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## **POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSONAL NEED**

Екологічну освіту варто розуміти як процес здобуття знань про сутність екологічних проблем, причини їх виникнення та можливість їх вирішення. В її основі сприйняття формуванню екологічності як риси характеру, що зумовлено співіснуванням із природою в контексті власного визначення місця у її просторах, а особливо якщо проблема екологічності стосується формування життєстійкості особистості в організаційській діяльності волонтера.

Статтю присвячено вивченню взаємозв'язку посттравматичного зростання й життєстійкості особистості в контексті організації волонтерської діяльності згідно сучасного екологічного стану. Метою статті є обґрунтування посттравматичного зростання в контексті організації волонтерської діяльності як екологічної проблеми формування особистості в умовах сучасності. Під час проведення дослідження було використано такі психодіагностичні методи: методика «Діагностика рівня алекситимії (Торонтська алексимічна шкала (TAS))», опитувальники «The Changes in Outlook Questionnaire» (CiOQ, Опитувальник світоглядних змін) та «The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory» (PTGI, Опитувальник посттравматичного зростання), котрі застосовано в контексті авторських уявлень про посттравматичне зростання.

Обґрунтовано теоретичні підходи щодо особливостей посттравматичного зростання волонтерів у контексті формування їх позитивного досвіду й збереження здоров'я в умовах війни. Встановлено, що збереження психосоматичного здоров'я залежить від особистісних, психологічних, фізіологічних і соціальних показників життєстійкості. Посттравматичний позитивний досвід в контексті формування екологічності волонтера свідчить про якість міжособистісних стосунків, зростання чуйності та близькості до особистісного оточення. Посттравматичні стресові порушення у волонтерів впливають на особистісну сферу взаємовідносин і спричиняють деструктивні розлади в сфері комунікативних відносин. Між студентами-волонтерами різних спеціалізацій та студентами-психологами існують розбіжності в сфері показників життєстійкості, але вони не є досить значними в організації волонтерської діяльності.

**Ключові слова:** волонтерська діяльність, екологічність, життєстійкість особистості, психологічне здоров'я, посттравматичне зростання.

Environmental education should be understood as a process of acquiring knowledge about the nature of environmental problems, the causes of their occurrence, and the possibility of solving them. It is based on the perception of the formation of environmentalism as a character trait, which is caused by coexistence with nature in the context of one's own definition of a place in its spaces, and especially if the problem of environmentalism concerns the formation of the vitality of an individual in the organizational activities of a volunteer.

The article is devoted to the study of the relationship between post-traumatic growth and the vitality of the individual in the context of the organization of volunteer activities according to the current ecological situation. *The purpose of the article* is the justification of post-traumatic growth in the context of the organization of volunteer activities as an environmental problem of personality formation in modern conditions. During the research, the following psychodiagnostic methods were used: the 'Alexithymia Level Diagnosis (Toronto Aleximism Scale (TAS))' method, 'The Changes in Outlook Questionnaire' (CiOQ) and 'The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory' (PTGI, Questionnaire of post-traumatic growth), which is applied in the context of the author's ideas about post-traumatic growth.

The theoretical approaches to the peculiarities of the post-traumatic growth of volunteers in the context of the formation of their positive experience and preservation of health in the conditions of war are substantiated. It has been established that the preservation of psychosomatic health depends on personal, psychological, physiological and social indicators of vitality. Post-traumatic positive experience in the

context of the formation of the volunteer's environmentalism testifies to the quality of interpersonal relations, the growth of sensitivity and closeness to the personal environment. Post-traumatic stress disorders in volunteers affect the personal sphere of relationships and cause destructive disorders in the sphere of communicative relations. There are differences between volunteer students of various specializations and psychology students in the field of sustainability indicators, but they are not significant enough in the organization of volunteer activities.

**Key words:** volunteering, environmental friendliness, vitality of the individual, psychological health, post-traumatic growth.

**Introduction.** Manifestations of negative mental reactions, as a result of the mental trauma of volunteers in the anti-terrorist operation, which is currently ongoing in the east of the country, are associated with the threat to the territorial integrity of Ukraine and are caused by post-traumatic stress disorders and violations of psychosomatic human health, as well as the development of psychopathologies and social personality maladaptation, the formation of antisocial behavior, which requires the urgent introduction of effective preventive, prognostic and rehabilitation measures.

