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## Informal support networks in the workplace as a mechanism for addressing professional burnout

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**Abstract.** This article examines why traditional formal support programmes often fail to address professional burnout, a problem that is becoming increasingly acute due to hybrid work arrangements and social isolation. This study aimed to develop and theoretically substantiate a comprehensive model explaining the formation of informal support networks within a team, integrating organisational, group, and individual determinants of this process and clarifying the underlying mechanisms. The article argues that their ineffectiveness stems from the neglect of the “meso level” – that is, authentic interpersonal relationships and social capital within the team. The core scientific problem lies in the lack of a comprehensive theoretical model that explains the genesis of informal support networks. Research on burnout has traditionally displayed a “blind spot”, focusing either on individual factors (the person centric approach) or on formal organisational conditions (the organisation-centric approach), while overlooking how and why spontaneous social connections emerge. Using systematic analysis, theoretical synthesis, and conceptual modelling, the article integrated insights from four academic domains: burnout theory, sociological network theory, models of network dynamics, and socio psychological theories, including homophily and social exchange. The principal outcome of the study was the development of a multilevel theoretical model describing the formation of informal support networks within a collective. The model demonstrated how contextual determinants – including organisational factors such as culture and leadership, group-level factors such as psychological safety, and individual characteristics such as emotional intelligence and motivation – create conditions that enable key mechanisms of support formation. The emergent network structure, characterised by macro level properties (for example, density) and micro-level roles (“stars”, “brokers”, and “isolates”), arised from the interaction of multiple mechanisms. These mechanisms included motivational drivers (such as the need for support) and structural principles (including homophily and reciprocity). The article’s conclusions emphasised a “management paradox”: such networks cannot be directly controlled and may generate unintended negative effects, including “star burnout” and excessive clustering. The practical significance of the model, therefore, lies in substantiating a shift in management strategy from attempts to artificially create support towards cultivating the conditions under which it can emerge organically

**Keywords:** social capital; psychological safety; organisational culture; homophily; social exchange; group dynamics

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## INTRODUCTION

In the context of the rapid transformation of contemporary labour markets, a process intensified by digital globalisation and characterised by growing instability, the issue of professional burnout is becoming increasingly pressing. The widespread shift towards hybrid and fully remote work formats, while offering greater flexibility, simultaneously heightens risks associated with social isolation, the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life, and the erosion of informal communication. Post-pandemic data not only records but also demonstrates a sustained increase in emotional exhaustion and professional burnout. These phenomena affect employees across multiple sectors and demographic groups, transforming what was once an individual concern into a systemic threat to organisational effectiveness, manifested in higher staff turnover and a decline in human capital quality. This trend underscores the need for both theoretical and applied research into effective preventive mechanisms, shifting the emphasis from reacting to consequences to addressing the underlying causes of burnout.

The analysis of existing scientific literature indicates a sustained scholarly interest in this problem. X. Wu (2024) conducted a comprehensive literature review on the impact of remote work on workplace loneliness, concluding that although telework enhances autonomy, it significantly disrupts the natural social fabric of organisations. The author emphasised that the absence of physical interaction intensifies feelings of detachment, which constitutes a direct precursor to burnout, suggesting that organisations must intentionally cultivate social connections to mitigate these effects. Examining the specific mechanisms underlying this isolation, P. Ng *et al.* (2022) analysed how remote work reshapes the structure of employees' social networks. The researchers concluded that remote work promotes the siloing of communication networks, whereby employees interact primarily with their immediate teams while losing "weak ties" across the wider organisation. The scholars highlighted that such structural fragmentation is associated with elevated burnout levels, as employees are deprived of access to diverse sources of social support and information.

