



ORIGINAL

Psychological Mechanisms of Addictive Behavior Development in the Modern Conditions of Ukraine

Mecanismos psicológicos del desarrollo de conductas adictivas en las condiciones modernas de Ucrania

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: the Russian aggression against Ukraine highlights the urgent need to address psychological health issues, particularly in combating addictive behaviours. This study aims to explore the psychological mechanisms underpinning the development of addiction in Ukraine's current context.

Method: the research employed surveys (40 patients and 20 experts), content analysis of scholarly literature, response analysis, and comparative methods.

Results: findings reveal that childhood trauma, especially familial stress, plays a pivotal role in fostering addictive behaviours. Additional contributing factors include parental divorce, adverse living conditions, and personal setbacks during childhood and adolescence. Alcoholism emerges as the most prevalent form of addiction, while drug addiction, gambling, and Internet dependency also represent significant issues. The proliferation of gambling addiction is attributed to martial law and the increased availability of online gaming platforms. Similarly, Internet addiction correlates with widespread digitalisation and globalisation. Effective strategies for overcoming addiction involve professional psychological support strengthened by social assistance, family counselling, educational initiatives, and guidance from spiritual or religious organisations. However, a critical shortage of high-quality psychological rehabilitation and treatment services persists in Ukraine. Proposed solutions include establishing a national assistance programme, reforming psychologist training, and leveraging international support systems.

Conclusions: the study underscores the necessity of a multifaceted psychological approach to address addictive behaviours effectively. Comprehensive measures combining professional, social, educational, and spiritual resources are vital for mitigating the impact of addiction in Ukraine's challenging circumstances.

Keywords: Addictive Habits; Help; Psychology; Trauma.

RESUMEN

Introducción: la agresión rusa contra Ucrania pone de manifiesto la urgente necesidad de abordar los problemas de salud psicológica, especialmente en la lucha contra las conductas adictivas. Este estudio tiene como objetivo explorar los mecanismos psicológicos que subyacen al desarrollo de la adicción en el contexto actual de Ucrania.

Método: la investigación utilizó encuestas (40 pacientes y 20 expertos), análisis de contenido de literatura académica, análisis de respuestas y métodos comparativos.

Resultados: los hallazgos revelan que los traumas infantiles, especialmente el estrés familiar, desempeñan un papel fundamental en el desarrollo de las conductas adictivas. Otros factores contribuyentes incluyen el divorcio de los padres, condiciones de vida adversas y fracasos personales durante la infancia y la adolescencia. El alcoholismo es identificado como la forma más común de adicción, aunque también destacan

la drogadicción, la adicción al juego y la dependencia de Internet. La proliferación de la adicción al juego se atribuye a la ley marcial y al aumento de los servicios de juegos en línea. De manera similar, la adicción a Internet se asocia con la digitalización y la globalización generalizadas. Las estrategias efectivas para superar la adicción incluyen apoyo psicológico profesional reforzado por asistencia social, asesoramiento familiar, iniciativas educativas y orientación espiritual o religiosa. Sin embargo, en Ucrania persiste una grave carencia de servicios de rehabilitación psicológica y tratamiento de alta calidad. Entre las soluciones propuestas se encuentran la creación de un programa nacional de asistencia, la reforma de la formación de psicólogos y el aprovechamiento de sistemas de apoyo internacionales.

Conclusiones: el estudio resalta la necesidad de un enfoque psicológico multifacético para abordar eficazmente las conductas adictivas. Medidas integrales que combinen recursos profesionales, sociales, educativos y espirituales son esenciales para mitigar el impacto de la adicción en las difíciles circunstancias de Ucrania.

Palabras clave: Hábitos Adictivos; Ayuda; Psicología; Trauma.

INTRODUCTION

Addictive behaviour is one of the most serious social and psychological problems in the modern world. Various forms of addiction - from alcoholism, drug addiction and gambling to less obvious ones (such as workaholism or Internet addiction) - are widespread. These forms of addiction affect all processes of human life. These global problems are also characteristic of Ukraine. The current conditions in Ukraine, which are marked by war, economic instability, high levels of stress and a sense of uncertainty about the future, are contributing to the growth of addictive behaviour among different age groups. At the same time, the main psychological factors that contribute to the formation of these addictions are multifactorial. According to the results of modern scientists, they consist of individual characteristics and external influences.^(1,2,3) For this reason, studying addictive behaviour in Ukraine is relevant because effective methods of prevention and therapy must be found. The latter should also consider the specific conditions of the current socio-cultural environment. The study of this particularly relevant issue will not only help to understand the key causes of addictive behaviour but also promote the development of individual capabilities to overcome them.

