resilience, adolescence, war.

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АНАЛІЗ ПІДХОДІВ ДО ВИЗНАЧЕННЯ СКЛАДНОЇ ЖИТТЄВОЇ СИТУАЦІЇ

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню наукових підходів до визначення поняття «складна життєва ситуація», концептуалізації такого визначення. **Метою** даної роботи є розкрити поняття «складна життєва ситуація» за допомогою наукових інструментів.

Проаналізувати зв'язок складної життєвої ситуації через призму загальнонаукових і конкретно-наукових підходів в рамках сучасної психології. Виокремити складну життєву ситуацію як феномен, який являється рушійною силою в становленні життєстійкості особистості. **Методологію** дослідження склали загальнонаукові методи дослідження, такі як спостереження, методи аналізу та синтезу, був проведений порівняльний аналіз та узагальнення теоретичних даних, що представлені у наукових джерелах. Також для порівняльного аналізу було використано конкретно-наукові методи дослідження. **Наукова новизна.** Виокремлено поняття «складна життєва ситуація» з ряду наступних суміжних понять: важка життєва ситуація, екстремальна ситуація, важкі життєві обставини, стресова ситуація, фруструюча ситуація, ситуація невизначеності ті інші. Закладенню основи більш ґрунтовного вивчення цього поняття як феномену. Також в даній статті розкрито смисл поняття «ситуація» і «життєва ситуація», як таких, що доповнюють розуміння поняття «складної життєвої ситуації». Визначення цих понять описані з огляду на сучасну ситуацію даної проблематики у зв'язку з воєнними діями, які відбуваються на всій території України, через воєнну агресію сусідньої держави росії. У статті подано результати теоретичного аналізу основних наукових підходів в психології по дослідженню проблеми складної життєвої ситуації, а саме поглиблено розглянуто ключові загальнонаукові і конкретно-наукові підходи. З загальнонаукових підходів досліджено екзистенційний і біхевіористичний, а з конкретно-наукових підходів – системний, ресурсний і екопсихологічний. Описано наше бачення проблеми визначення складної життєвої ситуації у парадигмі сучасної науки. **Висновки.** Дано визначення складної життєвої ситуації в умовах сьогодення зважаючи на воєнний стан в Україні. Висвітлено психологічні фактори впливу на особистість, які містить в собі складна життєва ситуація. Вперше розкрито смисл поняття складна життєва ситуація на основі загальнонаукових і конкретно-наукових підходів в психології – екзистенційний підхід, біхевіористичний підхід, системний підхід, ресурсний підхід та екопсихологічний підхід і описано їх основні аспекти.

Ключові слова: ситуація, життєва ситуація, складна життєва ситуація, наукові підходи, аналіз наукових підходів, війна.

Formulation of the problem. In the light of the latest sudden changes that have taken place in Ukraine over the past two years, namely with the outbreak of war in Ukraine, interest in the study of existential issues has increased significantly. One of these key issues is the vital activity of an individual during the war, psychological health, hardiness, resilience, the ability to withstand life's adversities and quickly adapt to different types of living conditions. Therefore, the question arises to investigate difficult life situations as they are, their components for a deeper understanding of this issue. Also, there is great interest in researching a difficult life situation from the point of view of various scientific approaches of modern dynamic science for the further improvement of an individual's life through the creation of effective psychological rehabilitation programs and models.

Analysis of basic research and publications. The analysis of this problem was considered by predecessors according to certain aspects of this problem such as: 1) analytical methods in psychology K. G. Jung, O. F. Bondarenko, N. F. Kalina, S. D. Maksimenko, O. P. Sannikova, A. V. Sergeeva, V. O. Tatenko, T. V. Tytirenko, A. V. Furman, N. V. Chepeleva, T. S. Yatsenko and 2) the definition of a difficult life situation as an independent problem was studied by the following scientists A.A. Kovalenkova, E. Grishin, O. P. Proskurnyak, O. O. Baydaroka, the role of hardiness in the study of difficult life situations, K. R. Manapov. In this study, we focused our attention on combining these aspects namely on studying the problem of a difficult life situation from analytical approaches. Those approaches are both general scientific and specifically scientific. We created this symbiosis for the first time, which is a scientific novelty.