In the Ukrainian context, which is characterised by distinct systemic and societal challenges, K.N. Fountoulakis *et al.* (2023) investigated the prevalence of burnout syndrome among medical professionals under crisis conditions. The researchers observed that burnout has evolved into a widespread phenomenon, affecting a substantial proportion of healthcare workers. The study demonstrated that traditional coping strategies are frequently inadequate when confronted with persistent systemic stressors. The authors therefore underscored the urgent need for organisational-level interventions, rather than an exclusive reliance on individual resilience. Similarly, Ukrainian scholars I. Chuhrii & T. Nazarovets (2023) examined the psychological characteristics of professional burnout among employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine. A direct association between anxiety, depression, and burnout was identified; however, the authors critically noted that

resilience should not be conceptualised solely as an internal personal trait, as it is strongly contingent upon external support systems. The researchers concluded that psychocorrective interventions must focus on strengthening internal stability, which is unattainable in the absence of a supportive professional environment.

Extending the sectoral scope of analysis, O. Ivanchenko *et al.* (2022) explored professional burnout among academic staff in Ukrainian higher education institutions. The scholars noted that the rapid digitalisation of education introduced a "technostress" factor, which accelerated emotional exhaustion. The researchers concluded that organisational support and the quality of interpersonal relationships within academic teams serve as critical protective resources, capable of mitigating these adverse outcomes. Turning towards potential solutions, S. Kang & J.H. Koo (2025) demonstrated the protective function of social capital. The authors emphasised that high-quality workplace relationships operate as a crucial buffer against burnout and turnover intentions. The study concluded that psychological resilience is determined not merely by the presence of colleagues but by the quality of the organisational "social fabric", particularly trust and reciprocity. Finally, with regard to the foundational conditions underpinning such relationships, O. Voitenko (2024) presented an extensive review of the construct of psychological safety. The author identified psychological safety as the cornerstone of effective teamwork and a necessary precondition for the emergence of social support. The review concluded that in the absence of a climate in which employees feel safe to express vulnerability, informal support networks cannot function effectively.

However, despite these significant contributions, the analysed studies devote insufficient attention to the genesis of informal supportive structures. Most research focuses either on the consequences of social isolation, such as burnout, or treats the presence of support as a static variable. Only rarely do scholars explicate the specific mechanisms through which individual motivation, group-level psychological safety, and organisational culture interact to "give rise" to an informal support network. This theoretical "blind spot" provided the rationale for the present study. This study aimed, therefore, to develop and theoretically substantiate a holistic model of informal support network formation within a collective, incorporating organisational, group, and individual determinants and clarifying the mechanisms underlying this process.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

An analysis of contemporary research and scholarly publications reveals a multifaceted theoretical foundation for the study of professional burnout, encompassing several scientific disciplines, as emphasised in research by G. Mygal *et al.* (2025). Foundational perspectives on burnout were established by the classical theories of C. Maslach & S. Jackson (1981), later revisited by B. Mańkowska (2025),

alongside models of organisational stress developed by R. Karasek (1979). These theoretical frameworks consistently identified social support as a key “buffer” that mitigates the negative effects of work-related stressors. However, social support is frequently conceptualised as a homogeneous perceptual resource, with limited attention paid to the structural and functional diversity of informal support networks. From a structural standpoint, sociological and organisational network theories, represented in the seminal studies of B.N. Adams (1967) and M. Granovetter (1983), and subsequently expanded by M. Carpenter *et al.* (2012), offer robust analytical tools for examining patterns of relational ties within a collective. Building on this theoretical foundation, researchers such as A. Venu *et al.* (2021), J. Zhang *et al.* (2024), and N. González-Casado *et al.* (2025) have focused on modelling the emergence and dynamics of social networks. These studies demonstrated that informal networks are not static configurations but dynamic systems that continuously evolve in response to individual attributes and broader structural conditions. Nevertheless, this line of research remains highly technical and often overlooks the specific supportive functions of informal networks in the context of organisational stress and burnout.

