

Ideas About Serving Among Representatives of Various Professional Groups

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Abstract

Introduction. This paper examines the ideas about 'serving' among representatives of various professional groups, including civil servants, servicemen of the National Guard of the Russian Federation, and firefighters and rescuers of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM of Russia).

Methods. The study used expert evaluations to collect and to structure information (expert opinions) about the concept of 'serving' and involved civil servants, servicemen of the Russian National Guard, and firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia. Content analysis was used to carry out a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the content of experts' responses concerning the concept of 'serving'.

Results and Discussion. The linguistic units from the experts' responses were combined into 5 categories of content-analysis: 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties', 'helping others', 'personality traits', and 'serving God'. In ideas of civil servants, serving is associated with the categories of 'helping others', 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties'. Servicemen characterize serving using the categories of 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' and 'attitude towards work'. The categories of 'personality traits', 'helping others', 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' are the most significant in ideas about 'serving' among firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia. All the experts understand serving as a professional activity aimed at helping others and fulfilling civic and official duties, which is accompanied by an emotional and value attitude towards work. Differences in the understanding of serving by representatives of various professional groups may be explained by the content of their professional activities. This study expands our understanding of the concept of 'serving' as a psychological phenomenon. The findings obtained in the study can be readily used for psychological and motivational support of specialists from these professional groups.

Keywords

serving, understanding of serving, idea of serving, professional groups, experts, linguistic units, civil servants, servicemen, firefighters, rescuers

Highlights

► Similarities and differences in ideas about 'serving' among representatives of various professional groups are determined by the content of their professional activities.

- ▶ The categories of 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties', and 'helping others' are the main categories in the experts' understanding of the concept of 'serving'.
- ▶ Civil servants, servicemen, and firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia understand serving as a professional activity, accompanied by an emotional and value, positive attitude towards work, aimed at fulfilling civic and official duties and helping others by a person having certain qualities.
- ▶ Research in social ideas about serving expands our understanding of serving as a psychological phenomenon.

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Introduction

Research in the issues of serving is important because of the limited resources and effectiveness of monetary motivation on employees in socially significant professional spheres and much need for new methods of non-material motivation of professional activity, in particular, based on actualizing serving motivation.

Today, the concept of serving as a psychological phenomenon is understudied. A literature overview has shown that the theoretical and practical aspects of issues of serving are insufficiently developed. In Russian scientific literature the concept of serving is mainly considered by representatives of religious studies, historical, philosophical knowledge in the context of charity traditions and the practice of social service (Antonova, 2009; Doinikova, 2006; Zubanova, 2012, 2013; Zubanova, Stepanov, Patyulina, & Ruzanova, 2013; Krasnobaeva, 2013; Levchenko & Cherkasova, 2013; Stepanov, 2012; Subaeva, 2004; Ustinenko, 2008; etc.). Global experience speaks in favour of the prevalence of social service mainly by such non-profit associations as the People Serving People Foundation (<https://www.pspfoundation.org/>), People Serving People (<https://www.peopleservingpeople.org/>) and private persons (McNeely, n.d.).

Certain works examine the phenomenon of serving in the context of various professions in relation to librarians, scientists, foresters, poets, lawyers, musicians, medical workers, agronomists, etc. (Zolotukhina & Smirnova, 2013; Stukov, Osyaeveva, & Shashkina, 2013; Kulik, 2017; Selikhovkin, 2009; Reshetnyak, 2017; Panyushkin, 1997; Karpov, 2013; Blozen, 2018; Hurst-Wahl, 2014; Khan, 2017; Langsley, 1989; Sims & Openshaw, 1980). Malik, Yamamoto, Souares, Malik, & Sauerborn (2010) show that intrinsic and sociocultural factors, such as serving, are important motivators for the professional practice of physicians.

