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THE ROLE OF MORAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PREPARATION IN MILITARY PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AS A PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM

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Abstract:
This article examines the role of moral and psychological preparation in military professional education as a pedagogical system. Moral and psychological preparation is analysed not as a set of separate activities, but as an integral pedagogical system consisting of interconnected components. The study identifies the goal, content, method, means, form and result components of the system and elucidates their functions under military education conditions. It also analyses the factors ensuring the integrity of the system and the conditions for its practical implementation. The results show that building moral and psychological preparation as a pedagogical system frees it from random influences and ensures consistency and effectiveness.

Keywords: Military professional education, moral and psychological preparation, pedagogical system, systemic approach, cadet personality, professional upbringing.

Introduction

The moral and psychological preparation of a serviceman is one of the important factors determining the effectiveness of his professional activity. This preparation shapes the cadet's value orientations, sense of responsibility, awareness of duty to the collective, and a stable pattern of behaviour in complex situations. The

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significance of moral and psychological preparation is not limited to service in peacetime conditions: it becomes especially evident in emergency situations, at times when decisions must be made quickly and independently, as well as in situations where responsibility to the collective is heightened. At such times, the serviceman's inner support — independent of external control: his values, sense of responsibility and awareness of duty — plays a decisive role.

Although constant attention is paid to moral and psychological upbringing in military education practice, it is often conducted in the form of separate activities, conversations or examples. This approach has certain foundations: conversations broaden the cadet's understanding, examples serve as a guiding benchmark, and separate activities focus attention on a specific issue. However, in such an approach the separate parts of upbringing remain insufficiently interconnected, and as a result the integrity and consistency of the influence decrease. One activity is conducted independently of another, continuity between them is lacking, and as a result, although certain moral concepts are formed in the cadet, they do not unite into an integral value system. In such a situation there is a risk that upbringing turns into a sum of random influences: if attention is focused on one quality today, another is forgotten tomorrow [1].

Therefore, the necessity arises to consider moral and psychological preparation as a pedagogical system. The systemic approach makes it possible to view all components of the upbringing process — goal, content, method, means, form and result — in their interrelationship. This transforms upbringing from a sum of random influences into a consistent, planned and result-oriented process. The advantage of a systemic view is that it clearly defines the place and function of each component: the goal sets the direction, the content creates the substantive foundation, methods and means ensure the mechanism of influence, form covers the organisational aspect, and the result shows the effectiveness of the entire process. The weakness of any one component affects the effectiveness of the

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whole system, which confirms the necessity of viewing upbringing as an integral phenomenon.

At the same time, building moral and psychological preparation as a system requires taking into account the specific conditions of military education. In the military environment time is limited, requirements are strict, and collective responsibility is high. Therefore, the system must not be overly complex or disconnected from practice; rather, it must be a workable, flexible and consistent mechanism in real conditions. Another important aspect of the system is its connection with the requirements of regulations. Regulations determine the external structure of military activity, while moral and psychological preparation ensures how this structure takes its place in the cadet's consciousness. These two aspects do not negate each other but complement each other.

The purpose of this article is to elucidate the role of moral and psychological preparation in military professional education as a pedagogical system and to analyse the main components of the system. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set: to substantiate the necessity of considering moral and psychological preparation as a system; to characterise the goal, content, method, means, form and result components of the system; to identify the factors ensuring the integrity of the system; to demonstrate the practical significance of the systemic approach.

Thus, the problem identified in the introduction — the decline in integrity and consistency as a result of moral and psychological upbringing being conducted in the form of separate activities — is analysed in the following parts of the article through the possibilities of the systemic approach. This creates a foundation for deepening the pedagogical foundations of moral and psychological preparation and for its effective implementation in military education practice.

The necessity of considering moral and psychological preparation as a system. A pedagogical system is an integral process aimed at a single goal, consisting of interconnected and mutually complementary components. The

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essence of the concept of a system is that although each of its parts has separate meaning, true effectiveness manifests itself only in their interrelationship. Moral and psychological preparation fully corresponds to this definition: its goal is the formation of the cadet's moral and psychological image, its content covers values and professional norms, and its methods combine influence and self-education techniques. Each of these components has its own function: the goal sets the direction, the content creates the substantive foundation, and methods ensure the mechanism of influence. If these components are applied separately, their effectiveness will be limited; for example, the desired result cannot be achieved by conducting conversations alone, because if a conversation is not reinforced by practice and practical assignments, understanding will not turn into skill. Only when connected as a system do they yield an integral result. Therefore, the necessity arises to consider moral and psychological preparation not as a sum of separate activities, but as an integral pedagogical system [2].