Domestic and foreign scientists (J. Bowlby, A. A. Kovalenkova, Y. O. Goshovskyi, O. L. Turinina, O. M. Grinyova, O. S. Kocharyan, T. M. Tytarenko, M. Rutter, G. V. Lozhkin, D. Hebb, N. V. Chepeleva, R. Spitz, etc.) studied difficult life situations together with their structural elements, such as: extreme, critical, atypical, stressful and other situations. In their writings they emphasized the study of the phenomenon of such situations, adaptation, finding resources in the process of such adaptation to difficult life situations. I. Vashchenko and I. Ananova summarized the accumulated material on the concepts of "situation", "life situation" and "difficult life situation".

A separate role belongs to foreign scientists (A. Hammer, M. Zainder, S. Hobfoll, P. Rossouw, J. Rossouw), who studied the resources of life resilience which are the result of certain dynamics of a difficult life situation and factors that affect further success and the effectiveness of an individual's life in conditions of uncertainty and difficult life circumstances. The resources of psychological stability provide a person with adaptation to changes, the ability to cope with stress and life's troubles, not to stop, to be able to cope with unpleasant feelings (K. Connor, J. Davidson). The experience of specific experiences in the analysis of difficult life situations, obtained in the process of adaptation to such events, is reflected in personal stories, highlighted in scientific works (A. Frank). The scientist also considers the internal and external resources of a person in difficult life situations which helps not to lose and find a new meaning, goals and values of life.

The purpose of the article is to reveal analysis of approaches to defining a difficult life situation. Considering the current war events Ukrainian society is undergoing transformations due to economic and political instability, transformation of social institutions: family, education, etc., is taking place, we are observing a change in the value system, and this leads to the emergence of various life situations in a person's life. The situations that a person experiences today are exceptional in each case because they are filled with stress and uncertainty. A person in the conditions of war must make important decisions that are rationally understood, look for mechanisms for managing the situation, while maintaining a sense of self-worth, respect for the environment, their values, goals, and building a model for the future.

Difficult life situations are a component of a person's lifestyle, they are an integral part of life. Such situations affect a person's future perception of reality, events and real actions, because they affect a person's consciousness and worldview in a certain period of time. Due to the events related to the war in Ukraine a lot of data has accumulated about circumstances that exceed the adaptation potential of a person and are a threat to mental and physical well-being. Research by scientists about difficult life situations is mostly focused on the components of such situations. When describing the results of theoretical research on the specified problem scientists use different concepts to describe a difficult life situation. Challenges of fate occur in a person's life and they are defined as "difficult life situations". In today's scientific paradigm this question is not considered enough and in this scientific work we have outlined a deeper and more detailed definition of a difficult life situation from the point of view of scientific and specifically scientific approaches.

Presentation of the main research material. In order to understand more deeply a difficult life situation we will consider the concept of "situation" in the modern scientific sense. Scientific psychological analysis of the "situation" category has important methodological significance. It allows us to do scientific research in the direction of understanding the problem of the relationship between internal and external, subject and object (Vashenko; Ananova, 2007). On the basis of psychological analysis and theoretical reflection of various concepts and paradigms the scientist O. O. Baidarova (Baidarova, 2013) singled out approaches – person-centered or cognitive-phenomenological. The scientist suggests considering the situation as a part, a unit of the life world, life space of a person. A systematic generalization of the existing ideas of scientists regarding the essence of the situation and the nature of the individual's activity in the situation testifies to the following. Depending on the scientific approach within which the specified problem is studied, scientists consider the situation as: 1) an environment that determines the activity of the individual by external attributes of the situation, elements of the environment; 2) subjective inner reality, which is one's own inner living space, a cognitive representation of objective reality; 3) the interaction of the individual and the environment – the individual, whose behavior in the situation is determined by external and internal factors of reality, exerts a purposeful active influence on the situation in order to create its own situational specificity; 4) a socio-culturally determined interactive unit, i.e. a person carries out social construction of activity in accordance with the regulatory normative features of the situation; 5) a set of life events and circumstances – a person creates its own life path and undergoes transformation under the influence of life events (Vashenko; Ananova, 2007).