Research problem

In Ukraine's current circumstances, which are marked by the spread of war, socio-economic instability, the COVID-19 pandemic and increased information pressure, the problem of the spread of various forms of addiction is becoming particularly important. These conditions also create additional triggers that contribute to the formation and consolidation of addictive behaviour. Given that addictive behaviour occurs as a specific result of the interaction of individual psychological characteristics (emotional instability, low level of self-regulation and anxiety), the influence of various social, cultural and economic factors (increased stress, limited social resources, popularisation of addictive behaviours), it is important to characterise not only the individual causes of addiction but also to identify the main psychological mechanisms of addictive behaviour, taking into account their early manifestations and analysing the impact of t Thus, these aspects constitute the main research problem of this study.

Research focus

Therefore, the main focus of the study will be on the main psychological factors that contribute to the formation of addictive behaviour. Particular attention will be paid to identifying the key factors of its development using the survey method. In particular, the study is aimed at determining the impact of traumas experienced in childhood on the formation of addictive behaviour and analysing the types of addictive behaviour. Also, the lack of sufficiently adapted programmes for the prevention and treatment of addictions to modern conditions indicates the need for a detailed study of the mechanisms of their development. Therefore, an important area will be the development of specific proposals for the elimination of addictive behaviour.

The purpose of this study is to identify and study the main psychological mechanisms that contribute to the formation of addictive behaviour in the current conditions of Ukraine. For this reason, the main research questions are as follows:

1. How do childhood traumas affect the development of addictive behaviour?
2. What are the main types of addictive behaviour that can be identified?
3. What proposals can be developed to eliminate addictive behaviour?

The study also formulated hypotheses that will require confirmation or refutation:

1. Childhood trauma (emotional or physical) is a significant factor in the development of addictive behaviour in adulthood among the population of Ukraine in the current socio-political context.
2. Modern prevention and rehabilitation programmes, educational initiatives, and national programmes that combine psychological support, timely medical examination, and social rehabilitation are aimed at reducing the manifestations of addictive behaviour.

Literature review

Addictive behaviour as a widespread phenomenon is becoming increasingly relevant in the modern scientific literature. The study by N. Helmchen et al.⁽¹⁾ examined the main biological mechanisms underlying the formation and further development of addictive behaviour. R. Wiers et al.⁽²⁾ examined and modelled the emergence of addictive behaviour in adolescents. According to the model, addictive behaviour results from an imbalance between two systems: the approach-oriented, appetitive system, which becomes sensitive when repeatedly exposed to addictive stimuli, and the regulatory executive system, which is underdeveloped and weakened by exposure to the stimulus.⁽²⁾ In the study, the authors primarily focused on alcohol addiction. This issue has also been found in other studies. In particular, modern authors have shown that the ability and incentive to control the tendency to appetite are two important components of self-regulation. Adolescents who frequently drink excessive amounts of alcohol still lack motivation because they usually do not perceive drinking as a problem. It often takes years for someone to become motivated to control their drinking after experiencing significant alcohol-related problems.^(3,4) A number of contemporary authors consider addictive behaviour as a result of developmental disorders at certain stages of early childhood development (including J. Weinhold and A. Bandura).^(5,6) The current scientific literature indicates that there are various reasons why the problem of human identity has become a central issue in many modern works on psychology and psychiatry, and among these reasons are those related to childhood psychoses or narcissistic and borderline disorders, which are, in fact, prerequisites for the development of addictive behaviour.^(5,7) In addition, according to the theory of D. Cervone and A. Bandura, the formation of addictive behaviour can also be a kind of result of observing other people who interpret certain benefits from the use of psychoactive substances or other addictive activities.⁽⁶⁾ According to a number of other studies, stress, which can be caused by various types of problems, can also influence the development of addiction.^(8,9) E. Kotyuk et al. described the main probable genetic risk factors for this behaviour. In particular the authors identified addiction-specific genetic effects and probable coincidences with individual genetic markers.⁽¹⁰⁾ The existing controversial nature of behavioural addictions has supported uncertain discussions among scientists about their construct validity.^(11,12,13) The study by M. Cavicchioli et al.⁽¹¹⁾ describes the basic mechanisms underlying two different types of human behaviour - addictive behaviour and maladaptive coping behaviour.