Research in social ideas about serving is important because of the popularity of the concept of 'serving' in the common practice of Russians, the diversity and ambiguity of definitions of the concept of serving, instability of content perception and ideas about this concept, as well as the lack of a scientific psychological view of this phenomenon (Barykina & Shutova, 2018). The study of social ideas of serving may open up new opportunities for studying the very phenomenon of

serving, and for predicting the processes occurring in the value-meaning sphere of representatives of various professional groups and society as a whole.

The theory of social representations by Moskovici (1995), suggests that social representations are any forms of beliefs, ideological views, knowledge of members of a social group in relation to a changing life. Social representations are potentially conscious, are widely shared by members of a certain socio-cultural group, and play a special role in maintaining and regulating intragroup relations (Mustafina, 2012). The concept of social representations enabled us to examine the way our contemporaries understand the concept of serving and formulate our definition of this concept.

Aims

We conducted the present study in order to identify the characteristics of ideas about serving among representatives of various professional groups: civil servants, servicemen of the Russian National Guard, and firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia.

Methods

The study was carried out using the method of expert evaluations aimed at obtaining information (expert opinions) expressed in quantitative and/or qualitative form, its processing, analyzing, and summarizing. Along with other mathematical and statistical methods, the method of expert evaluations has become widespread in psychological science (Artyukhov et al., 2012; Karpova, Sochivko, & Pastushenya, 2019; Maksimenkova, 2018; Benini et al., 2017; Neal & Grisso, 2014; Zondervan-Zwijnenburg, van de Schoot-Hubeek, Lek, Hoijtink, & van de Schoot, 2017).

Study Participants

1. Civil servants – 30 experts (67 % females, 33 % males; higher and specialized secondary education; mean working experience of 12 years).

2. Servicemen of the Russian National Guard – 28 experts (11 % females and 89 % males; higher education; mean working experience of 24 years).

3. Firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia – 32 experts (3 % females and 97 % males; higher education; mean working experience of 17 years).

In total, the study involved 90 experts aged 24–59 years (mean age = 42.7, standard deviation = 9.98; 27 % females, 73 % males).

Research Procedure

The expert survey card (inquiry form) provided the instructions and indicated the purpose of the examination and the procedure for working with the form.

The expert survey card included an open-ended item – ‘I understand serving as...’ This item is aimed to examine the ideas of the concept of ‘serving’.

The procedure for conducting the survey was classical: after reading the instructions each expert, filled in the inquiry form, and put the date and signature. The experts signed their consent to participate in the survey and to store the data.

During the study, few experts (n = 2, 1.08 %) had difficulty in defining the concept ‘serving’. Meanwhile, the majority of participants in the study clearly understood the meaning of the task and gave full answers to the questions.

In total, we analyzed 90 expert survey cards. All the inquiry forms were found to be valid.

To analyze the experts' responses we used *the method of content analysis* and the methods of mathematical statistics using Pearson's χ^2 test.

The categorization system underlying the content analysis method enabled us to carry out a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the content of experts' responses (Denisenko & Chebotareva, 2008).

Our study represents a kind of 'extracting meaningful trends from diffuse expert knowledge' (Bazarov, Erofeev, & Shmelev, 2014). Recognizing the fact that experts' responses are determined by professional orientation, in this study we aimed to describe the experts' ideas about the concept of serving as social creativity that has the potential to reflect the professional culture.

Research Stages

The stages of the content analysis were as follows:

Determining the system of categories of content-analysis (categories of analysis); these were the most general, key concepts corresponding to the research task.

Distinguishing the units of analysis – linguistic units (elements of the content of the text).

Calculating the frequency of occurrence of linguistic units related to various categories of content-analysis (Table 1). The last stage enabled us to generalize the results obtained in the study and formulate the conclusions (Baiborodova & Chernyavskaya, 2018).

We distinguished 98 linguistic units of the analysis (elements of the content of the text) are combined them into 5 categories of content-analysis (Table 1):

1. Attitude towards work (25 linguistic units, 26 %);
2. Fulfillment of civic and official duties (27 linguistic units, 27 %);
3. Helping others (25 linguistic units, 26 %);
4. Personality traits (18 linguistic units, 18 %);
5. Serving God (3 linguistic units, 3 %).