According to the definition of the Scientific Dictionary, edited by N. A. Pobirchenko, "life situation" is a set of life circumstances that directly or indirectly affect the behavior of a person, his state and inner world, determining the content and direction of individual development, thereby contributing to the emergence and problem solving (Syniavskiy; Sergeenkova, 2007). In the scientific work of T. P. Rysynets, I. S. Pototska, and L. S. Loiko stated that it is determined that a "life situation" is

a moment of the dialectical process of interaction between the subject and its environment. The subject's behavior at each moment of time is determined by that specific integrity which includes both the individual and his current environment. The subject and his environment were considered by researchers as interdependent variables: the environment affects the individual in a certain way and the current state of the individual. His previous experience modifies the subject's understanding and attitude to the relevant environmental influences. The life situation is presented to the subject as a living reality, in which the general and the special are present at the same time; random and regular; essence and phenomenon; cause and effect; identical and contradictory; unity, interaction and struggle (Rysynets; Pototska; Loiko, 2016). Following that, V. V. Predko defines that a life situation is a set of significant events for a person that affect his behavior and worldview in a certain period of time (Predko, 2021). The life situation consists of external objective conditions of the individual's life and internal subjective conditions of life. It is functioning with varying degrees of awareness and is determined by the previous events of the individual's life, on the other hand, it is stable conditions that are characteristic of the current period of his life. The life situation determines the process of a person's awareness of the meaning of his life activity as "insight", "act of objectification", "enlightenment" (Panok, 2017). Therefore, a life situation is a situation that is permanently present in the life of an individual. A person's life consists of life situations that a person independently characterizes as simple or complex, stressful or mundane.

If a life situation is a standard everyday situation that occurs every day in a person's life then a difficult life situation has an important element of unpredictability. According to V. V. Predko a difficult life situation means a situation significant for a person with a high degree of uncertainty (Predko, 2021). Subjective variables affecting the perception of uncertainty can be divided into three categories: 1) cognitive (life and professional experience); 2) mental states relevant to the situation which affect its assessment (for example, a decrease in criticality of thinking and weakening of attention under the influence of fatigue, illness, emotional excitement, impossibility of correct assessment due to lack of time, etc.); 3) persistent motivational and personal characteristics affecting behavior in difficult situations and attitude to consequences (Kotliarova; Manysshev, 1986). Thus, in a difficult life situation, a person experiences a stressful state, a state of confusion and a loss of the usual vitality. Also, in the scientific study of I. V. Vashchenko and I. Ananova, a difficult life situation is determined by the fact that the requirements for the individual go beyond the "norm". According to the signs of a complicated situation, the following life situations are distinguished: 1) a situation of everyday difficulties – an ordinary, standard life situation characterized by relative well-being; 2) a special situation related to age-related crises and the specifics of development; 3) a special ("strong") situation associated with sudden severe external events (upheavals) in the subject's life (situation of illness, etc.). Special attention should be paid to the classification of difficult life situations. In domestic and foreign psychology there is a considerable number of works in which they tried to classify difficult life situations. However, even here, there is no agreement among the authors regarding the criteria for defining and meaningful filling of this type of situation. The category of difficult life situations usually includes critical, crisis, extreme, difficult, stressful situations, situations of psychological threat, situations of uncertainty, etc. A difficult life situation is understood as a fragment of reality determined by internal and external factors, which is perceived at the subjective level as a psychological complication. It is the criterion "subjective feeling of complication" that makes it possible to combine at the highest level of generalization stressful, extreme, frustrating, conflicting, etc. situations, since the feeling of complication can arise in response to the influence of any factor of external and internal reality (Vashenko; Ananova, 2007).

Investigating a difficult life situation from the point of view of scientific approaches we found that the American scientist S. Stumpf noted that in ordinary cases the effective solution of difficult life situations includes many steps and relies on various types of knowledge to support the main tasks of understanding, decision-making/problem solving, implementation and monitoring. Similar tasks are needed to solve simple and difficult personal situations (Stumpf, 2006). Thus, consideration of a difficult life situation from the point of view of scientific and specifically scientific approaches is relevant. So, let's consider scientific and specific-scientific approaches to defining a difficult life situation.

The *Existential approach* is a direction of modern psychology in which various teachings and theories devoted to the psychological problems of human existence are synthesized. The composition of modern existential psychology includes the existential psychoanalysis of Zh. P. Sartre and L. Binswanger,

