

## **SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND DEVELOPING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE IN MILITARY PERSONNE**

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***Аннотация.*** В данной статье анализируются социально-психологические факторы, влияющие на управление профессиональным стрессом и формирование психологической устойчивости у военнослужащих. Военная деятельность характеризуется высоким уровнем ответственности, эмоциональной напряжённостью, строгой дисциплиной и воздействием экстремальных условий, что способствует развитию профессионального стресса. В исследовании рассматриваются такие ключевые детерминанты, как уровень социальной поддержки, особенности командного взаимодействия, стиль руководства, индивидуальные психологические ресурсы и стрессоустойчивость личности. Особое внимание уделяется роли адаптивных копинг-стратегий, эмоциональной саморегуляции и мотивационных факторов в формировании устойчивости к стрессу. Также анализируются психопрофилактические подходы, направленные на снижение негативного влияния стрессовых факторов и повышение эффективности профессиональной деятельности военнослужащих. Полученные результаты имеют значение для совершенствования методов управления стрессом и развития психологической устойчивости в военной психологии.

***Ключевые слова:*** профессиональный стресс, психологическая устойчивость, военнослужащие, социально-психологические факторы, копинг-стратегии, стрессоустойчивость, эмоциональная регуляция.

***Abstract.*** This article examines socio-psychological factors influencing occupational stress management and the development of psychological resilience among military personnel. Military service is characterized by high responsibility, strict discipline, emotional strain, and exposure to extreme conditions, which significantly increase occupational stress levels. The study considers key determinants such as social support, team cohesion, leadership style, individual psychological resources, and stress resilience. Particular attention is given to adaptive coping strategies, emotional self-regulation, and motivational factors as essential components in developing psychological stability. The article also explores psycho-preventive approaches aimed at reducing the negative impact of stressors and improving overall professional effectiveness in military contexts. The findings contribute to improving stress management mechanisms and enhancing psychological resilience within military psychology practice.

***Key words:*** occupational stress, psychological resilience, military personnel, socio-psychological factors, coping strategies, stress resistance, emotional regulation.

**Relevance of the topic.** Occupational stress management and psychological resilience among military personnel is a highly relevant issue in both national and international contexts. Modern military reforms and increasing operational demands require strong emotional stability and effective stress coping abilities. Global studies, including NATO and WHO reports, highlight high levels of stress-related disorders such as PTSD among military professionals. Therefore, studying socio-psychological factors is essential for improving performance and ensuring psychological well-being in military service.

**Introduction.** Occupational stress among military personnel has become one of the most significant psychological and organizational challenges in contemporary military science. Military service is inherently associated with high-risk environments, strict discipline, rapid decision-making requirements, and exposure to potentially traumatic events. These conditions create a sustained psychological load that can negatively affect cognitive functioning, emotional stability, and overall professional performance. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), stress-related mental health disorders are among the leading causes of reduced occupational efficiency in high-risk professions, including military and security sectors.

International research consistently confirms that military personnel are exposed to elevated levels of stress compared to civilian populations. Studies conducted within NATO member states indicate that approximately 10–20% of deployed soldiers experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after participation in combat or peacekeeping missions. Similarly, reports from the U.S. Department of Defense show that operational stress reactions, depression, and anxiety disorders remain persistent concerns affecting readiness and long-term service capacity. These findings highlight the global relevance of psychological resilience as a key factor in maintaining military effectiveness.

Socio-psychological factors play a crucial role in determining how individuals perceive and manage occupational stress. These factors include social support within military units, leadership style, cohesion among team members, and the availability of psychological services. Research in military psychology demonstrates that strong unit cohesion and supportive leadership significantly reduce the negative effects of stress and enhance adaptive coping strategies. Conversely, weak social support and authoritarian leadership styles are associated with higher levels of burnout and emotional exhaustion.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, ongoing military reforms and modernization of defense structures have increased attention to the psychological well-being of service members. National defense strategies emphasize not only physical preparedness but also psychological resilience as an essential component of combat readiness. In this context, the study of occupational stress management and resilience formation is becoming increasingly relevant for improving both individual performance and institutional efficiency.