Modern scientific studies have determined that the process of forming certain addictive disorders can be influenced by a fairly large number of social, economic, social, medical and educational factors.^(14,15) In particular, the main reasons for the development of severe addictive behaviour can be the child's belonging to a problematic family, negligent parental attitude, emotional disclosure, overprotection and other factors.^(16,17) In the modern digital world, the influence of media and social networks can also play a role. Kotyuk et al.⁽¹⁸⁾ discussed some genetic factors.⁽¹⁰⁾ Other studies have also emphasised previous psychopathologies, psychopathy, congenital disorders, and other genetic aspects.^(19,20) Thus, modern scientists have intensified the study of addictive behaviour and characterised various manifestations and causes of this phenomenon. However, this research issue is not fully characterised in the current scientific discourse. As seen from the above, most studies of addictive behaviour are based on data from Europe or the United States. At the same time, the problem of the development of addictive behaviour in Ukraine is not sufficiently covered. In addition, even though there are several studies on the importance of childhood trauma in the development of addictive behaviour, this problem remains under-researched in Ukraine. Thus, this study will try to address these issues and identify the main psychological mechanisms that contribute to the formation of addictive behaviour in the current conditions of Ukraine.

METHOD

Design

The study was conducted as a cross-sectional research characterised by collecting data from the examination of real patients, comparing them with the views of experts and concepts existing in the scientific literature. This type of study was chosen because of the opportunity to collect data on various manifestations of addictive behaviour in a short time. Since the causes and manifestations of addictive behaviour are urgent and require a quick response, this approach allowed us to evaluate different models of both existing practice and ways to improve it. In addition, the cross-sectional method allowed us to collect information from different participants, which is important for comparing different approaches and identifying the most dangerous addictive threats.

Sample and Participants

Table 1. Basic patient data	
Data	%
Age of participants	
25-30 years old	30
31-40 years old	40
41-60 years old	30
Education	
Higher	60
Professional	25
School	15
Duration of treatment	
1 year	25
2-3 years	40
4-5 years	20
More than 5 years	15

Table 2. Data from experts involved in the study							
Nº	Age	Gender	Education	Direction	Experience	The institution	N patients worked with
1	24	F	Higher	Pre-school education	2 years	Kindergarten	14
2	32	F	Higher	Psychology	7 years	Rehabilitation centre	8
3	45	F	Higher	Psychology	15 years	Rehabilitation centre	16
4	38	F	Higher	Pre-school education	10 years	Kindergarten	25
5	47	M	Higher	Psychology	7 years	Rehabilitation centre	19
6	40	F	Higher	Pre-school education	12 years	Kindergarten	29
7	50	M	Higher	Special education	29 years old	Rehabilitation centre	21
8	41	F	Higher	Pre-school education	15 years	Kindergarten	25
9	55	F	Higher	Pre-school education	34 years	Kindergarten	25
10	28	M	Higher	Psychology	5 years	Rehabilitation centre	17
11	32	F	Higher	Psychology	6 years	Hospital	10
12	50	M	Higher	Psychology	20 years	Hospital	25
13	45	M	Higher	Rehabilitation specialist	14 years old	Rehabilitation centre	26
14	48	M	Higher	Psychology	24 years old	Hospital	30
15	41	M	Higher	Psychology	15 years	Hospital	20
16	33	F	Higher	Pedagogy	5 years	Medical University	7
17	39	M	Higher	Psychology	10 years	Medical University	10
18	42	M	Higher	Rehabilitation specialist	11 years	Hospital	8
19	49	M	Higher	Rehabilitation specialist	20 years	Rehabilitation centre	19
20	54	M	Higher	Pedagogy	24 years old	Medical University	33

Therefore, this cross-sectional study analysed data from 2 groups of participants: patients (40 people in total) and Ukrainian experts (20 people in total). Patients were selected based on purposive inclusion. In the beginning, invitations to participate in the survey were sent out, which indicated the study’s main purpose, the timing of the implementation and the main ways to collect information. All potential participants agreed to participate by sending a letter of interest. Voluntary consent was an essential part of participation in the study. Table 1 summarises the main data on patients with addictive habits who sought help from psychologists.

Experts were included based on purposive sampling, which is effective in cases where it is important to get insights from those who have relevant experience working with patients who have experienced psychological trauma and suffer from addictive habits. Teachers, professors, psychologists, and rehabilitation specialists with relevant experience were invited to participate in the study. They were involved through communication either with them personally or with the organisations in which they work. A message was sent to the official websites of such organisations about the proposed study and the need for experts. A total of 20 people agreed to participate. Table 2 provides basic information about the experts who participated in the survey.

Instruments and Procedure

The main tool used in the study was a questionnaire administered to both patients and experts (additionally, the study of medical records and other documents of patients indicating their diagnoses, medical decisions, etc. was also used). It covered various aspects of the formation and treatment of addictive habits and the impact of current socio-political relations and emergencies. The main focus was on childhood traumas and their impact on the formation of addictive habits, determining the impact of current conditions on addiction, types of addictive behaviour, the most effective measures to overcome addiction, determining the level of sufficiency of psychological services and possible ways to improve the fight against addiction.

