

INNOVATION, WORK, SOCIETY

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL RESILIENCE
AS AN ADAPTIVE MECHANISM IN SERVICEMEN**Larysa Chernobai**

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Summary

The article is devoted to the analysis of theoretical approaches and psychological aspects of the study of mental resilience, as one of the factors that helps maintain and restore mental health of the individual and to explore mental resilience as an adaptive mechanism to respond to adverse factors of combat conditions for servicemen.

In modern scientific research, resilience distinguishes two main approaches to its understanding: 1) resilience as an individual characteristic (ego-resiliency), a personality trait that protects against the ills of life and is manifested through such qualities as flexibility, agility, ingenuity and strength of character, and also the ability to adapt to functioning in different external conditions; 2) resilience as a dynamic process in which positive adaptation occurs in conditions of trouble. In this sense, resilience is conceptualized as a continuous, active process of emergence or development of new forces and resources of adaptation and recovery, which has uneven dynamics in the face of new risks.

The question of whether resilience is a trait or a process is still debated, but there is a common understanding that this concept describes the activities of individuals, families and groups to function, adapt and cope successfully despite psychological, social, cultural and / or physical difficulties. Resilience (as a trait and process) is manifested in people during the continuation of their development.

Keywords: mental health, coping strategie, protective mechanisms, adaptation, combat factors, regulation, self-regulation, behavior control.

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1. Introduction

For a serviceman's personality, a serious psycho-traumatic factor is the combat conditions of performance of official duties, which objectively act as a determinant of mental changes that occur with a serviceman and often lead to negative consequences. Supporting, maintaining

and restoring mental health, general psychological adaptation, psychological readiness of servicemen for action can be achieved through the development of mental resilience, which is associated with the ability of the psyche to recover from adverse combat conditions.

Answers to the question of how and how a person is able to survive, recover and even grow psychologically, to strengthen after the hardships of life is a scientific task of modern psychology. Finding an understanding of human capacity for psychological positive adaptation in adverse combat conditions can help develop resilience, as well as the ability to cope with stressful situations.

2. Body text

The issue of resilience is given considerable attention, both among foreign and domestic researchers. Theoretical analysis of the studied sources allowed to identify the following areas in the study of this issue:

1) resilience, as a multidimensional phenomenon, as a complex self-organizing human system, from the standpoint of communicative methodology in psychological research (*V. Mazilov, O. Rylska*);

2) resilience as an interdisciplinary concept – based on a structural analysis of the concept in philosophy, history, cybernetics, economics and social sciences (*A. Mahnich*);

3) study of the resilience of children from disadvantaged families (*E. Werner, N. Garmezi, M. Rutter*).

The concept of resilience is translated into Ukrainian as "psychological resilience". Common to many definitions is that the concept of psychological resilience describes the ability to overcome difficulties, to adapt positively, to function successfully. Instead, attempts to generalize and conceptualize various aspects of the problem of resistance research are insufficient.

Today, this term is widely used in psychology, medicine, social work and other social sciences and is considered in the context of the impact on human adverse (extreme, threatening, stressful) conditions and the ability to normal (healthy) human functioning.

Resilience in science

In *W. Mueller's Great English-Russian Dictionary*, (resilience) is the ability to quickly restore physical and mental strength, and (resilient) it is cheerful, unpretentious (probably human).

J. Kidd defines professional resilience as the ability to overcome the "ups and downs" in professional activities, which is realized by reason of self-confidence, hope, self-esteem, flexibility.

E. Werner calls resilience as a balance between risk factors and protective factors.

J. Richardson believes that resilience is a process of overcoming stress, adverse factors.

O. Zabelina and *O. Kuznetsova* consider resilience from the standpoint of psychology and characterize it as the ability of an individual to successfully adapt to stress and distress.