At the individual level, theories from social psychology and group dynamics, examined by A. Khushk *et al.* (2022) and N. Koudenburg & J. Lise (2023), elucidate the fundamental micromechanisms of tie formation, including reciprocity, trust, and homophily. These studies contributed valuable insights into network formation from the perspective of individual behavioural drivers. Despite the substantial body of scholarship within each of these domains, a significant research gap persists. This gap reflects not merely a shortage of empirical findings, but the absence of an integrative theoretical model capable of synthesising these perspectives. Existing studies primarily address whether a relationship exists between social support and burnout, or describe the structural characteristics of networks in isolation. What remains insufficiently explained is how informal support networks emerge through the interaction of individual, group, and organisational factors, what structural forms they subsequently assume, and how these structures influence burnout prevention by addressing employees’ psychological needs. Consequently, the critical task is not the production of additional correlational evidence but the development of a comprehensive theoretical model explaining the formation of informal support networks within a team as a mechanism for mitigating professional burnout.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study adopted a theoretical and conceptual research design, with the objective of constructing a holistic analytical framework rather than empirically testing pre-defined variables. The primary aim was to synthesise fragmented interdisciplinary knowledge in order to explain the genesis of informal support networks. The informational base of the analysis consisted of high-impact peer-reviewed publications, predominantly drawn from the period

2020-2025, ensuring alignment with contemporary workplace realities. Priority was given to interdisciplinary coverage, incorporating three core domains: occupational health psychology (theories of burnout), economic sociology (social capital and network analysis), and organisational behaviour (psychological safety and organisational culture). Sources were retrieved from leading academic databases, including Scopus and Web of Science, using keywords such as “network formation”, “social capital genesis”, and “burnout prevention mechanisms”.

To address the research objectives, a set of general scientific theoretical methods was employed, each selected to correspond to a specific stage of the modelling process. The systems approach functioned as the foundational methodological framework, as it is particularly suited to the analysis of non-linear social phenomena. This approach enabled the conceptualisation of informal support networks not as static constellations of ties, but as emergent systems. The study employed a three-level model structure (Context, Mechanisms, and Outcomes) to examine how macro-level organisational conditions constrain or facilitate micro-level individual interactions. In parallel with this structural analysis, theoretical synthesis was applied to integrate conceptual frameworks that are traditionally examined in isolation. This method was instrumental in addressing the theoretical “blind spot” identified in the introductory section. Through the synthesis of the Job Demands-Resources model and social exchange theory, a conceptual linkage was established between processes of resource depletion (burnout) and resource acquisition (social support). This integration enabled the identification of second-level mechanisms – specifically homophily and reciprocity – as the principal drivers of informal network formation.

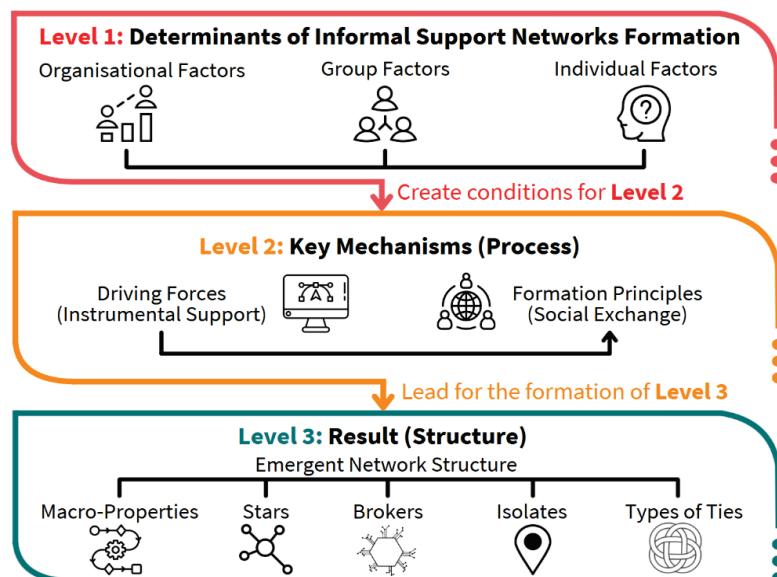
Additionally, the method of conceptualisation and differentiation was employed to refine the analytical vocabulary of the study. Given the conceptual ambiguity surrounding the term “support”, this method facilitated the operational clarification of key constructs, resulting in the differentiation of functional forms of support (emotional, instrumental, and informational) and the explicit delineation of psychological safety as a catalyst distinct from trust. Finally, conceptual modelling served as the primary constructive method, enabling the visualisation of hypothetical causal relationships between contextual determinants and observed outcomes. This process yielded a schematic representation of the proposed model, including a “life cycle” concept that illustrates the transformation of spontaneous interpersonal contacts into stable support structures. Although the study was theoretical in nature, the proposed model was designed to be empirically verifiable. Future validation may be conducted through a mixed-methods research design, combining social network analysis (SNA) to map structural properties (such as density and centrality) at the outcome level with longitudinal measures of burnout (for example, the Maslach Burnout Inventory) to test the hypothesised protective effects of informal support networks.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Integration of approaches and the structural-procedural logic of the model