Furthermore, psychological resilience is recognized as a dynamic process involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral adaptation to stressors. Adaptive coping strategies, emotional

regulation skills, and motivational stability are considered key predictors of successful stress management in military environments. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for developing effective psycho-preventive programs and training interventions aimed at reducing stress-related risks.

Therefore, investigating socio-psychological determinants of occupational stress management and psychological resilience in military personnel is of both theoretical and practical importance. It contributes to the development of evidence-based psychological support systems, enhances operational readiness, and promotes sustainable mental health within military organizations.

**Literature Review.** The scientific study of occupational stress and psychological resilience among military personnel has developed into a multidisciplinary field integrating military psychology, clinical psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior. Early theoretical foundations can be traced to Hans Selye's concept of the General Adaptation Syndrome, which explains stress as a non-specific physiological and psychological response to environmental demands. This framework later became a cornerstone for understanding how prolonged exposure to extreme conditions, such as military operations, can lead to both adaptive and maladaptive outcomes in human functioning.

Building on this foundation, Lazarus and Folkman introduced the transactional model of stress and coping, emphasizing that stress is not only a reaction to external stimuli but also a result of cognitive appraisal and coping strategies. This perspective is particularly relevant in military contexts, where individuals constantly evaluate threat levels and select coping mechanisms under pressure. Their theory highlights the importance of adaptive coping strategies, such as problem-focused coping, which are essential for maintaining operational effectiveness in combat and high-risk environments.

In Russian psychological science, significant contributions have been made by researchers such as B.G. Ananyev, S.L. Rubinstein, and A.N. Leontiev, who emphasized the activity-based approach to personality development. According to these scholars, personality is formed and expressed through socially mediated activity, which is highly relevant for understanding military service as a structured and socially regulated activity system. Later Russian military psychologists, including V.I. Lebedev and A.G. Karayani, focused specifically on extreme psychology, highlighting the psychological adaptation of individuals to combat stress, isolation, and high-intensity operational environments. Their research demonstrates that stress resistance in military personnel is closely linked to professional training, emotional regulation skills, and group cohesion.

Modern Russian studies also emphasize the role of socio-psychological climate within military units. Research shows that supportive interpersonal relationships, effective command communication, and fair leadership significantly reduce the risk of emotional burnout and post-traumatic stress reactions. In contrast, authoritarian leadership styles and poor group cohesion are associated with increased anxiety, aggression, and maladaptive coping behaviors.

Internationally, extensive research conducted by military institutions such as the U.S. Department of Defense, NATO Research Centers, and the UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory has further expanded understanding of military stress. Studies consistently report that exposure to combat operations significantly increases the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety disorders. However, these studies also emphasize the protective role of psychological resilience, which is defined as the ability to maintain or quickly regain psychological stability after adversity. Researchers such as Masten (2001) describe resilience as a “normative human capacity,” while Connor and Davidson (2003) developed validated measurement scales to assess resilience levels in military and civilian populations.

Recent Western studies also highlight the importance of social support systems, including peer support, family involvement, and institutional psychological services. According to research published in military behavioral health journals, soldiers with strong social support networks demonstrate significantly lower levels of stress symptoms and higher operational readiness. Furthermore, leadership style has been identified as a critical determinant of stress management outcomes, with transformational leadership associated with higher morale, motivation, and psychological stability among troops.

In addition, contemporary research increasingly focuses on neuropsychological and psychophysiological aspects of stress regulation. Studies using neuroimaging and biomarker analysis suggest that chronic exposure to operational stress affects the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, leading to long-term changes in emotional regulation and cognitive processing. These findings reinforce the need for early intervention and preventive psychological programs within military organizations.

Overall, both Russian and international literature converge on the idea that occupational stress in military personnel is a complex phenomenon influenced by individual, group, and organizational factors. Psychological resilience emerges as a key protective mechanism, while socio-psychological determinants such as leadership, group cohesion, and social support play a decisive role in moderating stress outcomes. This integrated perspective provides a strong theoretical basis for further empirical research and the development of effective psychological support systems in military settings.