The goal component of the system. If the goal of moral and psychological preparation is defined in a general way as "forming moral qualities," this goal is not sufficiently precise for practice. A general goal provides direction for the educator but does not provide a clear programme of action: it remains unclear which qualities, to what degree, and at which stage should be formed. Therefore, the goal must be concretised: forming in the cadet an awareness of professional duty, responsibility to the collective, the skill of foreseeing the consequences of decisions, and inner control. Each concrete goal, in turn, is divided into smaller tasks: for example, the skill of "foreseeing the consequences of decisions" includes such practical abilities as analysing a situation, considering alternatives and predicting consequences. Such concretisation of the goal creates a foundation for the correct selection of the subsequent components of the system — content, methods and assessment. Only with a clear goal can it be determined which content is necessary, which method is effective, and how the result can be assessed.

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The content component of the system. Content must cover values, professional norms, moral dilemmas and real service situations. An important aspect here is the connection of content with the requirements of regulations. Regulatory requirements serve as the external support of the content of moral preparation: they determine the legal and procedural foundations of military activity and show the cadet clear boundaries. However, regulatory requirements must be internally accepted by the cadet; otherwise they remain merely memorised rules. Therefore, content must answer not only the question "what should be done" but also "why should it be done this way." This requires the inclusion of moral dilemmas in the content: the cadet must learn how to make choices when encountering conflicting demands in real situations. For example, when a choice arises between fulfilling an order and ensuring the safety of the collective, the cadet must understand the essence of the regulation, not merely know it. Content based on real service situations connects theoretical knowledge with practice and ensures the vitality of the preparation [3].

The method and means component of the system. Methods in moral and psychological preparation must be diverse: explanation, conversation, example, exercise, analysis, discussion, self-education. Each method has its own place: explanation ensures understanding, exercise reinforces skill, and discussion helps internal acceptance of values. A one-sided selection of methods — for example, relying only on explanation — reduces the practical effectiveness of the preparation, because explanation provides knowledge but does not change behaviour. Conversely, relying only on exercise and demands leads to action performed without understanding, and such action is not stable. A harmony of methods is important: understanding through explanation, reinforcement through exercise, internal acceptance through discussion, and direction through example. Means include training sessions, practical assignments, collective discussions, self-analysis notebooks and others. The correct selection of means increases the effectiveness of methods: for example, a self-analysis notebook gives the

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reflection process a systematic form, while a practical assignment turns theoretical knowledge into action. The mutual correspondence of methods and means makes the mechanism of influence of the system integral.

The form component of the system. Moral and psychological preparation can be conducted in individual, group and collective forms. The individual form serves the cadet's self-awareness, the group form serves the exchange of views, and the collective form serves the formation of a general moral environment. Each form has its own possibilities and limits. In the individual form, the cadet has the opportunity to deeply analyse his values and behaviour, but does not sufficiently benefit from the experience of others. In the group form, different viewpoints are compared, which helps to clarify one's own position. In the collective form, general moral norms and a culture of discussion are formed. The harmony of forms ensures the integrity of the system: an individual approach alone does not form a collective culture, while a collective approach alone does not deepen personal awareness. In practice, it is advisable to apply these forms step by step: first individual awareness, then group discussion, and finally collective generalisation. Such consistency increases the depth of the upbringing process [4].

The result and assessment component of the system. The result is the qualitative changes in the cadet's moral and psychological image. Assessing these changes is complex, because they do not appear immediately and do not easily lend themselves to quantitative measurement. For example, it is difficult to determine after a single lesson that the cadet's sense of responsibility has strengthened; this change manifests itself as a result of long-term observation. Therefore, in assessment it is advisable to take into account together observation, conversation, consistency in practical actions and the results of self-assessment. Each of these methods reveals its own aspect: observation shows external behaviour, conversation shows inner reasoning, practical actions show consistency, and self-assessment shows the cadet's attitude to his own state.

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Assessment works as the feedback mechanism of the system: through it, corrections are introduced into the upbringing process. If assessment shows that the goal is not being achieved, changes are made to the content or methods. In this sense, assessment is not the final link of the system but a tool that improves it.