Today, numerous scientific studies and literature sources are dominated by different versions of the definition of "resilience", which is often interpreted by the authors as follows: maintaining a positive adaptation, despite significant experience in stressful situations, recovery from injury; prosperity, maintaining a state of well-being despite adversity; positive response to negative life events, competent functioning in conditions of stress and competence before disagreements; ability to constructively reflect complex events; ability to overcome difficulties.

The most generalized definition offers World Health Organization (WHO), according to him, resilience is "the ability to cope relatively well with difficult situations and personal

resources that can develop due to protective factors (for example, a favorable external environment and the development of adaptive coping mechanisms)."

In the Ukrainian-language literature in psychology, the concept of resilience is translated as stress resistance, vitality, viability, resistance to injury, which leads to a mixture of different concepts (B. Ananiev, D. Leontiev, S. Muddy, A. Ahiezer, O. Rylska). These concepts are used to denote the resources to overcome emergencies and stressful events, the psychological and social consequences of traumatic stress, loss. Therefore, at present in domestic psychology there is no single scientific-conventional concept, equivalent to the concept of resilience.

Modern (mostly American-European) approaches to the study of resilience are presented by a number of theories and concepts implemented in three main paradigmatic traditions:

1) cognitive behaviorism, 2) constructivism; 3) environmental realism.

At the present stage of its development, the cognitive-behavioral approach to the study of resilience is becoming increasingly practice-oriented. M. Neenan, one of the representatives of this trend, argues that people react differently to difficulties and troubles. Some become stronger spiritually and morally, while others experience only suffering, because the main thing in their lives is not the events themselves, but the importance they give them. M. Neenan offers a special technology of cognitive-behavioral therapy based on "listening to one's own life wisdom". This technology includes the following components: management of negative emotions, development of self-confidence, reduction of frustration, increase of tolerance, formation of life outlook (Neenan, 2009).

In recent years, a constructivist approach has been intensively developed in foreign research on resilience, which assumes the leading role of an active life position in shaping one's own life. (Durkheim, 1991).

Resilience is considered, for example, in the context of career development as a component of the model of professional growth and development (professional self-determination, professional self-government, professional viability).

J. Kidd defines professional resilience as the ability to overcome the "ups and downs" in professional activities, which are realized through self-confidence, hope, self-esteem.

The ecological approach owes its name to ecology, in which resilience characterizes the ability of ecosystems not only to recover, adapt, but also to transform, acquiring new useful properties after the stresses caused by adverse environmental influences. (Rutter, 1990).

Current approaches research resilience

An analysis of current approaches to the problem of mental resilience research shows that the concept of resilience simultaneously denotes an adaptive dynamic process (recovery after injury) and quality (or personality characteristics) that allows individuals to effectively overcome life's difficulties.

The problem of studying the peculiarities of resilience as a safeguard against the negative consequences of a military conflict is relevant and significant. An important task is the development of mental resilience in the independent overcoming of life crises, severe stressful situations, especially during military service and direct participation in hostilities.

The concept of resistance in accordance with the individual and personal characteristics of the individual is revealed as a personal quality that allows people to withstand various stressors and successfully overcome the most important moments in life.

Resilience is determined by the following qualities: values, social flexibility, emotional stability, cognitive flexibility, adequate self-esteem, positive attitudes in the environment, positive cultural self-identification.

Studies of the phenomenon of resilience have shown that there is a possibility of overcoming negative forms of influence on the individual through the formation, systematization and further integration into its life of individual (or personal) and interpersonal (social support, approval) forms of resilience.

Resilient behavior is a way of survival. For example, this is the maximum mobilization in combat, in a situation where there is a direct threat to human life or the lives of loved ones. Also, resilience can be a personality trait that determines a person's style of behavior, its focus on overcoming difficulties, the ability to respond flexibly and mobile to changes in the situation, the conditions of interaction.

