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PEDAGOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PERSONALITY OF MILITARY UNIT LEADERS

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Abstract

This article analyzes the fundamental pedagogical and psychological requirements for commanders and leaders of military units under the conditions of globalization, escalating security threats, and digital transformation. It examines specific mechanisms for transitioning from a traditional authoritarian management style to transformational leadership and the "Auftragstaktik" (mission command) model. The study scientifically substantiates the military leader's emotional intelligence (EQ), strategic and operational thinking in combat environments, decision-making speed, ability to train personnel, and team-building skills from a military-practical perspective.

Keywords: Military leader, unit commander, management culture, emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, strategic thinking, pedagogical competence, personnel management.

Introduction

The combat readiness, stability, and effectiveness of any military structure – especially units responsible for ensuring defense capability – depend directly on the high professional, pedagogical, and psychological competencies of tactical unit leaders. In today's rapid changes, the information age, and the cyber-physical nature of threats, traditional administrative-command management methods are

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completely losing their effectiveness. The modern leader of military service is required to possess not only administrative and organizational task execution skills, but also a high level of military-pedagogical mastery and psychological stability [1].

The scientific and philosophical heritage of Eastern thinkers also recognized the ruler's justice, knowledge, spiritual maturity, and organizational ability as the fundamental basis for state and societal stability.

In the 21st century, the exacerbation of the geostrategic environment and the transnational nature of international terrorism and modern hazards have led to the development of the military security system and a radical transformation of the requirements placed upon leaders. While past management models were primarily based on strict orders, control, and uniformity, modern military management is focused on intellectually developing human capital, inspiring personnel in combat environments, and making innovative decisions in unexpected situations [2]. Therefore, it is a vital prerequisite for a military unit leader to act not merely as an administrative order-giver, but also as an educator-pedagogue, military psychologist, tactical strategist, and transformational leader. Today, the success of any separate unit depends largely on the leader's personal qualities, culture of working with personnel, and ability to quickly adapt to a changing operational situation. Especially within the military system, the pedagogical and psychological competencies of an officer play a crucial strategic role in preparing young military personnel for the defense of the Motherland and shaping high moral and ethical qualities in them.

The pedagogical competence of a leader refers to the collection of knowledge, skills, and qualifications aimed at teaching, educating, and fully unleashing the professional and intellectual potential of military servicemen. A modern military leader must ensure a continuous environment of education and combat training within their unit and possess the skill to work with each military serviceman while taking their individual characteristics into account [3]. Psychological

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competencies, in turn, provide the ability to manage the moral and psychological state of personnel in complex and extreme conditions, prevent stress and emotional tension, and maintain a healthy socio-psychological environment.

Therefore, this article comprehensively analyzes the scientific and theoretical foundations for shaping the pedagogical and psychological profile of military unit leaders under conditions of globalization and modern threats, the role of emotional intelligence in management, and the mechanisms for applying transformational leadership principles in practice.

A military unit leader, in their activities, performs not only the execution of direct combat tasks but also the duty of teaching and educating subordinate personnel (conscripts and contract servicemen) [4]. The pedagogical competence of a leader is a complex of knowledge, skills, and qualifications aimed at enhancing the professional knowledge of military servicemen, strengthening service discipline, and instilling a sense of loyalty to the duty toward the Motherland.

Under modern military unit conditions, pedagogical competence includes the following fundamental structural components:

Methodological preparation: Organizing military-tactical training sessions and combat readiness drills at a high level based on modern didactic requirements;

Individual approach: Conducting educational work while considering the psychological characteristics, worldview, and national-cultural specifics of personnel;

Mentorship: Teaching professional skills to newly arrived young soldiers and young officers, adapting them to the harsh conditions of military service;

Knowledge sharing and mastering advanced experience: Continuously transferring practical experience gained during service to unit members and creating an environment of self-development (life-long learning).

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A modern military leader cannot manage personnel and soldiers solely through mechanisms of issuing orders and administrative punishment. The severe physical and psychological conditions of military service require constant internal motivation from personnel. Motivational management develops initiative, vigilance, responsibility, and mutual assistance among military servicemen.