Results and Discussion

Table 1 and Figure 1 present the results obtained in the study and the analysis of ideas about 'serving' among civil servants, servicemen, firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia.

The analysis showed that the frequency of occurrence of linguistic units (elements of the text content) (Table 1) in the category of '**attitude towards work**' is 25 units, or 26 % of the total number of responses. This category includes the following linguistic units: '*working effectively*'; '*devotion to any goal or idea*'; '*devotion to activities*'; '*perform tasks efficiently*'; '*being honest, responsible for work*'; '*professional dedication*'; '*favorite work*'; '*honor and dignity of the profession*'; '*execution of orders*'; '*voluntary submission another person*'; '*obeying orders or instructions implicitly*'; '*subordination*'; '*discipline*'; '*order*'; '*activity that implement moral values*'; '*following ethical and legal standards*', etc.

The category of '**fulfillment of civic and official duties**' included the following 27 linguistic units of analysis (27 % of the responses): '*fulfill duty to the Motherland*'; '*fulfill civic duty to the state*'; '*fulfill duty to someone*'; '*fulfill duty*'; '*fulfill civil, state, military, service duty to the Motherland, Fatherland*'; '*duty to the country*'; '*certain duty to the state and society*'; '*defend the Motherland*'; '*loyalty to the Motherland*'; '*serve the Fatherland*'; '*selflessness*'; '*not sparing yourself, lay down souls for the Fatherland*'; '*not sparing your life, put your souls on the altar of the Fatherland*'; '*to work*'

for the good of the Motherland'; 'work for the state'; 'work for the good of the Motherland, yourself and your family'; 'military duty'; 'military service'; 'work in hazardous conditions'; 'to fulfill the tasks'; 'to perform service and combat missions'; 'complete all assigned tasks', etc.

The '**helping others**' category included the following 25 linguistic units of analysis (26 % of the responses): 'helping others'; 'to do good'; 'giving others'; 'improving others' lives'; 'be useful'; 'working for others'; 'protect others'; 'serving others'; 'observing interests of others'; 'acting for the good of society'; 'participating in the improvement of living conditions of others'; 'being responsible for the life and peace of others'; 'respect for others'; 'gratuitous selfless help', etc.

The '**personality traits**' category (18 linguistic units, 18 %) included the following personality traits: *responsibility, honesty, honor, conscience, dignity, pride, probity, professionalism, patriotism*, etc.

Separately, we distinguished the category of '**serving God**', which included the following expressions 'serving God', 'the process of serving the church', 'worship, temple'. In total, this category included 3 linguistic units, or 3 % of the total number of expert responses.

Table 1

The frequency of linguistic units in experts' responses concerning the concept of serving and their distribution by the categories of content-analysis

Experts, n	Frequency of linguistic units n	Categories of content-analysis									
		Attitude towards work		Fulfillment of civic and official duties		Helping others		Personality traits		Serving God	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Civil servants, n = 30	28	9	32	6	22	11	39	2	7	0	0
Servicemen, n = 28	31	9	29	14	45	5	16	2	7	1	3

Table 1

The frequency of linguistic units in experts' responses concerning the concept of serving and their distribution by the categories of content-analysis

Experts, n	Frequency of linguistic units	Categories of content-analysis									
		Attitude towards work		Fulfillment of civic and official duties		Helping others		Personality traits		Serving God	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Firefighters and rescuers, n = 32	39	7	18	7	18	9	23	14	36	2	5
Sum of frequencies	98	25	26	27	28	25	26	18	18	3	3