Components of resilience

The concept of vitality (resilience) is perceived as identical to such well-known adaptive personality characteristics as stress resistance, emotional stability, psychological reliability. Of course, all of these human adaptive systems, which provide a satisfactory level of physical and psychological health, are components of resilience. But the main function of vitality (resilience) is to be able to build effective social interaction and find optimal ways of self-development and self-realization of the individual in difficult life circumstances. Thus, resilience can be seen as a personal potential for effective self-development in stressful situations and extreme living conditions. According to S. Maddi, a resilient person is a person with character, strong in spirit, one who is not afraid of difficulties and problems, does not "sour" when the clouds thicken. (*Maddi, 2002*).

Problem of adaptation in mental resilience

As for the problem of adaptation, it has been studied in many ways: the development of conceptual and methodological approaches (K. Bernar, R. Lazarus, J. Piage, G. Cellie, etc.), the systematic study of structural and level components (V. Berezin, F. Vasyliuk, V. Kaznacheev, etc.), psychophysiological support of educational activity of students of higher educational institutions (O. Kokun, M. Korolchuk, etc.), study of specific features of social interaction (D. Andreeva, I. Kon, etc.), conditions of production and educational activity (Yu. Aleksandrovsky, V. Aseev, etc.), support of personal growth in unfavorable environmental conditions (N. Agayev, G. Dubrovynsky, I. Kaskov, I. Lipatov, V. Nevmerzhytsky, O. Nazarov, O. Toritsyn, etc.).

Resilience is associated with the individual integration of such mental resources of adaptation as self-regulation, behavior control, coping strategies. Schematically, the relationship of these concepts can be represented as follows: resilience – resource opportunities that affect the development of regulation and self-regulation, as well as the psychological level of behavior regulation – behavior control, which determines not only types of coping strategies but also selected types of psychological protection.

In the works of L. Antsifirova, N. Konovalova, L. Wild, etc., protective unconscious activity is part of the subsystem of self-regulation, provides resource-saving behavior in changing conditions and growing demands on them.

Creativity as a mechanism of resilience

Creativity is also a mechanism of self-regulation of overcoming difficulties. When a person is confronted with an external confrontation, the development of creative potential can take place in four directions: blocking or restraining creativity, local or limited creativity, creativity at the cost of disabling adaptation, and integrated creativity. (*Leontiev, 2003*).

Deployment of creative potential in the face of difficulties depends on how developed resilience and personal integration. If there is a lack of courage and personal integration, it is most likely to restrain their own creativity. With personal integration but not enough courage to overcome external barriers, limited creativity is more likely to develop. With high courage and willingness to confront but lack personal integration, maladapted creativity is more likely.

Given the expressiveness of both personal preconditions, there is a chance for "integrated creativity." "Integrated creativity" is such creativity that does not become a source of problems for a person, but, on the contrary, gives meaning to life and leads to life satisfaction. People who resort to this type of creativity also have a lot of difficulties and obstacles in life, but the difference is that they have a mechanism for successfully overcoming them. (*Leontiev, 2003*).

Control as a mechanism of resilience

Control involves the belief that the struggle can affect the outcome. This effect is noticeable even when it is not absolute and success is not guaranteed. The opposite of this belief is a feeling of helplessness. A person with a highly developed control feels that he chooses his own activity, his own path. She is convinced that thanks to the resources she has or does not have yet, but she can get them, she can cope with the problems that stand in her way. If a person has strong control, he will try to influence events, rather than show inaction (*Leontiev, Rasskazova, 2006*).

The development of such a component of resilience as control, associated with the peculiarities of the formation of motivation to achieve, the desire to succeed.

Lack of resilience leads to the fact that the serviceman is unable to overcome the period of dependence, he never gets out of the influence of others, unable to work enough on self-development and self-improvement. This affects the nature of the social relations of the non-resident person, which are usually of a contractual nature.