To achieve this, the leader must apply the following practical mechanisms:

Clarity of goals: Communicating the significance of each combat duty or daily service task to personnel in an understandable manner;

Fair incentives: Timely and fair recognition of the achievements, vigilance, and initiative of military servicemen;

Healthy psychological climate: Forming a friendly environment based on mutual trust and interethnic harmony within the unit, preventing conflicts;

Pedagogical communication: Active listening, constructive feedback, fair delivery of criticism, and resolving issues through open dialogue.

In modern management science, it has been fully proven that a leader possessing only intellectual potential, military-technical knowledge, and a high IQ score is insufficient to ensure safe and stable activity [5]. Scientific research shows that the professional success of leaders is largely determined precisely by their level of emotional intelligence (EQ – Emotional Intelligence).

The military environment is characterized by constant stress, sleep deprivation, time constraints, and extreme factors. In such an environment, the leader's emotional intelligence becomes their primary support in managing personnel. According to Daniel Goleman's concept, the emotional intelligence of a military leader encompasses four main components (Table 1).

Practical manifestation of EQ in extreme conditions:

Self-awareness and self-management: When an unexpected emergency arise at a post, the leader is required first and foremost not to panic. An officer who can manage their own emotions maintains composure even in difficult situations and prevents making unfounded, hasty orders.

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Empathy and understanding of personnel: A unit leader must timely sense the psychological fatigue or depression of a serviceman. Through empathy, a bridge of trust is built between the leader and the ordinary soldier, which in turn prevents emergency behaviors [6].

Prevention of professional burnout: A leader with a high EQ level is fair and attentive toward subordinates, reducing destructive stress and psychological tension in the unit.

Table 1. Components of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) according to Daniel Golemans concept

No.	Component Name	Content and Significance in Military Management
1	**Self-awareness**	Deeply understanding one's emotions, inner experiences, and their impact on tactical decisions being made and on personnel.
2	**Self-management**	Strictly controlling panic, aggression, and stress in extreme and crisis situations, preventing unfounded emotional decisions.
3	**Social awareness / Empathy**	Intuitively sensing the hidden psychological state, fatigue, or pain of military servicemen, building an environment of mutual trust.
4	**Relationship management**	Uniting the team around a common idea and loyalty to military duty, constructively resolving conflicts that arise.

Under conditions of globalization and modern types of cross-border threats (cyberattacks, modern technological surveillance, and asymmetric methods), a military leader should not limit themselves merely to daily economic and service chores.

- **Strategic and operational thinking:** The ability to analyze the operational situation in the area of responsibility on a global and regional scale, foresee potential hazards (forecasting), and take preventive measures against them.

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• **Tactical agility:** The ability to quickly abandon outdated methods during unexpected force-majeure situations and instantly modify tactical plans based on the real demands of the situation.

The modern information space is characterized by two poles: extreme information scarcity (information vacuum) or, conversely, information overload (information noise). In a VUCA environment, a military leader must have the skill to filter incoming information in a short period and make the optimal and safest decision. This ensures organizational resilience and emerging stronger from crises [7].

Global changes in military management sociology and organizational behavior theory necessitate abandoning the traditional administrative-command (authoritarian) model and introducing a more flexible transformational leadership paradigm in its place.

In traditional transactional management, a leader operates solely based on strict rules, issuing orders, monitoring execution, and a chain of rewards or punishments. In modern military conditions, this model no longer justifies itself. The core of transformational leadership is not merely forcing subordinates, but voluntarily uniting them around a common strategic mission, the idea of defending the Motherland, and high values, inspiring a sense of belonging in them. Such a leader recognizes the inner potential of military servicemen and nurtures responsibility and initiative in them [8].

A specific feature of military service is that units often operate separately and in extreme geographical conditions far from the central headquarters. In situations where communication is cut off or an unexpected sudden attack occurs, waiting for a precise order from above by a junior unit commander can lead to a loss of time and tragic consequences.