First, a survey was conducted among patients and later among experts. The survey was conducted on the Google Forms platform, where participants could share their views on the specifics of providing qualified support to children affected by emergencies.

Data analysis

Google Sheets software was used to analyse the data, and a special division of the main questions was introduced into the columns of this software. After that, the content of the open-ended responses was analysed, and the use of keywords or phrases that indicate important aspects of addictive behaviour treatment in modern conditions was calculated. Next, the data were compared by analysing the differences in responses between patients and experts.

RESULTS

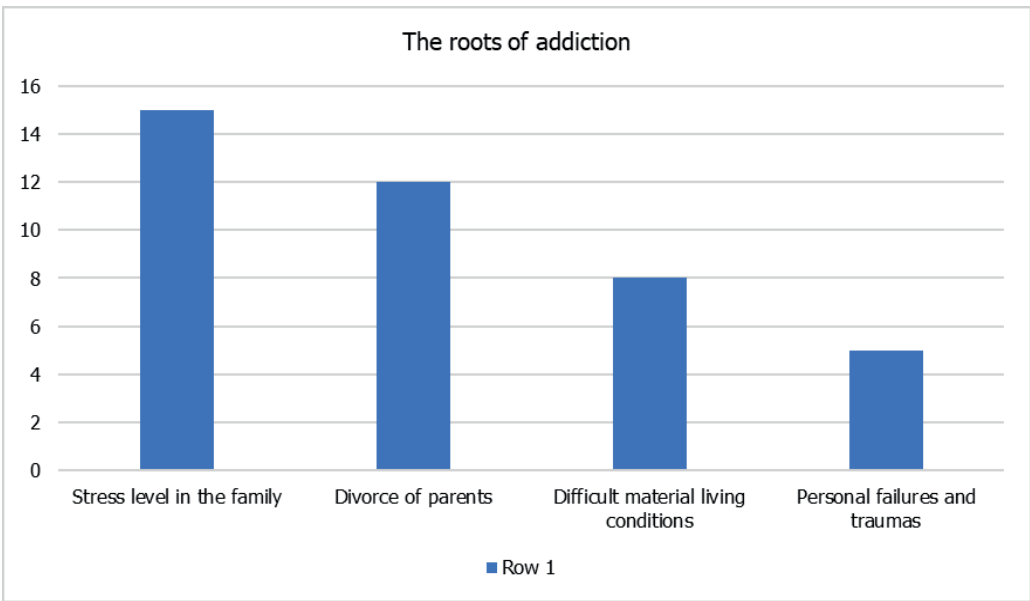


Figure 1. Childhood trauma and its impact on addictive behaviour

Sufficiently formed internal mental objects, as part of the self, form a system of social skills and abilities common in the social environment, leading to harmonious personality development, which reduces the prevention of the formation of addictive ways of overcoming environmental and social challenges, thus preventing the

formation of an adaptation syndrome in the form of addictive patterns that develop into non-chemical and chemical ones.^(21,22) For the study, the focus group representatives were asked to identify which of the above factors had the greatest impact on the formation of negative habits. We took into account the confirmed results of the psychological examination, which made it possible to identify the roots of the formation of addictive habits in adulthood, which had formed earlier but were exacerbated by military operations and the general impact of external circumstances (figure 1).

These results show that the most problematic was the impact of stress on the family (15 recorded cases). At the same time, the fact of divorce and subsequent upbringing in a formally single-parent family was also identified as a cause of addictive behaviour (12 responses), which, to some extent, is a continuation of the previous factor. In contrast, difficult material living conditions and personal failures in childhood and adolescence have a less destructive effect. Therefore, the exacerbation of childhood trauma in adulthood under the influence of external factors is a dangerous trend. In view of this, the formation of prerequisites for the development of addictive patterns has a specific character. Violation of the formation of internal mental objects in the process of early childhood development, which means the creation of various stages and components of the formation of the SELF, has a direct impact on the formation of a tendency to addictive behaviour. The earlier in ontogeny the deficit in the development of the SELF, the more severe the addictive behaviour that develops on this basis. However, the existence of a reliable family is also not an absolute guarantee of avoiding trauma. In particular, children who have a good, strong relationship with their mothers during the symbiotic phase and a high degree of expectancy reliability are more likely to engage in stranger exploration with discomfort.^(23,24) For overly intrusive mothers, some children may prefer the stranger.⁽²⁵⁾ Thus, family well-being and family discomfort can be assessed differently. Similarly, experts who consider childhood trauma to be extremely sensitive in emergencies also have similar opinions (table 3).