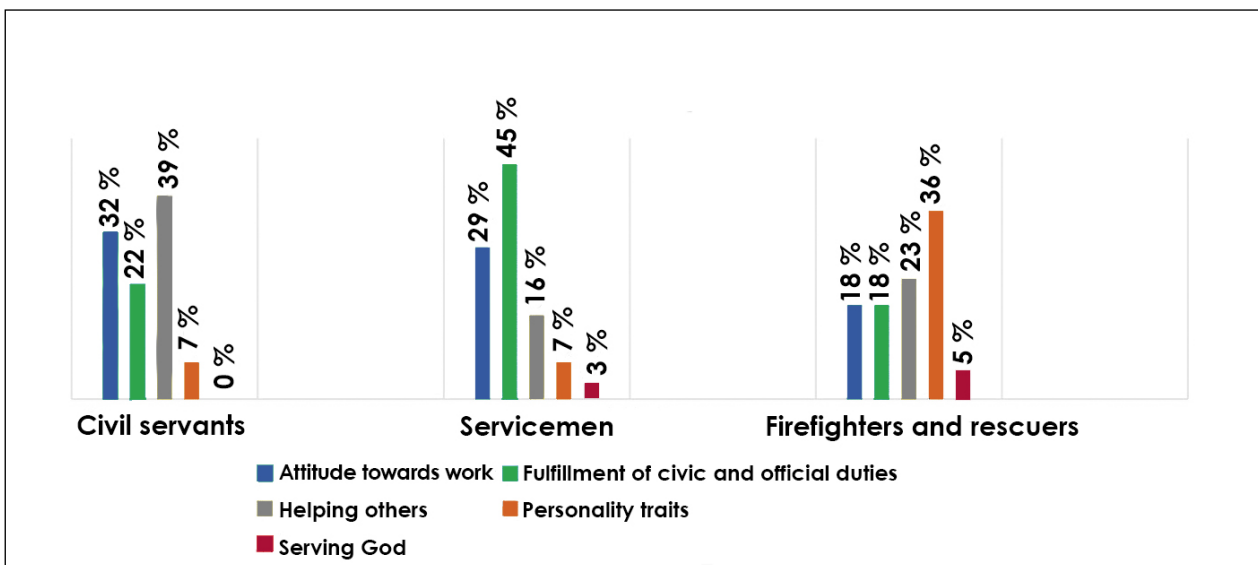


Figure 1. The frequency of linguistic units in experts' responses concerning the concept of 'serving' and their distribution by the categories of content-analysis, %

Ideas about serving among civil servants

When analyzing understanding of the concept of 'serving' among civil servants ($n = 30$), we identified a linguistic hierarchy, where the dominant position was occupied by responses from several categories: 'helping others' (39 % of statements), 'attitude towards work' (32 % of statements) and 'fulfillment of civil and official duty' (22 % of statements). The statements from the category of 'personality traits' were most rare (7 % of statements). Linguistic units from the category of 'serving God' were absent in the lexicon of experts (0 %) (Table 1; Fig. 1).

We observed significant differences (Pearson χ^2 test, $\chi^2 = 5.455$; $p < 0.05$) between the categories 'helping others', 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (referred to the 1st level) and the category of 'personality traits' (referred to the 2nd level) (Table 2). Thus, the 1st level includes the categories that are most frequently associated with the concept of 'serving', and the 2nd level – the least frequently associated ones. No significant differences existed between the categories within the levels (Table 2).

Table 2	
<i>Ideas about serving among civil servants (n = 30)</i>	
<u>Levels of significance of categories</u>	
1st level	2nd level
Helping others	
Attitude towards work	Fulfillment of civic and official duties
Fulfillment of civic and official duties	Personality traits

Note: $p < 0.05$.

The analysis showed that civil servants most often defined the concept of serving as '*activities for the good of society*', '*improvement of others' living conditions*', '*responsible implementation of tasks*', '*simplification of obtaining public services*', classified as 'helping others' (39 % of statements). They also understood serving as an opportunity '*to benefit others and society without the goal of personal enrichment*', '*work for the good of others*', personal efforts to improve the people's life ('*my efforts are aimed at improving the lives of citizens*'), personal attitude towards work ('*my attitude towards work that I do responsibly and conscientiously*'), etc. (the 'attitude towards work' category).