Therefore, the **"Auftragstaktik"** (mission command or task-based management) principle, originating from the German military school, holds priority significance in modern military management:

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- **Clarity of purpose:** The leader explains only the final objective (what needs to be done) to the unit or small group, without rigidly charting every single step.
- **Freedom of decision-making:** The junior unit commander or sergeant has the right and responsibility to make independent and prompt decisions on-site based on the changing real situation.
- **Management relying on human capital:** The leader abandons micromanagement and systematically delegates tasks while trusting subordinates.

The authority of a military leader is determined not only by their position or rank, but by the depth of their personal-academic culture and professional knowledge. In the current era where the period of information and technology obsolescence is proceeding rapidly, a military leader must perfectly know the fundamentals of the field they manage.

The principle of continuous learning and self-improvement (life-long learning) must become a personal lifestyle for an officer. The breadth of scientific worldview and continuous intellectual growth ensure that the leader is recognized as a true expert and professional role model before their personnel.

The leader's speech style, rhetorical skill, and ability to convey thoughts clearly, concisely, and with evidence determine their cultural level. Linguistic precision, calmness, and firmness occupy an important place in military communication.

The leader's behavior, discipline, and attitude toward service must always serve as a pedagogical model (exemplary behavior). Along with strictly complying with military regulations within the unit, the leader must ensure impartiality in evaluating personnel—namely the principle of meritocracy (rewarding based on actual service results and capabilities).

In military activity, the pedagogical approach and psychological stability constitute two inseparable pillars. While pedagogical methods serve to professionally develop military servicemen, psychological competencies allow for effective work with the human factor and crisis prevention (Table 2).

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Table 2. Synthesis of pedagogical and psychological competencies of a military unit leader

Pedagogical Requirement	Psychological Requirement	Expected Practical Result
Teaching and professional preparation	Empathy and understanding	Full realization of the combat and intellectual potential of military servicemen
Incentives and educational influence	Emotional intelligence (EQ)	Stability of service discipline, vigilance, and moral-psychological state
Effective communication and instruction	Stress resistance	Preservation of a positive team environment in extreme and crisis situations
Mentorship	Transformational leadership	Solid formation of a reserve of junior commanders and sergeants

The effectiveness of leadership activity relies on its complex competencies. A modern military unit leader must possess the following 7 interconnected fundamental competencies:

1. **Professional-combat competence** — mastering tactical and shooting training perfectly;
2. **Military-pedagogical competence** — the skill to teach and educate personnel;
3. **Psychological competence** — emotional stability and empathy;
4. **Communicative competence** — a clear and effective communication culture;
5. **Strategic and operational competence** — foresight and quick decision-making;
6. **Digital competence** — managing modern intelligent surveillance and monitoring systems;
7. **Innovative competence** — adapting to a changing environment (agility) and introducing new methods.

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Since the 21st century is an era of hybrid wars, information-psychological attacks, and cyber-influences, a military leader is responsible for protecting not only physical security but also the consciousness and information-psychological security of personnel [9].

The culture of personnel using modern gadgets and protection from negative and extremist ideas on the internet depend directly on the educational and pedagogical work of the leader. Conducting regular explanatory and preventive measures among personnel within the unit regarding keeping service secrets and not distributing information related to locations and special actions on social networks requires high pedagogical vigilance from the leader.

Under conditions of globalization, the increasing complexity of modern threats, and digital transformation, the requirements placed upon military unit leaders have changed radically. Today's military leader is not merely a person ensuring the execution of administrative orders, but a transformational leader and educator who possesses high emotional intelligence (EQ), can make independent decisions based on the "Auftragstaktik" principle, and inspires personnel in the cause of defending the Motherland.

While pedagogical competencies shape the knowledge and skills of military servicemen, psychological stability and a healthy environment guarantee the reliability of the human factor in ensuring state defense. Implementing the proposed scientific-theoretical approaches and modern management models in practice serves to elevate the personnel potential of the Armed Forces to a qualitatively new, higher stage.

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