Table 3. Childhood traumas and their impact on addictive behaviour (expert opinion)		
Traumatic event	Number of experts (maximum 20)	Expert opinion
Stress level in the family	10	Expert 3: A high level of stress in a family turns into one of the main factors of emotional instability in children, which also has its results in adulthood. Expert 6: In today's realities, the formation of family harmony is the key to a child's psychological development.
Divorce of parents	5	Expert 15: The process and consequences of divorce have a direct impact on children's sense of stability. It causes fear, insecurity, and low self-esteem, which can have a direct impact on the personality in adulthood.
Financial difficulties	4	Expert 8: Lack of financial resources in the family is more likely to cause conflicts and general anxiety, which leads to a negative psychological state of children.
Personal traumas and failures	1	Expert 19: Personal setbacks have a major impact on self-esteem and confidence. However, with proper psychological support, such effects can be minimised.

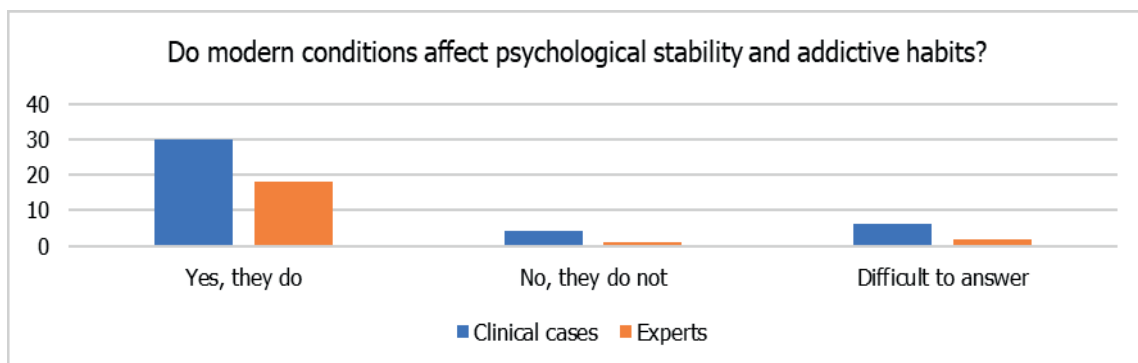


Figure 2. Do current conditions affect psychological stability and addictive habits?

Experts pointed out the importance of negative influencing factors that lay the groundwork for psychological

problems in childhood. Thus, the climate in each individual family and the socio-economic circumstances of life have a significant impact on the psychological state of children, while personal trauma is secondary but still requires attention and appropriate correction. Psychological crises caused by these factors are particularly acute in times of instability, as demonstrated by the current Russian-Ukrainian war. Current social conditions (war, displacement, psychological pressure) have a significant impact on behaviour and psychological health (figure 2).

The analysis of clinical cases and expert opinions revealed that current social conditions (in particular, the consequences of military operations) have a direct impact on the exacerbation of childhood trauma and the formation of addictive habits. The assessments of clinical cases and expert opinions are unequivocal, although it is difficult to establish a direct correlation in a few cases. However, such exceptions do not negate the general trend. It is also important to note the manifestations of addictive behaviour observed in the subjects (figure 3).

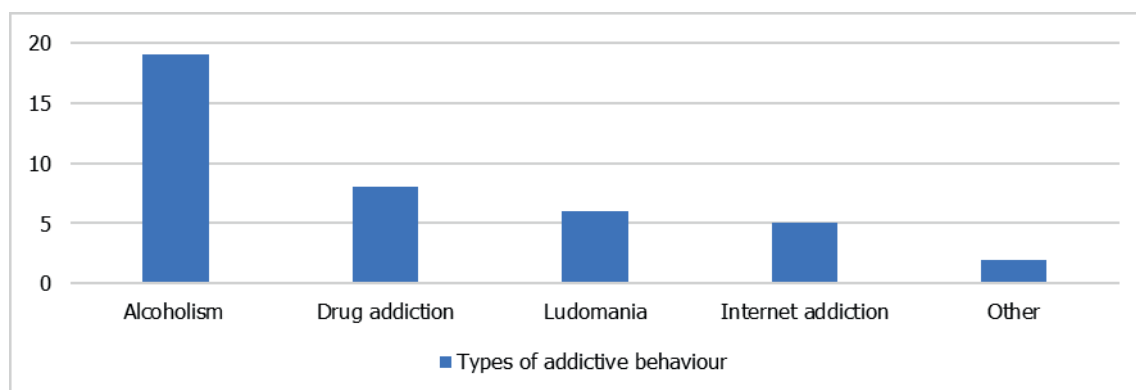


Figure 3. Types of addictive behaviour

Alcoholism was identified as the most common type of addictive behaviour (almost half of all cases). Drug addiction (severe and mild cases), gambling addiction, and Internet addiction are also significant. The spread of gambling addiction is also associated with martial law and the spread of online gambling services in Ukraine. Internet addiction is one of the negative phenomena of our time, which may be a consequence of general digitalisation and globalisation. Experts also make similar assessments (table 4).