Our findings indicate that a special place belongs to the definitions of the concept of serving referred to the category of content-analysis of 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (22 % of statements). The mathematical analysis showed that there are no significant differences between the linguistic units of this group and the statements related to the categories of 'helping others' and 'attitude towards work' (Pearson's χ^2 test, at $p < 0.05$).

Meanwhile, we observed no statistical difference between linguistic units belonging to the category of 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' and the lexical components of the category of

content-analysis of 'personality traits', which much less frequently define the concept of 'serving' (Pearson's χ^2 criterion, $p < 0.05$).

According to several civil servants, serving should be understood as '*dedication to work*', '*professionalism*'; '*a man of word and deed*' should be considered as the subject of serving. Therefore, certain personality traits, a positive attitude towards work, and competencies necessary for successful solution of professional tasks could be a kind of psychological resource that allows the subject of professional activity to fulfill his civic and official duties and help others. However, our findings from this group of experts enabled us to interpret serving, first of all, as a personal, personally significant activity of an employee, aimed at achieving a socially useful result. Such activities are helping others and fulfillment of duty, which are motivated by a certain attitude. Although the latter may also be considered as the result of the employee's consciousness and activity. With regard to the work of civil servants, both the activity itself and its result are reflected in 'protecting human and civil rights and freedoms' (On the state...: Federal law of July 27, 2004, no. 79-FL; On the system...: Federal law of May 27, 2003, no. 58-FL; Christensen & Opstrup, 2018), taking care of others' safety, and creating conditions for cultural development and growth of economic well-being.

In the field of social protection of the population, civil servants participate in the development, management and implementation of programs aimed at social protection of mothers and children, are engaged in demographic policy, provide assistance to citizens in connection with their age, health, social status, and insufficient means of subsistence. Civil servants provide social assistance (social protection, social security) to needy social groups, concrete families, and individuals. This often takes place in the form of serving the sick and the elderly, taking care of children, targeted social assistance to the poor, providing them with benefits in solving vital problems of nutrition, health care, education, pensions, material assistance, etc. In the field of culture, civil servants organize work with children and youth, identify and support talents, help people of the art create and promote their works, support industry and enterprises.

Therefore, by serving civil servants understand helping others, attitude towards work, fulfillment of civic and official duties; serving is personally significant activity of an employee aimed at achieving a socially useful result while respecting the priority of human and civil rights and freedoms, consolidated by professional job responsibilities.

Ideas about serving among servicemen

The analysis showed that linguistic units from the categories of 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (45 % of statements) and 'attitude towards work' (29 % of statements) (Table 1; Fig. 1) occupy the dominant position in the hierarchy of ideas about 'serving' among servicemen ($n = 28$).

The analysis of the frequency of occurrence of linguistic units within the categories of 'fulfillment of civic and official duties', 'attitude towards work', 'helping others', 'personality traits', and 'serving God' showed that there are statistically significant differences between these categories (Pearson's χ^2 test, at $p < 0.05$). Thus, the above categories were divided into 3 levels. The 1st level includes the categories that are the most frequently associated with the concept of 'serving'; the 3rd level – the least frequently associated ones. There are statistically significant differences in the frequency of attribution of concrete linguistic units to the concept of 'serving' between the categories of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd levels of the hierarchy, ($\chi^2 = 6.452$; $\chi^2 = 5.543$,

at $p < 0.05$). No statistically significant differences existed between the categories within each level (Table 3).

Table 3		
<i>Ideas about serving among servicemen (n = 28)</i>		
<u>Levels of significance of categories</u>		
1st level	2nd level	3rd level
Fulfillment of civic and official duties	Attitude towards work	Helping others
Attitude towards work	Helping others	Personality traits
		Serving God

Note: $p < 0.05$.