Maintenance of specific, relevant psychological systems (strengthening of morale, self-esteem, self-productivity) in overcoming post-traumatic stress disorders is currently carried out by various volunteer organizations that provide social and psychological support to victims of war. Among such organizations, the information association "La Strada-Ukraine", the psychological support project 'PORUCH' psychological assistance from the Institute of Cognitive Modeling, a selection of contacts of Ukrainian psychologists and platforms on the website <https://viyna.net/>, the National Hotline for Children and Youth, Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, which offer free psychological consultations mainly online [1-5].

Such scientists as O. Kokun, N. Agaev, I. Pishko and N. Lozinska suggest using the procedural model of resilience in order to explain and clarify to the client the desired final result in overcoming stressors. The authors focus on the creation of a psychotechnological program for the recovery and development of resilience based on psychoeducational procedures that are important for human survival (resilient factors): one's own experience and resourceful memories, trust in one's own intuition, nobility and altruism, etc. [3, p. 138].

The post-traumatic period is mainly characterized by increased nervousness and sensitivity to unexpected sounds, figures, light or sudden movements. The actions of the victims are always uncontrolled and tense, in anticipation of negative events. Apathy, panic, and aggression occur in a *post-traumatic stress disorder* (PTSD) situation. There is a need to substantiate the factors of self-help at the stage of post-traumatic growth of the volunteer's personality.

The **purpose** is the justification of post-traumatic growth in the context of the organization of volunteer activities as an ecological problem of personality formation in modern conditions.

**Experimental part.** The problem of modern environmentalization of society should occupy a prominent place in the human mind and be a process of mastering new ideas, specifically in the ecological and spiritual spheres, regarding the training of highly educated specialists in the organization of a personal approach to life, who are able to resist economic threats in all spheres of human life.

Accordingly, the provision of psychological assistance in the context of the formation of environmental friendliness of a volunteer is an immediate need for his timely mastery of the consequences of an unexpected traumatic event for him (e.g., trauma-witness as a result of murder or misappropriation of people, violence, sniper shooting, passage of military equipment, etc.). It is precisely such events that leave an indelible mark on a person's consciousness (dreams often appear in which certain elements of psychotrauma, conversations or voices of the victims are present), the imprints of which are usually quite vivid in the volunteer's memory. They lead to the emergence of typical symptoms of PTSD: loss of communicative abilities in direct interaction with the addition of different localization of sensations (pain or paresthesias) and impaired well-being regarding the impossibility of realizing one's own life scenario, the result of which is a classic re-experiencing of a traumatic experience [3, p. 114].

The famous psychoanalyst S. Mishchuk attributes to the main signs of post-traumatic stress disorders the following signs: the suddenness of the escalation of crisis events; supranormative and suprathreshold stressogens in one or another specific situation; intrapersonal uncertainty, interpersonal and intergroup conflict, which require prompt resolution due to a person's lack of experience in solving such problems; powerful dynamic and progressive changes in the situation that developed under the conditions of martial law; complication of life processes due to a person's unpreparedness for such changes; personal instability at the limit

of her adaptive resources. The crisis of such events usually destroys the usual stereotypes of behavior and dramatically causes a restructuring of the personality structure [4, p. 44].

*The psychotrauma*, according to S. Mishchuk, is defined as a gradual, extended process of experiencing an unnatural disruption of the established life organization, mental processes, psychoemotional and psychosomatic balance of a person, which occurs due to the sudden impact of a personally significant, stressful factor and leads to the development of qualitatively new elements of the worldview, effective ways inclusion in life processes either causes fixation on traumatic events or progresses by repeating stages (retraumatization). Psychotraumatic events can block access to a part of experiences and, accordingly, to the free flow of the power of an individual's overcoming intention. A person needs recovery and active social support in overcoming and solving problems [4, p. 46].

We consider the *post-traumatic growth* (PTG) as the main result of restoring one's own resilience, which will constitute a certain set of psychotechniques in overcoming the consequences of stress and returning to the so-called "previous comfort zone". PTG provides for transformational psychological changes in thinking, in the interpretation of one's own feelings and a person's attitude to the world, which contributes to personal growth. Or, on the contrary, due to the lack of clear control and awareness of one's own actions after crisis events, psychotrauma affects a person's psyche, changing it beyond recognition. At the same time, the information provision of volunteers during the provision of psychological first aid consists in psychosocial support, basic services and the safety of victims who need immediate intervention in a safe and appropriate manner, under the conditions of not encroaching on human dignity, helplessness or well-being [2, p. 214].