research works of V. Frankl, analytical existential psychology of M. Boss, existential antipsychiatry of R. Lang, existential personology of S. Maddi, existential-analytical theory of James F.T. Bugental and, first of all (Demchuk, 2016), the psychotheology of Rollo R. May (May, 1958). The ideological sources of the existential approach to defining a difficult life situation are the "philosophy of life", existentialism and phenomenology. In general terms existentialism can be defined as the desire to understand a person without dividing him into subject and object. The main concept is that a person exists, emerges from reality, actively and freely acts in the world. This term emphasizes the counterbalance to those theories that perceive a person as a highly structured subject. This is the idea that existence precedes essence and existence means phenomenon and becoming, while essence implies static matter that cannot change on its own. Existence implies a process but essence refers to the final product. Existence is associated with growth and change, essence signifies staticity and exhaustiveness (Demchuk, 2016). The Austrian psychologist and psychiatrist V. Frankl (Frankl, 2021) believed that the driving force of human behavior and personality development is the search for the Logos as the meaning of life which should be carried out by a specific person according to his own needs. From the point of view of the existential approach a difficult life situation is a unique component of the personal experience of a specific person and the goal of a person is to find meaning, content values and to find freedom in choosing to overcome such a situation. V. Frankl (Frankl, 2021) noted that a person has to turn to his own life values when he finds himself in the power of circumstances that he is unable to change. But under any circumstances a person is free to take a meaningful position in relation to them and give their suffering a deep life meaning. A person has to resort to the search for values when the individual is in the power of circumstances as a difficult life situation, which the person himself is unable to change. But under any circumstances a person is free to take a meaningful position in relation to them and give their suffering a deep life meaning. It can be concluded that as soon as a person finds meaning in overcoming a difficult life situation such a person gains the strength to overcome any trials. Modern science still relies on the theories developed by V. Frankl and recognizes his significant contribution to the search for the meaning of human existence in the paradigm of the existential approach.

The *Behaviorist approach* takes its name from the English word behavior – "behavior") – one of the areas of psychology that explains the behavior of people (or animals) by mechanical and reflective acts in response to external stimuli. The most widespread current in psychological science of the 20th century. Behaviorism received its scientific justification thanks to the works on conditioned reflexes by I. Pavlov and V. Bekhterev. Under the influence of positivism J. Watson proved that only what can be observed is real (Ianchenko, 2014). American psychologist B. Skinner considers personality as an isolated self that has no place in the scientific analysis of behavior. To characterize personality he introduces the concept of "pattern", which denotes a certain set of behavioral reactions. Personality is the sum of patterns. Each individual reaction is based on previous experience and genetic history (Skinner, 1974). Therefore, each difficult life situation that occurred in the life of an individual imposes it has a certain pattern of behavior. It is possible that in the next similar situation a person will act in accordance with the experience he already had. As a "science of behavior" behaviorism has replaced empirical psychology. Behaviorists try to deal only with those facts that can be observed. In this approach we consider a difficult life situation as one that contains certain actions. Such a situation was preceded by difficult life circumstances, which are defined at the level of legislation in the Law of Ukraine in Article 1, Clause 15. "On Social Services" (Zakon Ukrainy, 2023). Throughout life a person struggles for the ability to adapt to his social environment (Dolynska, 2023) to solve difficult life situations if a person is able to do it on his own. In the behaviorist approach the most important lever of life changes are the actions of the individual. The ability to change one's position for the better, get out of trouble and overcome stress.

The *Systematic approach* is a direction of the methodology of scientific research which is based on the consideration of a complex object as a whole set of elements in a set of relationships and connections between them. A system is a set of interacting elements that make up a whole formation that has new properties absent in its constituent elements (Voronkova; Boiko, 2019). We suggest considering the structure of a difficult life situation using the example of a systemic approach to a life situation relying on the direct meaning of these concepts in the paradigm of modern science and today's events. We agree with the factors of the system approach which were provided by I. V. Vashenko and I. Ananova in their scientific work. These components include: I. A set of elements of the environment

(objective side), which make up physical and social factors. Physical factors are presented in the subject and functional form in spatio-temporal characteristics (duration in time; saturation with a different number of events, etc.). Social factors of the environment which constitute a natural segment of social life are determined by a set of social and interpersonal relations – subject-object and subject-subject interactions. II. Personality (subjective side) as an active subject of the life situation which: 1) "determines" the life situation on the basis of the system of values and the value-normative system which are components of the picture of the situation, in the process of personal and social interaction with the situation; 2) transforms the situation – creates its own situational specificity. Therefore, the appearance of any life situation is impossible without a personality. In addition, the perceptual-cognitive picture of the life situation (a fragment of the general picture of the world, a cognitive construct) depends on the individual that is the representation of the life situation and the difficult life situation in the mind of the subject which reflects part of the objective reality that exists in the spatial temporal dimension and is characterized by a certain social context. The influence of the situation (environmental factors) is mediated by the perceiving-cognitive systems of the individual – the individual system of meanings and values is subjective experience. Moreover, the objective situation is given meaning/sense, personal meaning, personal significance which in turn determines the subject's attitude to the life situation. The cognitive construct of the situation sets the context of perception, bringing order into the general picture of the social world (Vashenko; Ananova, 2007).