The development of a theoretical model explaining the formation of informal support networks constituted the central objective of this study and required a fundamental reorganisation of existing scientific knowledge. An initial review of diverse strands of literature – specifically burnout psychology, social support theory, social network analysis (SNA), and social psychology – revealed a pronounced fragmentation in prior research. Although classical theories of burnout identify social support as a crucial resource, they tend to conceptualise it as a static variable, without accounting for its origin or underlying mechanisms. In

contrast, sociological network theories offer sophisticated tools for mapping relational structures, yet they frequently abstract these structures from the psychological needs that give rise to them. Social psychological approaches, in turn, explain the micro-level mechanisms of interpersonal attraction but rarely situate them within the constraints imposed by organisational hierarchies. This fragmentation necessitated an integrative approach, in which conceptual alignment across these perspectives enabled the formulation of the model's theoretical foundations. The outcome of this synthesis is a coherent three-level model that conceptualises support formation not as a collection of isolated factors, but as a linear and logically sequenced process of transformation (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Theoretical model of the formation of informal support networks within a team

**Source:** developed by the author based on the research of R. Karasek (1979), C. Maslach & S. Jackson (1981), M. Granovetter (1983), B.N. Adams (1967)

At the centre of this process is the first analytical block of the model – psychological needs as driving forces. The analysis suggests that the genesis of any support network begins with an employee's perceived deficit of key resources. In the context of burnout prevention, these deficits are not abstract preferences but fundamental needs: emotional support to validate personal experiences, instrumental support to address task-related uncertainties, and informational support to navigate organisational norms and power structures. These unmet needs function as the initial “trigger” that motivates individuals to move beyond isolation and seek social interaction. In the absence of such a driving force, the emergence of a network lacks a functional rationale. The translation of psychological need into a stable interpersonal connection, however, requires specific enabling processes, represented in the second block of the model – the mechanisms of formation. The study identifies two universal socio-psychological principles that govern this transformation. The first is homophily, defined as the

tendency of individuals to associate with others who are perceived as similar, which operates as a heuristic mechanism facilitating rapid trust formation. The second is reciprocity, derived from social exchange theory, which posits that social ties stabilise only when the exchange of support is mutually reinforced. Together, these mechanisms explain how an initially spontaneous interaction can consolidate into a durable supportive relationship.

The cumulative operation of these mechanisms gives rise to the third logical block – the emergent network structure. This structure is not deliberately designed by management but instead crystallises organically over time. It is characterised by specific macro-level properties, such as density and clustering, which determine the speed and efficiency with which support can circulate within a team. Importantly, this process generates distinct structural roles that have often been examined in isolation. The proposed model integrates these roles into a single ecosystem: “stars”, or hubs, emerge as central providers of support who are

consequently exposed to an increased risk of resource depletion; "brokers" function as bridges that connect otherwise disconnected subgroups; and "isolates" are identified as individuals who, owing to failures in the mechanisms of homophily or reciprocity, remain excluded from the flow of support resources. In this way, the model demonstrates that network structure represents the final evolutionary stage of the process through which individual psychological needs are addressed via specific social mechanisms.