Volunteers are currently close to the Ukrainian military. The front line of the Russian-Ukrainian war is not only the front. They are there where the war for Ukraine is being fought: in hospitals, warehouses, training grounds, mass media, and offices. They supply and repair equipment, provide immediate assistance, contribute to the strengthening of the Armed Forces, tell about the war first-hand and curb the flow of propaganda and disinformation [5, p. 40].

The results of military operations have a negative impact on people's health and have a maladaptive effect on the optimal functioning of the volunteers' bodies. Events that reflect the result of purposeful, often criminal activity (terrorist acts, sabotage, torture, hostilities, mass violence, death of loved ones, getting into a 'hostage situation', destruction of one's own house, etc.) are critical. Therefore, an effective system of prevention, psychological correction, and psychological recovery of ATO/JFO volunteers is extremely necessary. Post-traumatic growth is relevant in the context of the formation of a positive experience of volunteers in war conditions [1, p. 17].

*Environmental awareness* of the volunteer is a set of ecological knowledge of a person, his personal attitude to the environment and an idea of a person's place in the "human-environment" plane, readiness for actions that allow preserving the environment, or readiness to refrain from actions that cause damage to the environment, to support or not support for environmental policy, environmental measures, etc. Environmental awareness is measured by a level that can change during a person's life [3, 4].

The lack of viability of the volunteer's personality indicates the inability to synthesize individual qualities and abilities, to self-organize and self-regulate. The structural components of psychological stability include factors of the social environment and personal factors - the attitude of the individual (including self-esteem), the spirituality of the individual, emotions and feelings, the cognitive sphere, the behavioral (action) sphere, the communicative sphere, self-realization, hope, mental strength (subjectivity), self-discovery and self-development, readiness for changes, etc. [5, p. 39].

According to this approach, we consider *sustainability* as a complex integrative quality of the individual, which ensures high productivity and adequate behavior in difficult life circumstances, harmonization of personal and socio-cultural values; as a component of intelligence, which contributes to the preservation of high functional activity in stressful conditions by adapting to them or as a result of a high level of development of emotional and volitional self-regulation; as a feature of temperament, which allows a person to reliably perform targeted activity tasks due to the optimal use of neuropsychic energy resources [1, p. 18].

The experimental base of the research during 2021-2022 was Vinnytsia State Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi Pedagogical University and National Pirogov Memorial Medical University, Vinnytsia. The general sample of people was made up of students, whose potential features were used to reveal the features of post-traumatic growth as a factor of sustainable human life support in wartime conditions. All of them are engaged in volunteer activities. The total number of the sample was 112 people (among them 54 volunteer students of various specialties and 58 psychology students) in the age category of educational

institutions students from 17 to 22 years old in the specialties 222 'Medicine' and 053 'Psychology', who have a tendency to pessimism outlook on life in the post-stress period in the context of volunteering.

According to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), PTSD is coded as F43.1. and develops as a result of severe mental trauma. Before the start of the study, all participants were informed about the conditions of participation in the experiment and gave their consent to participate. The experiment was carried out by the decision of the specialized academic council of Vinnytsia State Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University. The ethical rights of all participants were respected. The study was conducted in the natural conditions of the educational process of higher education institutions, with the provision of general conditions for participation in the experiment: the same time and duration of training, the same measuring materials, which allow diagnosing the level of post-traumatic growth according to the criteria for assessing the vitality of volunteers.

