

Correlation Between The System Of Values And The Stressful Factors (Anxiety Level) Among The Group Of Georgian Soldiers

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Summary

The anxiety level and the system of values have been studied with help of the situational anxiety test (V. Norakidze, in 1) and the scale of values (Rokich, in 2) among 180 Georgian soldiers. As a basis to this investigation there served a preliminary supposition that social problems, existing in the country, experiencing hardships at the early stages of its independence, would reveal very high anxiety level and a motley spectrum of the scale of values among the soldiers to be investigated. The results of the study showed an absence of the extreme high anxiety level. They also showed a system of values, not very relevant to military persons – preferences to those ones, which (as the examined persons thought) would guarantee for them a comfortable life: love, good friends, happy family life. On the contrary, such values, as discipline, active and productive life, serving and the like were disregarded.

Introduction

While planning this investigation we intended to find out what are the psychosocial and psycho-individual peculiarities of soldiers, how do they adjust to contradictions and difficulties of today's Georgian life. Obviously, there are too much of them: total corruption - the legacy of completely viciously organized social relations (of which the country is not yet liberated), independence of the native land – wretched mockery of such a high notion, fundamental concepts experiencing revision, principles, settled long ago going to ruin, social psychics under hard blows etc. Studying the psychological state of soldiers against such a background is not only of sheer interest, but of great actuality too (3); in order to decrease the feeling of discomfort, we ourselves find comfort in our aspirations and actions (4). It can be sad, that for lessening unpleasant senses we, as a rule, adjust our thinking to being and try to regulate our thoughts as much as possible.

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Methods

The study has been carried out on 180 soldiers of 17 – 25 years age from 3 different military units, or 3 groups: I – soldiers, undergoing medical treatment in a military hospital, II – students of the Military Academy, III – soldiers of an ordinary military unit.

Because of identical results among the investigated persons it was possible to unite all mentioned groups in one. Results were counted with help of SPSS method and happened to be statistically reliable ($P < 0,05$).

Anxiety levels have been studied with help of 2 tests in form of closed questionnaire (1). One of them consists of 60 objectives to be answered with “yes” or “no”. Relatively, different questions summarize in scores differently. According to this questionnaire, 5 levels of anxiety can be distinguished:

Number of scores	Levels of anxiety
40 – 50	Very high
25 – 40	High
15 – 25	Middle, tending to high
5 - 15	Middle, tending to low
0 – 5	Low

Table 1: Number of scores and levels of anxiety

The second test consists of 30 objectives, which need answers: “never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “mostly”, and “always”. These answers have been numbered from 1 to 5 and the final amounts of scores have been related to one of three types of individuals:

Number of scores	Individuals
100 – 150	A, stressful persons
76 – 99	AB, intermediate persons
30 – 75	B, quiet persons

Table 2: Number of scores and characters of individuals

A system of values has been investigated with help of the scale of Rokich (2). According to it, the values of two types were picked out – the terminal ones, i.e., the values-goals (18 ones) and the instrumental ones, i.e., the values-means (17 ones). It is clear, that the terminal values are such notions, which are the final goals of individual’s aspirations. As to instrumental values, they are the means, by which the terminal values can be achieved.

Each of these values has been written on a separate card and soldiers have been asked to range them – they had to lay out separately the cards with the values that they preferred. The ignored values created the group of the neglected ones.

Results

The results for the anxiety level, tested with the questionnaire, consisting of 60 questions occurred to be situated in limits of 5 – 40 score (middle – high levels of anxiety, the most of them belonging to the group “Middle, tending to high”). According to second anxiety questionnaire, the results show the intermediate sum of scores, 76 – 99.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	All
Test 1	22,47	20,58	21,47	21,16
Test 2	86,15	84,12	82,11	84,01

Table 3: Average results for all groups

No reliable difference exists between the data of 3 groups ($p > 0,05$)

As to the scale of values, the soldiers preferred such instrumental values, as good breeding, honesty, strong will and such terminal values, as health, happy family life, love, good friends.