### **Multilevel context and managerial implications of informal network formation**

Although individual needs and socio-psychological mechanisms drive the internal logic of network formation, the study demonstrates that this process never unfolds in a social vacuum. A key outcome of the analysis is the conceptualisation of a multilevel context that functions as an external environment determining whether internal mechanisms can be activated at all. While previous studies have frequently examined these determinants in isolation, the proposed model integrates them into a hierarchical system of constraints and facilitators operating across three interconnected levels. At the macro level, the organisational context establishes the fundamental "rules of the game". The analysis identifies organisational culture as the primary determinant at this level. A culture that prioritises hyperindividualistic competition acts as a structural barrier, effectively inhibiting the mechanism of reciprocity, as helping a colleague may be interpreted as assisting a competitor. By contrast, a collaborative culture functions as a catalyst for supportive interaction. In addition, the physical and digital design of the workplace plays a less visible yet critically important role. The availability of so-called "collision spaces", such as communal coffee areas or informal digital communication channels, creates the spatial and social opportunities required for homophily to operate. In the absence of such spaces, employees are deprived of opportunities to identify potential sources of support. The transition to remote work is therefore conceptualised as a significant contextual disruption, as it removes many of these spatial catalysts and compels employees to rely predominantly on formal communication channels, which are poorly suited to the provision of emotional support.

At the meso level, the group context functions as the immediate filter through which social interactions are shaped. The central construct at this level is psychological safety. The model proposes that even when an organisation formally endorses a supportive culture, the specific climate within a team may still constrain interpersonal connections. Psychological safety is defined as a shared belief that the team environment permits interpersonal risk-taking. Within the model, its role is pivotal, as it effectively lowers the perceived "cost" of seeking help. In psychologically unsafe environments, the need for support – the initial driving force – is suppressed by fears of appearing incompetent, and the process of network formation is therefore terminated at its earliest stage. Therefore, psychological

safety is not merely a beneficial attribute but a necessary precondition for the genesis of informal support networks. At the micro level, the individual context encompasses personal attributes that shape an individual's capacity to form and maintain social ties. The model identifies motivation and emotional intelligence as particularly salient factors. While unmet needs initiate the search for support, it is pro-social motivation and empathic capacity that enable individuals to act as providers of support, thereby sustaining the cycle of reciprocity. Individuals who lack these attributes may seek assistance but fail to reciprocate, which ultimately relegates them to the periphery of the network as "isolates". This multilevel analysis confirms that the formation of a support network is a probabilistic process that requires the alignment of a supportive organisational culture, a psychologically safe group climate, and adequate individual capabilities.

The theoretical analysis culminates in the formulation of the "management paradox", which constitutes the most significant theoretical implication of the proposed model. This paradox emerges from a fundamental tension between the value of informal networks for organisational resilience and the inherent impossibility of exercising direct administrative control over them. The internal logic of the model demonstrates that none of the core components of an informal network is amenable to command-and-control mechanisms. Job descriptions cannot generate psychological needs for emotional validation; managerial directives cannot enforce reciprocity; and authentic homophily cannot be engineered through assigned seating arrangements. Consequently, the emergent structure of informal networks cannot be artificially created or "installed" through top-down mandates. Managerial attempts to "formalise the informal" – for example, by assigning compulsory "buddies" or mandating participation in scheduled social activities – frequently yield counterproductive outcomes. Such interventions undermine the voluntary nature of social exchange, substituting genuine trust with procedural compliance. This process ultimately erodes the very social capital that organisations seek to cultivate. The theoretical conclusions of the study, therefore, necessitate a paradigm shift in management thinking. Leadership should not be conceived as the role of an "architect" who constructs networks incrementally, but rather as that of a "gardener" who cultivates favourable conditions. Effective managerial intervention is thus confined to shaping the determinants of the multilevel context: fostering a culture of openness, designing physical and digital spaces that facilitate interaction, and, most critically, nurturing psychological safety. By establishing these enabling conditions, management allows the spontaneous mechanisms of homophily and reciprocity to operate organically, permitting informal support networks to emerge as adaptive responses to workplace demands. This paradox delineates the limits of administrative authority in the domain of social relations and provides a theoretical foundation for indirect, context-oriented leadership strategies in the prevention of professional burnout.