Type of additive behaviour	Number of experts (maximum 20)	Expert opinion
Alcoholism	9	Expert 13: It should be acknowledged that alcoholism is one of the most widespread forms of addiction in Ukraine today. The reasons for this phenomenon are the availability of alcohol, certain drinking traditions, and social and living conditions.
Drug addiction	6	Expert 18: Drug addiction causes social isolation, psychological pressure, severe stress and traumatic events.
Ludomania, Internet addiction	4	Expert 4: The fascination with these forms of addiction is connected with the constant search for quick gratification, the need to escape from reality. These processes are reinforced by the accessibility of technology, the easy interface of gaming applications, etc.
Other	1	Expert 12: Shopping addiction, workaholism and other forms of addictive behaviour are the consequences of chronic stress and trauma experienced in childhood.

The interviewed experts agreed that the most common forms of addictive behaviour in Ukraine are alcoholism, drug addiction, gambling addiction and Internet addiction. This process is driven by both certain socio-economic factors and the development of modern digital technologies. At the same time, childhood traumas and traumas sustained as a result of hostilities are also quite good reasons for the development of addictive behaviour in modern Ukrainian realities. In such circumstances, it is important to identify possible ways to overcome this situation. Some effective mechanisms have been identified that have demonstrated their effectiveness in clinical cases (figure 4).

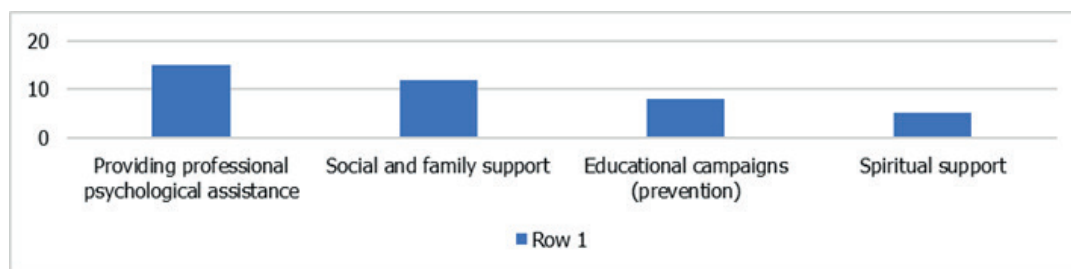


Figure 4. The most effective measures to overcome addictions

The studied cases have shown that one of the most effective ways to overcome addictions is to provide professional psychological assistance. At the same time, social support mechanisms and work with families play an important role, allowing them not only to overcome addictive habits but also to prevent relapses in the future. Conducting educational campaigns aimed at preventing psychological dependence is also promising (but perhaps not in the current conditions of martial law when traumatic events and daily stress have an extremely high impact). It is quite original that the support of spiritual and religious organisations had an impact. The experts' assessments were determined in a different way (table 5).

West	Number of experts (maximum 20)	Expert opinion
Psychological assistance	8	Expert 19: Individual or group psychotherapy sessions are probably the best way to overcome addictions. First of all, it is about uncovering the root causes of addictions. Expert 20: Psychological assistance helps to develop reliable principles of emotional self-control.
Educational campaigns	7	Expert 3: Educational initiatives help to raise awareness of the risks of addictive behaviour. For this reason, they are extremely necessary. Expert 8: The main focus should be on young people. It is not only about overcoming childhood trauma, but also about understanding the consequences of war: at the first symptoms of addiction, it is worth seeking professional help. This algorithm of actions requires special implementation.
Social and family assistance	4	Expert 13: Creating a stable environment is the main importance of support from family and social environment.
Spiritual support	1	Expert 9: Spiritual support is a very tangible motivator for further action, but this tool is not effective for all categories of people.