Such relationships are based on mutual benefit, not on mutual respect and understanding. An irresistible person is bad at accepting failures, practically incapable of learning from his own mistakes. Lack of resilience leads to regressive mastery of life's difficulties, when the serviceman is not aimed at solving problems, but seeks opportunities to escape from their solution. To avoid resolving life's troubles, a non-resident serviceman (consciously or unconsciously) resorts to various, usually negative coping strategies. As a result of such regressive mastery of difficulties, the opportunity to learn something new is almost completely lost.

Coping-strategies involve the subject having a characteristic such as resilience. Resilience, regulation, self-regulation, behavior control, coping affect the processes of adaptation and social adaptation.

Thus, resilience is a condition for the formation of a lifestyle that is based on awareness and transformation of their own positive and negative experiences. To realize a negative experience, it must first be analyzed and evaluated, and then rethought, ie mastered.

Spiritual and creative potential

Another adaptive mechanism for responding to adverse factors of mental resilience is the desire for spiritual development and the formation of spiritual and creative potential, which almost always carries a strong psychological charge and reserve of resilience. In his research, S. Maddi points to the importance and strengthening of human viability (resilience) in our troubled times.

In critical moments of crisis, many people can see the search for faith, spiritual values that give meaning and support in life. Finding the meaning of life, awakens the mental forces necessary to withstand conflicts, houses, changes in social systems, which are so often faced by man. In this approach, coping strategy (the desire for spiritual development) is seen as a spiritual phenomenon, according to which the Christian tradition is a layer of ideas, methods, techniques and specific recommendations that help a person cope with external stressful situations and internal conditions that threaten the integrity of the individual. and her psyche.

Spiritual values for man as his psychological protection are increasingly considered not only at the philosophical level, but also in practical terms.

So, K. Pargament, P.J. Sweeney, when developing training programs in the US Army, suggests paying attention to the presence of a component of spirituality in each program

designed to promote resilience, health and well-being due to the fact that efforts to integrate into the spiritual dimension of such programs are still on beginning of development.

A three-level vocational training module has been developed to promote the spiritual resilience of soldiers. The goal of the first level is to raise the self-awareness of servicemen of their spiritual values, including basic values and beliefs, purpose (purpose) and meaning of life.

The purpose of the second level is to provide servicemen with access to spiritual resources that ensure the development of their spirituality and that would help them anticipate situations related to the struggle of the spirit and which they may encounter in their military service. The third level is designed to help servicemen build greater social confidence, which contributes to the development of a deep sense of connection with other people and the world. (*Pargament, Sweeney, 2011*).

At this level we find a direct reflection of the opinion of E. Durkheim, according to which the unit of study of society is the individual, and the interaction between individuals: society – is a set of interactions of individuals. And accordingly, the first forms of social behavior – the joint regulation of behavior (*Durkheim, 1991*).

In the study of the factors that make students successful in their educational activities, the idea of E. Durkheim is also traced. Durkheim on the joint regulation of behavior at different levels of interaction of individuals. A. Bowker conducted a study of the level of awareness of american women of indian descent, which identified four main aspects of resilience:

- a) an adult or mentor who cares for and helps to develop a sense of purpose;
- b) the influence of the school and teachers, especially those who raise the child as a whole;
- c) high spirituality and purpose in life; d) low stress in the family (*Bowker, 1993*).

As a component of a resilient personality are: faith in their own strength, diligence, spirituality. An important goal of a resilient personality is called the formation of personal maturity, which is expressed in the discipline of mind, emotions, actions, in a harmonious sense of the world and yourself in this world.

In another study of human morality and spirituality, D. Dunn suggested that the meaning of life is part of a stronger concept than spirituality, using the structural alignment of modeling procedures in a large battery of tests, and tested the resistance model of K. Kamfer.

A large sample of working and non-working mothers confirmed that spirituality, which includes the meaning of life, is the most important predictor of resilience and positive adaptation in adulthood and old age. (*Dunn, 1994*).

Recently, researchers are increasingly considering personal morality as a basic criterion for a resilient person (*Rylska, 2011*).