### Conceptual analysis of the model

The principal outcome of this study is the development of a theoretical model for the formation of informal support networks, which conceptualises support not as a static resource but as a dynamic and evolving process. This perspective enables the resolution of fragmentation observed in prior research by integrating psychological needs and sociological mechanisms within a unified analytical framework. This approach is consistent with the findings of A.N. Venu *et al.* (2021) and T. Lars & A. Bakker (2021), who, in their analyses of social network dynamics, emphasised that collective behaviour emerges from complex interactions between individual identities and structural change. Their research demonstrated that network configurations continuously evolve in response to external stimuli. The proposed model extends this argument by applying it to the context of professional burnout, demonstrating that the relevant "stimulus" is a deficit of resources – specifically, emotional exhaustion – that initiates the search for social capital. Whereas A.N. Venu *et al.* (2021) and T. Lars & A. Bakker (2021) focused on general patterns of collective behaviour, the present model specifies the concrete mechanisms – homophily and reciprocity – through which individual stress is transformed into collective support.

A further critical component of the model is the conceptualisation of the multilevel context – organisational and group – as a necessary precondition for the formation of social ties. It is argued that, in the absence of a supportive environment, the mechanisms of support formation are effectively inhibited. This proposition is strongly supported by the research of T. Sun (2023), K. Hebel *et al.* (2025), and V. Nedkovski & M. Guerci (2021), who examined the influence of psychological safety on organisational behaviour. These scholars empirically demonstrated that psychological safety functions as a key mediating factor by enabling employees to engage in interpersonal risk-taking. Their conclusions were incorporated into the proposed model, which clarifies that, in the context of burnout, such "risk-taking" specifically entails requesting help. In contrast to approaches that treat organisational culture as a passive background condition, the model positions psychological safety as an active "catalyst", without which the potential effects of homophily and reciprocity remain unrealised. This framework explains why informal support networks fail to emerge in toxic team environments, even when shared characteristics or interests are present.

According to the developed model, the emergent structure of informal support networks functions as a buffer against work-related stress, thereby enhancing organisational and individual resilience. This interpretation aligns with the findings of S. Shahwan *et al.* (2024), R. Nagarajan *et al.* (2024) and A. Mihai *et al.* (2025), who examined the protective role of social support and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. These studies identified a direct positive association between social support and reduced levels of burnout. However, whereas S. Shahwan *et al.* primarily conceptualised support as a preexisting resource,

the present model elucidates the process through which this resource is generated. It demonstrated that resilience should not be understood as an inherent individual trait, but rather as an emergent property that arises from the stabilisation of network ties through mechanisms of social exchange. In this way, the study complements the research of S. Shahwan *et al.* (2024), A. Mihai *et al.* (2025), and R. Nagarajan *et al.* (2024) by providing a theoretical rationale for how organisations can actively cultivate resilience, rather than relying exclusively on individual employee characteristics. A distinct component of the model is devoted to dysfunctions and challenges, with particular emphasis on the problem of isolation under hybrid work conditions. The analysis indicated that the erosion of the spatial context inhibits the spontaneous formation of social ties. This conclusion is consistent with the comprehensive literature reviews conducted by X. Wu (2024), S. Schrijver (2021), and M. Zhang *et al.* (2024), which examined the effects of remote work on employee loneliness. These researchers observed that the absence of physical interaction and non-verbal cues substantially intensifies feelings of detachment. This concern is shared in the present study; however, the proposed model further clarifies the underlying mechanism of this phenomenon. Specifically, remote work eliminates "accidental collisions", which normally act as triggers for homophily – that is, the formation of ties based on perceived similarity. Consequently, isolation should be understood not merely as a psychological outcome of reduced communication, as suggested by X. Wu (2024), but as a structural breakdown in the mechanisms of network formation. This finding reinforced the thesis that social support cannot be administratively "assigned" in digital environments without the deliberate creation of virtual spaces designed for informal interaction.

### CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical analysis undertaken in this study supported the conclusion that the formation of informal support networks is neither random nor chaotic, but rather a structured and emergent process. This process is grounded in fundamental human needs for emotional and instrumental support and is activated through core principles of social interaction, notably homophily and reciprocity. The proposed threelevel model demonstrated that the emergence and long-term stability of such networks are directly contingent upon the surrounding context, including organisational conditions, group-level dynamics, and individual attributes. In this respect, the study contributed to bridging the longstanding divide between psychological and sociological approaches by advancing a dynamic model of network genesis. This shift redirects scholarly attention from static descriptions of the "support-burnout" relationship towards an analysis of the processes underlying social capital formation.

The findings also yielded important practical implications for management. The model articulates a "management paradox": although informal support networks constitute a critical resource for team resilience, direct administrative

intervention or attempts to deliberately “create” or “control” such networks tend to be counterproductive. These actions undermine the trust and reciprocity that form the foundation of informal social ties. Effective managerial influence must therefore operate indirectly, focusing on the cultivation of a supportive context rather than on the regulation of interpersonal connections themselves. Key leadership levers included fostering an organisational culture that values mutual assistance and, most importantly, the deliberate development of psychological safety within teams. A psychologically safe environment – one in which seeking help is normalised rather than stigmatised – functions as the catalyst that enables support mechanisms to emerge and operate effectively. Future research should prioritise empirical

validation of the proposed model, particularly across diverse organisational and industrial contexts. A promising avenue for further investigation lies in examining how emerging work arrangements, especially hybrid and fully remote formats, reshape the processes of informal network formation.

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## **Неформальні мережі підтримки в колективі як механізм подолання проблеми професійного вигорання**

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена актуальній проблемі професійного вигорання, яка посилюється в умовах гібридної роботи та соціальної ізоляції. Метою дослідження стало розроблення та теоретичне обґрунтування комплексної моделі формування неформальних мереж підтримки в колективі, що інтегрує організаційні, групові та індивідуальні детермінанти цього процесу та пояснює його механізми. Показано, що традиційні формальні програмами підтримки в колективі часто є неефективними, оскільки не враховують ключову роль соціального капіталу та «мезо-рівня» – реальних людських стосунків у колективі. Наукова проблема полягає у відсутності цілісної теоретичної моделі, яка б пояснювала процес формування (генезис) неформальних мереж підтримки. Дослідження вигорання традиційно демонструють «сліпу пляму», фокусуючись або на індивідуальних факторах (персоно-центрічний підхід), або на формальних організаційних умовах (організаційно-центрічний підхід), ігноруючи при цьому, як і чому спонтанні зв'язки виникають. За допомогою методів системного підходу, теоретичного синтезу і концептуального моделювання, у статті інтегровано знання з чотирьох наукових напрямів: теорії вигорання, соціологічних теорій мереж, моделей динаміки мереж та соціально-психологічних теорій (гомофілія, соціальний обмін). Центральним результатом роботи стало розроблення багаторівневої теоретичної моделі формування неформальних мереж підтримки в колективі. Модель пояснила, як рівень контекстуальних детермінант (організаційні (культура, лідерство), групові (психологічна безпека) та індивідуальні (емоційний інтелект, мотивація) фактори) створює умови для рівня ключових механізмів утворення підтримки в колективі. Ці механізми включали рушійні сили (потреби у підтримці) та принципи формування (гомофілія, реціпроність), які, в свою чергу, породжують рівень виникнення емерджентної структури з її макро-властивостями (щільність) та мікро-ролями («зірки», «брокери», «ізоляти»). Висновки статті розкрили «парадокс управління» (неможливість прямого контролю мереж) та їхні потенційні дисфункції («вигорання зірок», кластеризація). Практична цінність моделі полягає в обґрунтуванні переходу менеджменту від спроб «створити» підтримку до її «вирощування»

**Ключові слова:** соціальний капітал; психологічна безпека; організаційна культура; гомофілія; соціальний обмін; групова динаміка