Each element of this structure performs certain functions that satisfy the needs of the system. This approach was widely used by K. Marx and F. Engels (Voronkova; Boiko, 2019). The analysis of the structure and functions of the phenomenon "difficult life situation" is considered as caused by internal and external factors, fragments of reality such as: the influence of stress factors; stressors (stressful situation), the influence of unfavorable (unwanted) factors that determine the activation of a person's protective reactions (conflict situation), the influence of conflicting factors on a person (frustrating situation), the influence of traumatic factors (traumatic situation), the influence of extreme factors. Those are on the border of human capabilities and exceed the internal resources of a person (extreme situation), the occurrence of extreme and harmful conditions for a person (emergency situation), changes in the usual conditions in a person's life (stress situation). To follow a systematic approach difficult life situations can be divided into two main groups: 1) establish the connections between the parts of the research object as a whole and 2) establish the connections of each individual part of the research object with its other parts. The list of categories of difficult situations, according to their structural and functional composition, are fragments of a "difficult life situation". This approach to this issue gives us the opportunity to isolate the elements of situations and explore the connections between them within the framework of the phenomenon of a difficult life situation. According to Y. A. Pryimakova (Pryimakova, 2019) the structural and functional analysis of the systematic approach helps to highlight the main elements of conflict interaction. It determines the role of each of the elements and is also the most important prerequisite for successful conflict resolution. The advantage of this methodological approach is that it helps to find some stable components even in any dynamic phenomenon. So if you add the factor of stress and uncertainty to the above-mentioned elements of the life situation then such a description can be used to analyze a difficult life situation using a systemic approach. In our opinion the basis of a more thorough study of the problem of difficult life situations can be the study of the psychological phenomenon "difficult life situation" as a system and its properties that contribute to overcoming difficulties and activating mental resources of a person. The essence of the analysis in the system approach consists in dividing a complex object into its component parts, studying the connections between them and determining their specific functions. The main goal is to study the elements of a difficult life situation for a deeper understanding of it. And as a result to develop psychological mechanisms for successfully overcoming such a situation.

One of the youngest trends in modern psychology, in the development of the theory of psychological stress is the *Resource approach*. In order to study the peculiarities of mental activity by foreign scientists J.D. Brown, E.C. Poulton developed a resource approach and later the concept was refined by researchers M.J. Posner, D.A. Norman, D.J. Bobro and a number of other scientists. E.C. Poulton identified the ability to self-control as the main human resource where cognitive processes play a leading role (Brown; Poulton, 1961). According to S. Maddi the successful functioning of a person

is related to control which reflects the individual's belief in the possibility and ability to control the events of his own life, to overcome difficult circumstances (Maddi; Matthews; Kelly & others, 2012). Similar thoughts can be traced in the works of J. Rotter who used the concept of Locus of control. The resource approach is based on the principle of resource conservation which provides the opportunity to obtain, save, restore, multiply and redistribute resources in accordance with one's own values. With the help of this distribution of resources a person has the opportunity to adapt to the variable conditions of the living environment (Hobfoll; Watson; Bryant & others, 2007). In S. Hobfoll's resource concept of stress, resources are defined as something that helps a person adapt in difficult life situations. From the standpoint of this approach, various types of resources, both environmental and personal are considered. In addition the resources differ according to their role in regulating stress coping processes. Personal, social, psychological, professional, physical, and material resources are distinguished. Thus, S. Hobfoll refers to resources: material objects (income, house, transport, clothes) and immaterial objects (desires, goals); external (social support, family, friends, work, social status) and internal (intrapersonal) parameters (self-esteem, professional skills, optimism, self-control, life values, belief system, etc.); mental and physical conditions; volitional, emotional and energetic characteristics necessary for survival or health preservation in difficult life situations or serve as means of achieving personally meaningful goals (Hobfoll, 2001). Obviously, different types of resources play different roles in human adaptation and overcoming difficult life situations at different age stages (Yushchenko, 2015). The resource approach is related to a person's ability to use their personal qualities, social support and community capabilities to overcome extreme and stressful life situations. According to research by American scientists (Bowles; Pollock; Pollock & others, 2015), the resource approach can be conditionally divided into two types of environmental resources, i.e. internal (personal). They are aimed at self-realization, self-development and self-improvement and they are external. The last ones relate to the values of the individual, his self-perception, coping, decision-making, behavior in conflicts and generally solving difficult life situations. External resources also include social support, leadership and engagement in community activities. Therefore, according to the understanding of the resource approach a person mobilizes his internal resources based on external factors that he can use in his environment. Here it is worth noting that the level of vitality of an individual is of key importance, especially during difficult life situations such as military actions that take place throughout the whole territory of Ukraine.