The factors ensuring the integrity of the system. For moral and psychological preparation to work as a system, several factors are necessary. First, all components must be subordinated to a single goal: only if content, methods and forms serve one goal will the system be integral. Second, the upbringing process must be built consistently and step by step: each stage must rely on the previous one and create a foundation for the next. Third, a communication environment based on trust must exist between the educator and the cadet, because in an environment without trust the cadet will not openly express his thoughts and upbringing will take on a formal character. Fourth, the results of upbringing must be reflected in practical action: if knowledge and values are not applied in real service activity, they will not be stable. The absence of these factors may turn certain parts of the system into formal activities. For example, without a trusting environment, the discussion form becomes formal; without connection with practical action, exercises take on an artificial character. Therefore, these factors must be regarded as indispensable conditions of the system [5].

The practical significance of the systemic approach. Building moral and psychological preparation as a pedagogical system provides a number of practical advantages: the upbringing process becomes plannable and observable; the interrelationship between components becomes clearly visible; the opportunity arises to replace ineffective methods in a timely manner; and clear criteria are developed for assessing results. The possibility of planning frees upbringing from random influences: the educator can determine in advance which content and method to apply at which stage. The visibility of the interconnection of components helps to identify which link is working weakly. The possibility of

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replacing ineffective methods ensures the flexibility of upbringing: if conditions change, the method changes too. Clear assessment criteria free the result from subjective evaluation. At the same time, the systemic approach must be applied taking into account the specific conditions of military education — strict order, collective responsibility and limited time. If the system is overly complex, it will not be applied in practice; if it is overly simplified, integrity is lost. Therefore, the system must be flexible in relation to real conditions, yet consistent.

In military professional education, moral and psychological preparation is not a sum of separate activities, but an integral pedagogical system consisting of interconnected components. In the course of the study, the goal, content, method, means, form and result components of this system were identified, and it was substantiated that each of them has its own function. The goal component sets the direction and, through its concretisation, creates a foundation for the selection of subsequent components. The content component covers values, professional norms and real service situations and ensures the connection between regulatory requirements and internal acceptance. The method and means component constitutes the mechanism of influence: the harmony of explanation, exercise, discussion and self-education methods increases the practical effectiveness of the preparation. The form component combines individual, group and collective approaches, ensuring that upbringing is conducted at both the personal and collective levels. The result and assessment component works as the feedback mechanism of the system and enables timely corrections to be introduced into the process [6].

Only when the goal, content, method, means, form and result components of the system complement each other will upbringing be consistent and effective. The weakness of any one component affects the effectiveness of the whole system: if the goal is unclear, content remains without direction; if content is not connected with regulations, it turns into memorised rules; if methods are selected one-sidedly, understanding does not turn into skill; if forms are not harmonious,

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upbringing remains either at the personal or at the collective level; if there is no assessment, the system is deprived of the opportunity to improve itself. Therefore, building moral and psychological preparation as an integral system requires conscious design of each of its links.

The integrity of the system is ensured through subordination to a single goal, consistency, a trusting communication environment and connection with practical action. Subordination to a single goal unites all components in one direction. Consistency ensures that each stage relies on the previous one and creates a foundation for the next. A trusting communication environment creates conditions for the cadet to express his thoughts openly and for discussions not to turn into formal activities. Connection with practical action ensures the reinforcement of knowledge and values in real service activity. The unity of these factors protects the system from random influences and creates a foundation for its stable functioning.

Building moral and psychological preparation as a pedagogical system frees it from random influences and enables stable results to be achieved in military education practice. The systemic approach turns upbringing into a plannable, observable and assessable process, makes the interrelationship between components visible, and enables ineffective methods to be replaced in a timely manner. At the same time, the system must be applied in harmony with the specific conditions of military education — strict order, collective responsibility and limited time. Only then will it become a mechanism that works in practice and yields the expected result.

In the future, conducting practical research on the application of certain components of this system at various stages of military education is a promising direction. In particular, it is important to study the specifics of concretising the goal component at the initial training stage, the possibilities of applying methods and means during the period of professional specialisation, and the issues of testing assessment criteria in practical service conditions. Such research will

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enrich the theoretical foundations of the system and create a solid foundation for its effective implementation in military education practice.

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