**Methodology.** This study was designed to examine socio-psychological factors influencing occupational stress management and psychological resilience among military personnel in the context of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The research adopted a quantitative-correlational design, which is widely used in contemporary military psychology to identify relationships between psychological constructs and socio-environmental variables. The methodological approach is based on the principles of systematic analysis and personality-activity theory, which allows for the comprehensive assessment of both individual and group-level determinants of stress regulation.

The study sample consisted of 180 military personnel aged between 20 and 40 years, serving in different units under standard operational conditions. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness across rank levels and service experience.

Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was strictly maintained in accordance with ethical research standards commonly applied in psychological studies within Uzbekistan’s higher education and defense-related research institutions.

Data collection was carried out using standardized psychological instruments that are widely applied in Uzbekistan and post-Soviet psychological research practice. These included the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) for measuring occupational stress levels, the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-25) for assessing psychological resilience, and a socio-psychological support questionnaire adapted for military contexts, focusing on leadership style, unit cohesion, and perceived social support.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26.0. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation), correlation analysis (Pearson’s  $r$ ), and regression analysis were applied to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Reliability of the scales was confirmed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient.

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in the table below.

**Table 1.**

**Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of key variables (SPSS output summary)**

Variables	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Cronbach’s $\alpha$	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Occupational Stress (PSS-10)</b>	26.48	6.72	0.84	1	- 0.62*	- 0.55*	- 0.48*	- 0.51*
<b>2. Psychological Resilience (CD-RISC-25)</b>	71.35	10.41	0.89	- 0.62*	1	0.58*	0.61*	0.64*
<b>3. Social Support</b>	3.42	0.78	0.81	- 0.55*	0.58*	1	0.66*	0.60*
<b>4. Leadership Style (Transformational)</b>	3.58	0.69	0.83	- 0.48*	0.61*	0.66*	1	0.57*
<b>5. Unit Cohesion</b>	3.71	0.74	0.86	- 0.51*	0.64*	0.60*	0.57*	1

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

The results of the SPSS analysis demonstrate statistically significant relationships between occupational stress and socio-psychological variables. Specifically, occupational stress shows a strong negative correlation with psychological resilience ( $r = -0.62, p < 0.01$ ), indicating that higher resilience levels are associated with lower perceived stress. Similarly, social support, transformational leadership style, and unit cohesion all demonstrate moderate to strong negative correlations with stress levels, suggesting their protective role in stress reduction.

Conversely, these socio-psychological factors are positively correlated with psychological resilience, with unit cohesion showing the strongest relationship ( $r = 0.64, p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that cohesive military groups and supportive leadership structures significantly enhance resilience among service members. The Cronbach's alpha values for all scales ranged between 0.81 and 0.89, confirming acceptable to high internal consistency reliability.

Overall, the SPSS-based analysis confirms that occupational stress in military personnel is not solely an individual psychological phenomenon but is strongly influenced by organizational and interpersonal factors. These findings provide empirical support for the importance of socio-psychological interventions aimed at strengthening leadership quality, enhancing unit cohesion, and improving social support systems within military environments.

**Discussion.** The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of how socio-psychological factors influence occupational stress management and psychological resilience among military personnel. The results confirm that stress in military environments is not an isolated individual experience but a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the interaction between personal resources, group dynamics, and organizational structures. This aligns with contemporary military psychology literature, which increasingly emphasizes the systemic nature of stress and adaptation in high-risk professions.

One of the most significant outcomes of the analysis is the strong negative relationship between occupational stress and psychological resilience. This finding supports the theoretical assumption proposed by resilience scholars such as Masten (2001) and Connor and Davidson (2003), who argue that resilience acts as a protective psychological mechanism that enables individuals to maintain stable functioning under adverse conditions. In the military context, resilience is not only an inherent personality trait but also a developable capacity influenced by training, experience, and social environment. Therefore, the observed inverse relationship suggests that strengthening resilience-building programs could significantly reduce stress vulnerability among service members.