The *Ecopsychological approach* is a relatively new direction that was formed in foreign psychology about thirty years ago. This direction is actively developing in domestic psychology in the last decade at the junction of psychology, ecology, pedagogy, psychotherapy, sociology, history, philosophy and other sciences. Based on the research of scientist Y. M. Morgunova noted that today there are a considerable number of approaches in researching the psychological aspects of the system "Individual – Environment" and "Human – Nature" which indicates the absence of a single direction of ecopsychology with its own object and subject of research. The scientist investigated such an approach in which the only object of ecopsychological research would be the formation of all manifestations of mental reality in the systemic interaction of a person with the environment. As part of this approach the influence of physical, chemical and biological factors of the environment on a person was considered, but gradually in research more and more attention was paid to the psychological aspect. This view led to the formation of a special section of ecology – psychological ecology. The subject of psychological ecology research is the influence of environmental factors on the human psyche. Psychological ecology identified as its main task the selection of the most significant environmental factors for the human psyche. They study their impact on human mental health and human behavior from a psychophysiological point of view. As well as the development of methods for the optimal organization of these factors (Morgunova, 2015). As V. A. Skrebets notes the subject of ecopsychology is individual and social consciousness in the reflection of the natural, artificial and social environment, biological, mental and social components of it (environment), (Skrebets; Shalimova, 2014). In our opinion the ecopsychological approach to the study of a difficult life situation is a reflection of the natural, social, and spiritual aspect in the real ecological conditions of today's life. Such a difficult formation contains three main elements – a person (as a biological species), the surrounding world of a person (society, events, place of residence, ecology, etc.) and the process of interaction between a person and the surrounding world.

Conclusions. Therefore, a difficult life situation is a psychological mechanism for personal growth and an incentive for internal transformation. A difficult life situation is the main lever for changes in the consciousness of an individual when a person experiences non-standard situations and sudden changes in his life. A difficult life situation includes the following factors affecting a person: stress, extremity, uncertainty, frustration, conflict, psychological trauma, emergency, tension, as well as difficult life circumstances and others. A person has the opportunity to change his own life. Under the influence of such changes the personality develops new orientations and a person gets to know himself better entering a new level of existence. By overcoming a difficult life situation a person becomes stronger, thereby increasing his hardiness and psychological resilience for the future.

In this article for the first time the meaning of the concept of a difficult life situation is revealed on the basis of general scientific and specifically scientific approaches in psychology such as: existential approach, behaviorist approach, systemic approach, resource approach and ecopsychological approach. It is emphasized that a difficult life situation is a multifaceted element of a person's life in a dynamic social environment and it is determined by internal and external factors. We are convinced that a difficult life situation can be considered from different scientific approaches. From the point of view of the existential approach, a difficult life situation is considered as a desire to understand a person as a complex whole entity. Taking into account the behaviorist approach, the lever of life changes is precisely the real actions of the individual and the desire to change the situation for the better. Using the example of a systemic approach, research has determined that a difficult life situation consists of many elements in a set of relationships and connections between them. Also, in such a situation, a high level of vitality of the individual is of great importance, especially during sudden everyday changes such as military operations throughout the territory of Ukraine. According to the ecopsychological approach a difficult life situation is considered as a symbiosis of three constituent elements of ecopsychology: first – a person as the center of the universe, second – the surrounding world (as a psychological component of society, events, places of residence, ecology, etc.) with its constituent elements and third is the interaction of a person with the environment.

Prospects for further research include conducting an empirical research of the resilience of teenagers who find themselves in a difficult life situation during the war. The research will take place in secondary schools in different regions of Ukraine. The basis of the empirical study will be the "difficult life situation" which reflects military actions on the territory of Ukraine.

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