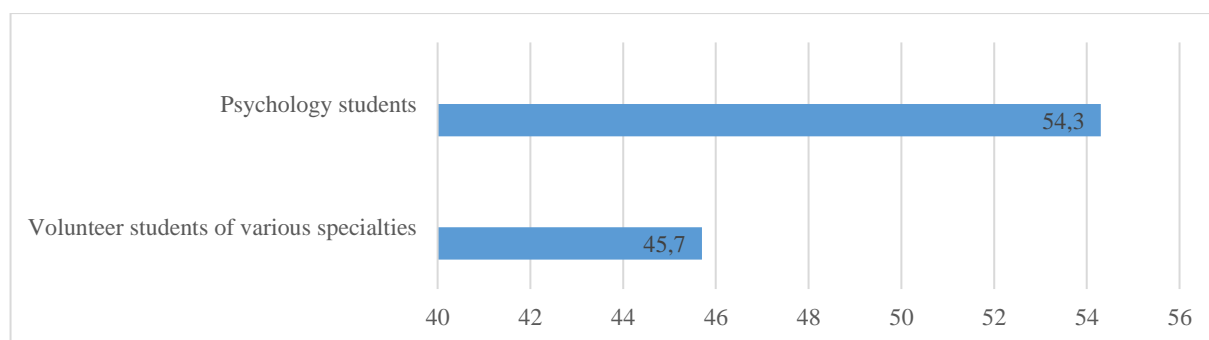
It should be noted that persistence in overcoming difficulties, maintaining self-belief, confidence in oneself, one's abilities, perfection of mental self-regulation are an integral part of mental life. The ability to maintain a constant level of mood, to feel the emotional richness of life, to have diverse interests, polymotivation of life activities are signs of a harmonious characterological status of a person, and even more so of the personality of a volunteer [1, p. 17].

During the research, we used the method „Diagnosis of the level of alexithymia (Toronto alexithymic scale (TAS))“, which was developed in 1985 in the USA by J. Taylor and adapted at the NIPNI Psychoneurological Institute named after V. Bekhtereva (D. Yeresko, G. Isurina, etc.), the questionnaires "The Changes in Outlook Questionnaire" (CiOQ) and "The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory" (PTGI) were also used, which applied in the context of the author's ideas about post-traumatic growth [4, p. 57].

Two scales were also used: "The Perceived Benefit Scales" (PBS, Scales of Perceived Benefit), which was created to assess the positive consequences of critical events, and contains seven subscales ("changes in lifestyle" scale, "material benefits" scale, " increasing self-efficacy", the scale "family closeness", the scale "social closeness", the scale "faith in people", the scale "spirituality" and "The Thriving Scale" (TS, Scale of success), the last of which contains 20 questions and serves to assessment of growth from own suffering [3, p. 122].

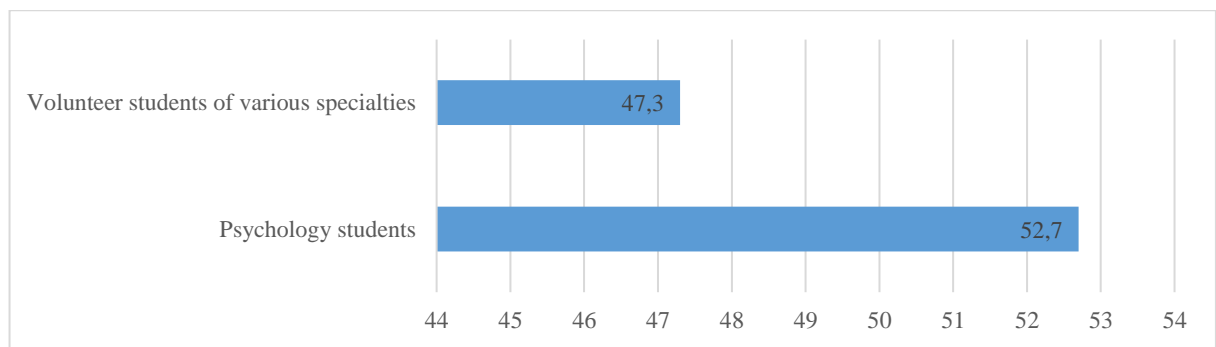
In the process of statistical data processing of psychodiagnostic indications, the method of checking the probability of sample differences in the distribution of features using the Pearson  $\chi^2$  test, which allows you to assess the strength and direction of the consistency of changes between two features, and the Student's t-test, which is connected with the test of the equality of the means, was used values in two samples.

The average score for the above methods of post-traumatic growth (arithmetic mean of the total score on all scales) among medical students who directly assisted refugees from the combat zone (coordination of actions, first psychological aid, referral to services as needed) is 45.7 points, and among psychology students who participated in the organization of help to victims online (psychological counseling, individual and group discussions) – 54.3 points (Fig. 1).