Within this context, the basic criterion of human viability can be considered a personal-spiritual criterion that ensures human integrity. Thus, spirituality and morality have always been seen by man as a way out of the crisis of life, and human morality is increasingly analyzed in research not only at the philosophical level, but also in the practical aspect.

The approach to spirituality as coping allows us to assess the extent to which this resource is used and whether it is effective, for example, as a resource coping to stress. (*Jackson, Bergeman, 2011*).

Several studies have shown that many people deal with traumatic events as stressors through personal spirituality.

A nationwide survey in the United States after 11 september found that seeking spirituality was the second most common way of coping (90%) after talking to people (98%) (*Schuster, 2001*).

Spirituality directly affects the level of stress experienced by the employee, as well as the degree of emotional burnout in employees.

That is, the resilience (resilience) provided by spirituality reduces the level of work-related stress of workers, and the development of burnout is in question (*Kutcher, 2010*).

Positive spiritual coping has a positive correlation with positive psychological adaptation and an indistinct inverse correlation with negative psychological adaptation to stress (*Ano, Vasconcelles, 2005*).

As noted in many studies, protective factors are often related to human resilience and resources, which complement a person's ability to defend and adaptability to failure, life-threatening or stressful (*M. Fraser, etc. 1999*) physical or psychological well-being, possession of a spiritual or religious point of view on oneself and society (*Moos et al., 1995*) unexpressed poverty, no threat of unemployment, alcohol, drug abuse, domestic violence (*M. Fraser, etc. 1999*).

Family and social relationships also play an important role in the development of individual resilience. Secure interpersonal relationships, based on spirituality, provide an important source of emotional support and serve as a condition for human viability (resilience). (*Greff et al., 2006*).

Thus, many experimental studies have shown that faith is the most important predicate of personality resilience and an adaptive mechanism for responding to adverse factors, and spirituality contributes to the development of resilience, health and well-being of the individual, coping strategies related to resilience in their turn, able to provide protection, adaptability to adverse factors of combat conditions.

Adverse factors of combat conditions lead to the loss of psychological resistance in servicemen, which can be qualified as a state of neuropsychological instability, which is accompanied by destructive processes in the emotional, volitional, behavioral, activity spheres: increased anxiety, fatigue, aggression, depression, confusion, depression, the presence of internal conflicts, memory and sleep disorders, which requires the development of mental resilience, as an adaptive mechanism for responding to adverse factors of combat conditions through mental resources of adaptation, as positive coping strategies (spiritual development, faith), self-regulation and behavior control.

3. Conclusion

1. The concept of resilience is both an adaptive dynamic process (recovery after injury) and a quality (or characteristic of the individual) that allows the individual to effectively overcome life's difficulties.

2. The problem of studying the peculiarities of resilience as a safeguard against the negative consequences of military conflict is relevant and significant. An important task is the development of mental resilience in the independent overcoming of life crises, severe stressful situations, especially during military service and direct participation in hostilities.

3. The concept of resilience in accordance with the individual and personal characteristics of the individual is revealed as a personal quality that allows a person to withstand various stressors and successfully overcome the most difficult moments in his life;

4. Resilience is determined by the following qualities: values, social flexibility, emotional stability, cognitive flexibility, adequate self-esteem, positive attitudes in the environment, positive cultural self-identification;

5. Studies of the phenomenon of resilience have shown that there is a possibility of overcoming negative forms of influence on the individual through the formation, systematization and further integration into its life of individual (or personal) and interpersonal (social support, approval) forms of resilience.

6. Resilience is associated with the individual integration of such mental resources of adaptation as self-regulation, behavior control, coping strategies. Schematically, the relationship

of these concepts can be represented as follows: resilience – resource opportunities that affect the development of regulation and self-regulation, as well as the psychological level of behavior regulation – behavior control, which determines not only types of coping strategies but also selected types of psychological protection.

7. Resilience, regulation, self-regulation, behavior control, coping affect the processes of adaptation and social adaptation.

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