The analysis showed that 45 % of servicemen understand the concept of 'serving' as 'fulfillment of civil and official duty', that is, through the contractual and voluntary moral obligations (Shchipakov, 2017). For example, servicemen gave the following definitions of serving: '*fulfillment of service and combat missions*'; '*assistance, benefit to the state*'; '*loyalty to the Fatherland*'; '*serving for the good of the Motherland*'; '*loyalty to military duty*'; '*fulfillment of military duty to defend the Motherland*'; '*implementation of the Russian officer's code*'; '*strict fulfillment of their duties for the good of the state*'; '*protecting the interests of the country*'; '*defending the Motherland*'; '*... defending the Motherland, peaceful sky overhead*'; '*loyalty to the Fatherland, Motherland*'. Therefore, the servicemen associated the concept of serving with military service and protection of state interests.

At the same time, we should not ignore the evidence of scientists (Britt, Adler, & Castro, 2006; Castro & Hassan, 2016) that the nature and conditions of military service can affect the mental health and well-being of military personnel. In this regard, the results of this study are significant, since servicemen understand serving through the category of 'attitude towards work' (29 % of statements): '*giving themselves, all their strength, not sparing their lives, put their souls on the altar of the Fatherland*', etc.

Clause 1, Article 59 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, adopted by a popular vote on July 4, 2020, states that 'defense of the Fatherland is the duty of citizens of the Russian Federation', and it is extremely important and extremely honorable. Awareness of the importance of military service evokes feelings of '*pride*' and '*patriotism*' in servicemen, desire '*not to spare their lives, put their souls on the altar of the Fatherland*', '*serve honestly and conscientiously, work*

for the good of the country, to strengthen our state', 'devote themselves to protecting the interests of the country', which, in turn, become motives for effective activities.

We share the opinion of V. Ya. Gozhikov that understanding of military service as an honorable duty determines a special attitude towards the process of its performance, that is, as something very important: the sociocultural and value-meaning imperative of serving (in the format of military professional development of cadets) manifests itself in the fact that servicemen as active subjects 'cannot think of themselves without a value attitude towards officer service, which determines the foundations of life and is a system-forming component of their personal and professional identity' (Gozhikov, 2017, p. 64).

Therefore, the results of the study enable us to assume that certain individual participants associate serving with emotional and value attitude towards activities, since they define the concept of 'serving' using formulations classified under the category of 'attitude towards work'. Moreover, one of the experts proposed the following definition, 'Service is a type of a person's attitude to his/her activities, when he/she feels responsible, obliged to faithfully execute his/her job and feels pride'.

The analysis also showed the least frequency of the linguistic units categorized as 'helping people' (16 %), 'personality traits' (7 %), and 'serving God' (3 %) in definitions of the concept of serving among servicemen.

In relation to the ideas about 'serving' among servicemen, we consider important the results of Zhilyaev's (2017) study of the image and components of the positive image of a Russian officer. According to the researcher, 30 % of the officers surveyed believe that a true officer should serve the Fatherland, protect the freedom of men and citizens, protect public order and ensure the safety of citizens, help citizens in difficult situations, which means that an officer must be brave, decisive, courageous, responsible, and disciplined. Moreover, this is behavior that the civilian population associates with a positive image of a serviceman and expects from an officer of the National Guard troops (Zhilyaev, 2017). Zhilyaev associates the concept of 'service' with the categories of 'helping others' and 'personality traits'; serving means helping others, protecting and showing courage and heroism.

Thus, the analysis showed that servicemen characterize 'serving' in the categories of 'fulfillment of civil and official duty' and 'attitude towards work' and understand serving as the duty of the Russian Federation citizens to defend the Fatherland, which is coupled with an emotional value attitude towards officer service as a system-forming component of their personal and professional identity.

Ideas about serving among firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia

Firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia ($n = 32$) most often use the statements related to the categories of 'personality traits' (36 % of statements), 'helping others' (23 % of statements), 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (18 % of statements), and 'attitude towards work' (18 % of statements). Least of all the statements ('church service', 'serving God') entered the 'serving God' category (5 % of statements) (Table 1; Fig. 1).

Table 4	
<i>Ideas about serving among firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia (n = 32)</i>	
<u>Levels of significance of categories</u>	
1st level	2nd level
Personality traits	
Helping others	
Attitude towards work	Serving God
Fulfillment of civic and official duties	
Note: $p < 0.05$.	