*Fig. 1. The level of post-traumatic growth of volunteers during the provision of assistance to victims*

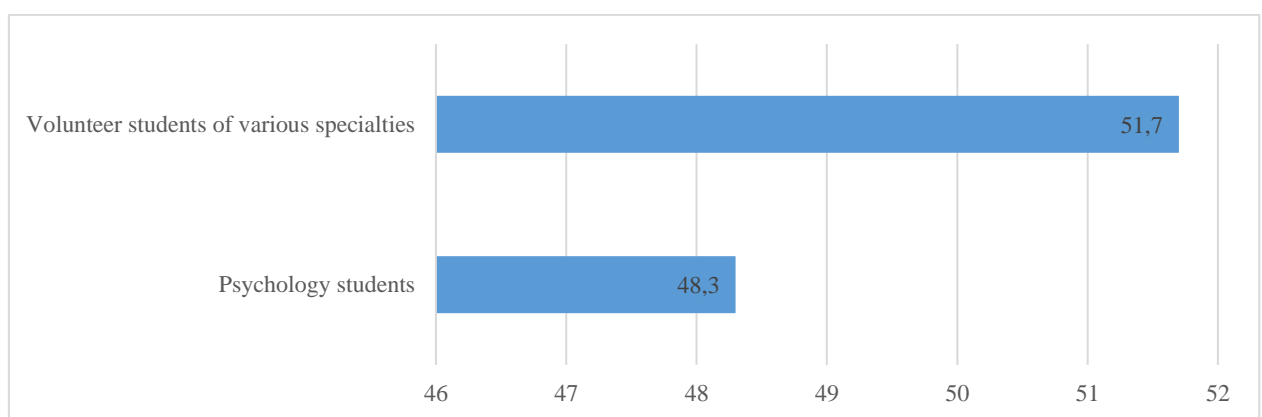
The analysis of the distribution of the average indicators within these groups according to the criterion of viability, which provided assistance, has the following results: volunteers were concerned about the problems of the displaced persons, communicating directly with them - 47.3 points; indirectly – 52.7 points, using information and communication tools (Fig. 2).



*Fig. 2. Comparison of volunteers' vitality indicators*

Taking into the account the above-mentioned information, we note that individuals of all groups were diagnosed with signs of post-traumatic stress in the conditions of war during volunteer activities.

The level of post-traumatic stress for those who directly provided psychological assistance to the victims was 51.7 points, and for those who provided it indirectly - 48.3 points (Fig. 3).



*Fig. 3. The level of post-traumatic stress of volunteers during assistance to victims*

Further analysis of stress indicators showed that the highest level of stress in medical students is 51.7 points when communicating with victims. The stress level of psychology students who provided assistance indirectly was 48.3 points. This shows that post-traumatic stress disorders affect the personal sphere of relationships and cause destructive disorders in the sphere of communicative relations. Correlation analysis (Table 1) for the entire sample did not reveal significant relationships between these parameters (0.18;  $p < 0.161^*$ ).

The statistical significance of some correlation values is quite high, but does not provide a basis for more thorough conclusions, since the sample of respondents is small. However, some relationship is observed in the structural organization of PTSD and posttraumatic growth.

The presence of a number of correlations (Table 1) according to the indicators of growth components and the impact of stress confirm the relationships between the 'value of life' and 'attitude towards others' scales, which proves the increased impact on the level of post-traumatic growth. Certain trends were also noted regarding their interaction on the "spiritual changes" scale ("negative changes in thoughts and moods" and "re-experiencing"). At the same time, indicators on the scales "personal strength" and "new opportunities" have weak correlations with almost all components of post-traumatic stress.

However, this analysis of the correlations between the scales of the research methods for the generalized indicators of post-traumatic growth and stress does not provide grounds for the following assumptions and conclusions - no trends can be traced. It is also worth noting that post-traumatic stress disorder is caused not by the traumatic event itself, but by its information presentation in the awareness of the events that happened to the volunteer. The latent period lasts about 2-6 months from the time of psychological trauma.