The whole spectrum of preferred and neglected values is shown in the tables 4 and 5.

Preferred		Neglected
2,1%	Active and effective life	7,1%
2,4%	Vital wisdom	3,3%
22,8%	Health	2,1%
5,7%	Interesting job	1,9%
1,6%	Beauty of nature and of art	6,7%
11,5%	Love	1,6%
2,2%	Material well-being	6,6%
11,3%	Kind and devoted friends	0,3%
2,0%	Social acknowledgment	5,7%
1,8%	Cognition	8,9%
1,4%	Productive life	9,2%
2,7%	Development (physical and spiritual)	4,1%
1,7%	Entertainment	5,4%
5,7%	Freedom (of judgment and action)	5,6%
19,6%	Happy family life	2,0%
2,9%	Happiness of others	7,0%
1,0%	Creative activity	13,3%
1,7%	Self-confidence	6,9%

Table 4: Preferred and neglected terminal values.
[Because of identity of results, all three groups are united].

Preferred		Neglected
4,5%	Accuracy	3,4%
22,0%	Good breeding	2,0%
11,1%	Cheerfulness	2,3%
3,8%	Discipline	3,6%
3,9%	Independent behavior	4,6%
2,1%	Irreconcilability to own and others shortcomings	15,6%
8,8%	Education	1,7%
4,0%	Responsibility	3,3%
2,5%	Rationalism	13,4%
3,5%	Self-control	2,6%
3,5%	Defense of own views	2,4%
5,7%	Strong will	1,8%
1,9%	Conciliation	12,7%
1,9%	Width of views	16,1%
18,5%	Honesty	6,6%
1,0%	Productive work	8,9%
2,8%	Thoughtfulness	2,1%

Table 5: Preferred and neglected instrumental values.
[Groups are united as in table 4].

Discussion

What are the data of our investigations and how can they be interpreted? Is there anything remarkable in them? We consider, it is.

The data of the investigated anxiety level show mainly middle, tending to high level of it. Perhaps, the absence of deviation toward the extreme high degree is a sign of adaptation to existing circumstances. It is impossible to live permanently in conditions of high anxiety. This changes profoundly our physiology and psychology and can not go on for a long time. Therefore, the limits of the anxiety levels in our study seem to us logical.

Very interesting, by our opinion, are the results of study of social values. Both terminal and instrumental values are the figures of person's psychological adaptation to the environment. The kind of adaptation is a result of the structural characteristic changes of a person. Each individual, with his or her own particular requirements, psychic experiences and functions, has personal attitude to the environment. This environment, influencing on the person and provoking his or her modification, creates individual's actual disposition. A collection of preferred and neglected or disregarded values in our study do reveal such a disposition, that seems not fully relevant to the military persons, especially to those, studying at a Military Academy. It is difficult to consider and estimate each value, all the nuances of it, but neglectfulness of active and effective job, productive life, self-confidence, accuracy and discipline seems rather strange. It is not clear, why such value, as "material well – being" was neglected.

A portrait of the soldier, revealed by our study, as we think, is a result of the reality, in which our country has been existing for last 200 years; it has gradually lost the experience of being a state. The homeland was

the compounding part of the immense empire, which could not be identified with a small country, needing to be served.

False, utopian values, imposed on people and not stimulating patriotic feelings, have also negatively influenced on their psyche.

Our investigation demonstrated the promotion of values, which – as young people think – defend them morally, create a comfortable surrounding for them (3). On the contrary, some fundamental principles, based on serving, discipline and responsibility are neglected.

Disclaimer

The findings, views and opinions in this report are those of the authors and should not be construed as the official Army position, policy, or decision unless so designated by other official designation. Soldiers voluntarily participated in those studies being informed on the general idea of the study. Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

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