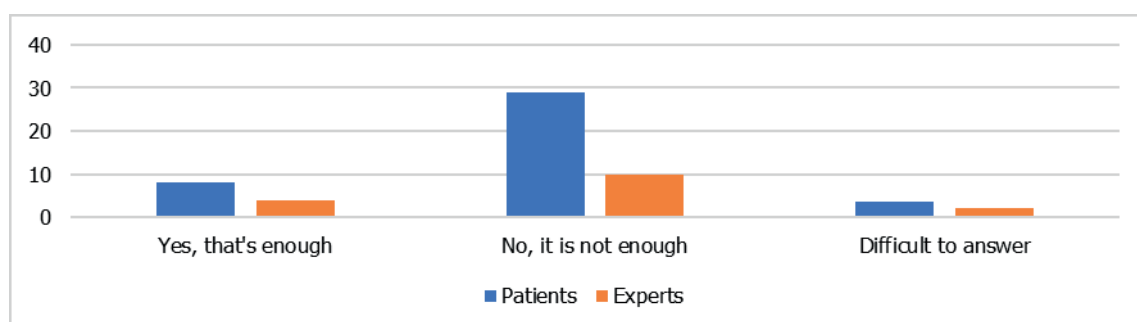


Figure 5. Are there enough psychological assistance services in Ukraine?

Therefore, the opinions of experts differ somewhat from the observation data. There is no doubt about the effectiveness of psychological support (therapy). At the same time, experts consider preventive educational measures to be more effective, as they allow for detecting the emergence of addictions and seeking help in time. Family and social support are in the lead because of the importance of forming an appropriate environment. In contrast, scepticism towards spiritual and religious support seems questionable.^(26,27) In fact, in the Ukrainian reality, support from spiritual institutions is quite relevant, as demonstrated in the review of clinical cases.

However, it is also necessary to take into account the quantity and quality of psychological services available in Ukraine aimed at overcoming addictive behaviours (figure 5).

A fairly predictable result was the finding that there is a lack of quality psychological rehabilitation and treatment services in Ukraine. The surveyed patients and experts in the field jointly identified this result. It is worth noting that it was also suggested that possible ways to overcome this situation be identified (table 6).

Table 6. Possible ways to improve countering addictions (expert opinion)		
The proposed path	Number of experts (maximum 20)	Expert opinion
Adoption of a national assistance programme	11	Expert 2: The introduction of a national assistance programme will be an important step in countering addictive behaviour. The point is that this phenomenon is becoming a national threat due to the devastating psychological impact of Russian aggression. Expert 5: The existence of a single programme will create a basis for providing assistance at all levels. In the long run, we can talk about a unified medical state strategy.
Improved training of psychologists	6	Expert 11: Amendments to the training of psychologists (taking into account military realities) should focus on the ability to use modern methods of counteracting addiction.
International assistance (including rehabilitation)	3	Expert 16: Analysis of the experience of other countries and organisations will help to improve the state of addictive behaviour treatment with the most modern methods.

Experts focused on several areas to improve the treatment of addictive behaviour. One is creating a national assistance programme, which could become important in systematising the approach to overcoming addictions. Another relevant area is the change in the training of psychologists, which aims to update education content to reflect current realities. International assistance can complement other initiatives by providing access to international experience.

DISCUSSION

The Russian aggression against Ukraine has demonstrated the importance of maintaining psychological health as an urgent challenge of our time. Overcoming psychological consequences, including addictive habits, is based on overcoming a number of other challenges. The purpose of the study was to identify and study the main psychological mechanisms that contribute to the formation of addictive behaviour in the current conditions of Ukraine. The realisation of this goal involved finding answers to the questions of which traumas experienced in childhood influence the development of addictive behaviour, what are the main types of traumas in Ukrainian realities, and what proposals can be developed to eliminate addictive behaviour. As a result, the hypothesis is proposed that traumas experienced in childhood (emotional or physical) play a significant role in the development of addictive behaviour in adulthood among the population of Ukraine in the current socio-political conditions. In addition, another hypothesis is related to the need for modern prevention and rehabilitation programmes, educational initiatives, and national programmes that should combine psychological support, timely medical examination, and social rehabilitation. The proposed results show that childhood trauma (the problem of stress in the family) is an important cause of addictive behaviour. Divorce was also identified as a cause of addictive behaviour and, to a lesser extent, difficult living conditions and personal failures in childhood and adolescence. The interviewed experts confirmed these findings, pointing to the importance of negative factors that lay the groundwork for psychological problems in childhood. Thus, the climate in each individual family and the socio-economic circumstances of life have a significant impact on the psychological state of children. While personal traumas are secondary, they still require attention and appropriate correction. These results correlate with the findings of other researchers^(28,29) who consider untreated childhood traumas to be psychologically destructive mechanisms that can be triggered by adverse external circumstances. This allows us to confirm the hypothesis that some childhood traumas are a significant factor for the development of addictive behaviour in adulthood among the population of Ukraine in the current socio-political conditions (in particular, in the context of Russian aggression and the difficulties of martial law).