We observed significant differences (Pearson's χ^2 test, $\chi^2 = 5.379$; $p < 0.05$) among the categories of 'personality traits', 'helping others', 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (referred to the 1st level) and the category of 'serving God' (referred to the 2nd level). Thus, the 1st level includes the categories which are the most frequently associated with the concept of 'serving', and the 2nd level – the least frequently associated ones. No statistically significant differences existed between the categories within the 1st level (Table 4).

For firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia the concept of 'serving' was most frequently associated with the category of 'personality traits', including 'honor', 'dignity', 'responsibility', 'discipline', 'courage', 'conscience', and 'professionalism'. Official activities of firefighters and rescuers of the Ministry of Emergency Situations are associated with threats to their life and health; the cost of professional mistakes is too high. Accordingly, in order to act effectively, they need not only special knowledge and practical skills, but also certain personality traits, mental states, motivation, which determine the qualitative implementation of professional tasks to save people and property, to provide first aid to victims, to protect population in case of emergencies, etc. (On fire safety: Federal law of December 21, 1994). Moreover, the activities of firefighters and rescuers are regulated by regulatory and statutory documents that determine the goals, objectives of professional activity, functional duties of officials of divisions, control over the performance of tasks, the rights and obligations of employees, prescribe ways of behavior, strict subordination in relations to participants in collective activities and relationships between them.

Besides, firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia understand serving through the category of 'helping others' (23 % of linguistic units): *'being responsible for the life and peace of others'*, *'saving others'*, *'protecting others'*, etc. In 18 % of statements, the concept of 'serving' correlates with *'duty'*, *'service to the Motherland'*, *'service to others'*, *'protection of the population'*, which entered the category of 'fulfillment of civil and official duty'; 18 % of statements were classified as 'attitude towards work' and defined serving as *'working in the name of someone or something'*, *'responsible attitude towards official duties'*, etc. We believe that high moral responsibility and discipline, stress resistance, heroism, readiness and ability to quickly mobilize resources, take risks, act thoughtfully in conditions of multitasking, lack of information and lack of time, attitude towards duties as a socially useful activity and civic, official duty, etc. play a significant role in the behavior of firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia. This may explain the fact, that in this group of experts the concept of serving was associated with the categories of 'personality traits', 'helping others', 'attitude towards work' and 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' (no statistically significant differences, Pearson's χ^2 test, $p < 0.05$).

Thus, the analysis showed that firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia understand serving as regulated activities to save lives in emergency situations, associated with the presence of certain personality traits and an emotional-value attitude towards work. The categories of 'personality traits', 'helping others', 'attitude towards work', and 'fulfillment of civic and official duty' were the most significant categories in the concept of 'serving' of firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia.

Conclusions

Thus, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the categorical data indicate that the experts' ideas about 'serving' have certain similarities and differences, probably due to the content of their professional activities and personal characteristics.

According to the results of the survey of experts and the data of statistical analysis, the categories 'attitude towards work', 'fulfillment of civic and official duties' and 'helping others' are statistically the most frequent definitions (26 %, 28 % and 26 % of linguistic units, respectively) and, as a consequence, the main ones in the experts' understanding of the concept of 'serving' (Table 1).

The rest of the categories – 'personality traits' (18 % of responses) and 'serving God' (3 % of responses) – play a secondary role and are much less frequently used as a definition of the concept of serving.

We draw a conclusion, that, despite specific characteristics of various fields of activities, the experts (civil servants, servicemen, firefighters and rescuers of EMERCOM of Russia) turned out to be common in their understanding of serving as a professional activity aimed at helping others, associated with an emotional-value attitude towards work, and as a process of fulfilling civil and official duties.

The present study expands our understanding and ideas about serving, fills the gaps in information about the phenomenological foundations of serving as a psychological category, and provides possibilities for using its results in the practice of psychological services for moral, psychological, and motivational support of service activities, for example, for actualizing serving motive.

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