Another important aspect revealed by the study is the role of social support in mitigating occupational stress. The results demonstrate that individuals who perceive higher levels of support from peers and commanders experience lower stress levels and higher psychological stability. This finding is consistent with international research conducted in NATO and U.S. military populations, which consistently highlights social support as one of the most reliable protective factors against stress-related disorders, including PTSD and burnout. Social support functions as both an

emotional buffer and a practical resource, enabling individuals to better interpret and manage stressful situations.

Leadership style also emerged as a critical determinant of psychological well-being. Transformational leadership, characterized by motivation, trust, and supportive communication, was positively associated with resilience and negatively associated with stress levels. This supports findings from military organizational psychology, which suggest that leaders who foster trust and provide clear guidance significantly enhance unit morale and psychological safety. In contrast, rigid or authoritarian leadership styles tend to increase anxiety and reduce adaptive coping capacity. This highlights the importance of leadership development programs in military institutions as a strategic tool for stress prevention.

Unit cohesion was another key factor influencing psychological outcomes. The study shows that strong interpersonal bonds within military groups significantly enhance resilience and reduce stress. This is particularly important in military settings, where teamwork and collective responsibility are essential for operational success. Cohesion creates a sense of belonging and mutual trust, which helps individuals cope more effectively with uncertainty and danger. These findings are consistent with Russian military psychology research, which emphasizes the importance of group solidarity in extreme operational environments.

From a broader perspective, the results confirm that occupational stress in military personnel should be understood as an interaction between individual psychological characteristics and socio-organizational conditions. This integrated view is supported by both Russian activity theory and Western transactional stress models, suggesting a convergence of theoretical perspectives. It becomes evident that effective stress management cannot rely solely on individual coping strategies but must include institutional interventions aimed at improving leadership quality, strengthening group cohesion, and enhancing social support systems.

**Conclusion.** The conducted analysis of socio-psychological factors influencing occupational stress management and psychological resilience among military personnel allows for several theoretically and practically significant conclusions. First of all, it has been established that occupational stress in military environments is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be explained solely through individual psychological characteristics. Instead, it emerges from the continuous interaction between personal resources, interpersonal relations, and organizational conditions inherent in military service.

The results clearly demonstrate that psychological resilience plays a central protective role in reducing the negative impact of occupational stress. Individuals with higher levels of resilience are better able to maintain emotional stability, adapt to challenging operational conditions, and recover more effectively from stressful experiences. This confirms that resilience should be considered not only as an individual trait but also as a dynamic psychological capacity that can be developed through targeted training, experience, and supportive environments.

At the same time, the study highlights the decisive importance of socio-psychological factors such as social support, leadership style, and unit cohesion. Strong interpersonal relationships within

military collectives, effective communication between commanders and subordinates, and a supportive organizational climate significantly contribute to stress reduction and psychological stability. In contrast, the absence of social support and the presence of rigid or poorly structured leadership systems may increase vulnerability to stress-related psychological difficulties.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that improving psychological well-being in military personnel requires an integrated approach. Such an approach should combine individual-level interventions, such as stress management training and resilience development programs, with organizational-level reforms aimed at enhancing leadership quality and strengthening group cohesion. In this regard, psycho-preventive measures and continuous psychological monitoring should become an essential part of military personnel management systems.

In the context of ongoing military modernization processes in Uzbekistan, these findings acquire particular relevance. Strengthening the psychological readiness of service members is not only a matter of individual health but also a key component of national security and operational efficiency. Therefore, the development of structured psychological support systems, evidence-based training programs, and leadership development strategies is of strategic importance.

In conclusion, occupational stress management and psychological resilience in military personnel should be viewed as an integrated system influenced by both internal psychological mechanisms and external social-organizational conditions. Addressing these factors in a coordinated manner will contribute to enhancing the effectiveness, stability, and psychological well-being of military personnel in modern defense environments.

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