The results of the study show that alcoholism is the most common type of addictive behaviour (almost half of all cases). Drug addiction (severe and mild cases), gambling addiction, and Internet addiction are also significant. The spread of gambling addiction is also associated with martial law and the spread of online gambling services in Ukraine. Internet addiction is one of the negative phenomena of our time, which may be a consequence of general digitalisation and globalisation. The interviewed experts agreed that the most common

forms of addictive behaviour in Ukraine are alcoholism, drug addiction, gambling addiction and Internet addiction. Both certain socio-economic factors and the development of modern digital technologies drive this process. These results are comparable to the findings of other researchers^(30,31,32) who consider the combination of digitalisation with gambling addiction, Internet addiction, etc., to be a pressing challenge today.

The easy availability of alcohol remains a problem, especially in times of war, when state control over the quality and quantity of such products is difficult.⁽³³⁾ Obviously, we should agree with those researchers^(34,35) who consider the combination of state and non-governmental organisations to be an important step towards overcoming addictive behaviour. The prospects of the chosen vector indicate the possibility of further integration of state programmes and private efforts to counteract addictive habits.^(36,37)

The study demonstrates that the most effective way to overcome addiction is to provide professional psychological assistance. Social support, working with families, educational campaigns, and support from spiritual and religious organisations are also important. The experts listed in the results confirm the effectiveness of psychological support (therapy) but consider the educational and professional element to be more important than family and social support or spiritual and religious support. This result confirms the conclusions of other researchers about the need for further integration of different areas of care, and the emphasis on the use of spiritual and religious components should not cause scepticism.^(38,39,40) It is worth noting, in support of the clinical results, that in the Ukrainian reality, the need for assistance is greater than the need for prevention (since the military challenge does not depend on the will of the Ukrainian population and is imposed by the Kremlin regime).^(41,42) At the same time, it is quite obvious that after the end of hostilities, the further use of educational and psychological technologies for the timely detection of addictions and overcoming their impact will become a promising area of psychological development.

This study has demonstrated that there is a lack of quality psychological rehabilitation and treatment services in Ukraine. The surveyed patients and experts in the field jointly determined this result. At the same time, the respondents pointed out several ways to improve the situation regarding the treatment of addictive behaviour. The study focuses on the creation of a national assistance programme, changes in the training of psychologists, and the use of available international assistance, which can complement other initiatives by providing access to international experience. This approach allowed us to confirm the conclusions of other scholars that the way to counteract addictive habits in society further is to combine several strategies that combine both local and international experience.^(8,33) In particular, this gives grounds to confirm the proposed hypothesis that there is a need to use the integration of modern prevention and rehabilitation programmes, educational initiatives, and national programmes that should combine psychological support, timely medical examination, and social rehabilitation.⁽³⁶⁾ This aspect will help improve the overall situation by counteracting the spread of addictive habits in society.

The methodology proposed in this study has several limitations that should be considered when working with the results obtained in this article. First of all, we are talking about studying clinical cases of victims of addictive habits. In some cases, it is challenging to identify the causes of their current condition. When studying their medical records, it is necessary to consider that some of the data in them may be incorrect, incomplete, etc. Although this does not undermine the main results obtained, there is still a need to take this aspect into account. Similarly, the subjective opinions of experts whose own previous experiences may have guided the survey should be considered, as this could impact the survey results. Subjectivity in the answers provided also requires attention as an element that introduces specific statistical errors in the calculations. On this basis, further research using empirical data will allow for adjustments to the results obtained and make them more mathematically precise.

CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, overcoming addictive habits is an important part of maintaining psychological health, especially in the context of global crises such as Russian aggression. The survey revealed that childhood trauma (the problem of stress in the family) is an important cause of addictive behaviour. Other reasons for addictive behaviour include divorce, difficult living conditions, and personal failures in childhood and adolescence. The climate in each individual family and socio-economic circumstances of life have a significant impact on the psychological state of children. While personal traumas are secondary, they still require attention and appropriate correction. It was found that alcoholism is the most common type of addictive behaviour (almost half of all cases). Drug addiction (severe and mild cases), gambling addiction, and Internet addiction are also noticeable. The spread of gambling addiction is also associated with martial law and the spread of online gambling services in Ukraine. Internet addiction is one of the negative phenomena of our time, which may be a consequence of general digitalisation and globalisation. One of the most effective ways to overcome addiction is to provide professional psychological assistance. Social support and family work, educational campaigns, and support from spiritual and religious organisations are also important. The study also shows that there is a lack of quality psychological rehabilitation and treatment services in Ukraine. The surveyed patients and experts in the

field jointly determined this result. At the same time, respondents pointed to several areas for improving the situation with the treatment of addictive behaviour. The study focuses on the creation of a national programme of assistance, changes in the training of psychologists, and the use of available international assistance, which can complement other initiatives by providing access to international experience.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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