Table 1

**Statistical significance of correlation indicators according to psychodiagnostic research methods**

<i>Correlative relationships</i>		<i>III</i>	<i>Attitude to others</i>	<i>New opportunities</i>	<i>Personal strength</i>	<i>Spiritual changes</i>	<i>The value of life</i>
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Post-traumatic stress</i>	Pearson's criterion	.161*	.214**	.092	-.37	.172*	.272**
	The Student criterion	.018	.003	.119	.321	.013	.001
	N (number)	112	112	112	112	112	112
<i>Repetitive experience</i>	Pearson's criterion	.125	.179**	.055	-.061	.171*	.233**
	The Student criterion	.047	.007	.227	.217	.012	.002
	N (number)	112	112	112	112	112	112
<i>Avoidance</i>	Pearson's criterion	.117	.162*	.003	-.44	.167*	.267**
	The Student criterion	.067	.018	.005	-.043	.167	.268**
	N (number)	112	112	112	112	112	112
<i>Negative changes in thoughts and moods</i>	Pearson's criterion	.145*	.181**	.101	-.031	.142*	.241**
	The Student criterion	.029	.009	.095	.351	.027	.002
	N (number)	112	112	112	112	112	112
<i>Excitability and reactivity</i>	Pearson's criterion	.171*	.220**	.112	-.007	.149*	.259**
	The Student criterion	-.013	.004	.071	.473	.025	.001
	N (number)	112	112	112	112	112	112
**Correlation significant at 0.01 level							
*Correlation significant at 0.05 level							

**Results and their discussion.** Later, a number of psychocorrective measures were carried out for both groups of respondents, which contributed to increasing their level of post-traumatic growth in the conditions of war. The psychocorrective program is based on the following psychotherapeutic principles and techniques: utilization (use of critical events in the context of gaining positive experience), trial therapy, use of humor, focusing on resources, acceptance of the client's unique individuality, use of specific speech patterns, telling psychotherapeutic stories, Milton modeling, setting up and leading etc. In general, events of increased complexity are considered by us as problems that lead to something useful, such that can be used for positive changes (reframing methodology). Table 2 presents the results of psychocorrection of these changes according to the level of increase in post-traumatic growth of volunteers.

<i>Development level</i>	<b>The level of formation of post-traumatic growth of volunteers</b>	
	<b>The group of research subjects (112 people)</b>	
	Before the experiment	After the experiment
<i>Hign</i>	26 people (23,21%)	86 people (76,50%)
<i>Average</i>	47 people(41,96%)	65 people (58,03%)
<i>Low</i>	39 people (34,82%)	7 people(6,25%)

Table 2 shows that the volunteers of both groups experience qualitative changes in overcoming critical events that arise in the situation of overcoming extremely difficult challenges, which proves the presence of post-traumatic growth.

Thus, the post-traumatic growth of volunteers in the conditions of war is the growth of self-awareness, recognition and understanding of one's own life-creating power, courage, self-understanding, readiness for empathy and feelings of both pain and sadness, as well as joy and happiness. Post-traumatic positive experience in the context of the formation of the volunteer's environmentalism testifies to the quality of interpersonal relations, the growth of sensitivity and closeness to the personal environment. After all, the post-traumatic growth of volunteers is based on a wise philosophy of life, an awareness of the values 'We can do it. We are together'.

**Conclusions.** Currently, volunteering is a non-specific form of employment in war conditions, which involves cooperation with victims, volunteer organizations of various associations, centers of international associations, etc. In any case, it is the state that is the guarantor of ensuring the protection of the rights of citizens who have expressed a desire to provide their own help in the context of socially useful work, taking the position of a customer of volunteer services or, directly, a party in need of selfless help. The post-traumatic stress disorders in volunteers affect the personal sphere of relationships and cause destructive disorders in the sphere of communicative relations. There are differences between volunteer students of various specializations and psychology students in the field of sustainability indicators, but they are not significant enough in the organization of volunteer activities.

As a social lever, volunteer organizations have an impact on all spheres of human life, giving preference, above all, to the social focus on the general well-being of all social strata both in Ukraine and among the population of the world, on the protection of the ecology of the surrounding environment, on the elimination of manifestations of classism in the perspective of obtaining quality education, medicine, scientific and technical progress, etc.

**Prospects for further research.** Prospects for further research in this direction are determined by the study of individual features of the vitality of volunteers of international volunteer tourism, the main subjects of which are international organizations and individuals who provide voluntary assistance in the content of the settlement of racial, political, economic, cultural enmity, promote the principles of altruism, mobilization voluntary forces among individual representatives of society, the creation of an international society and a vivid example of the implementation of current constitutional rights and freedoms, the evolution of universal human values, an increase in the level of post-traumatic growth, etc.

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