



## Research articles

### SOCIALIZATION ENVIRONMENT AS A FACTOR IN THE DYNAMICS OF EMOTIONAL STATES OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN WAR CONDITIONS

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#### Annotation

*Relevance.* The aim of the research was to identify age-specific features of anxiety, stress, and emotional regulation among young people, as well as to determine the role of family support, socialization environment, and informational influence in shaping their emotional state.

*Methodology.* To achieve this goal, a comprehensive set of methods was applied, including the Phillips School Anxiety Test, Boyko's method for identifying communication difficulties, Shcherbatykh's Stress Test, the Wessman-Ricks Emotional State Self-Assessment Method, Luchynkina's «Institutions and Mechanisms of Socialization» questionnaire and psychological training. The study was conducted among Ukrainian school students aged 10-16, divided into two age groups – adolescents and youth.

*Results.* The results revealed increased levels of anxiety, social stress, and difficulties in emotional regulation in both groups, with adolescents showing greater emotional vulnerability. Youth more often experienced fear of not meeting others' expectations and demonstrated lower physiological resistance to stress. It was found that orientation toward the Internet environment intensifies social stress and reduces emotional stability, whereas family support serves as a protective factor, helping to decrease anxiety and improve emotional balance. Factor analysis identified three components of psycho-emotional states – cognitive-somatic, stress-emotional, and interpersonal – which comprehensively reflect the mechanisms of emotional response among young people in wartime conditions.

The developed emotional support training program demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in levels of anxiety, stress, and emotional barriers, along with an increase in indicators of energy, self-confidence, and overall psychological well-being.

*Conclusions.* The conclusions emphasize the importance of family support, the development of emotional self-regulation, and the implementation of psychoprophylactic programs to ensure youth adaptation during wartime. Future research should focus on exploring the long-term effects of psychological interventions and the role of the media environment in fostering adolescents' resilience.

**Keywords:** psycho-emotional states, socialization, stress, anxiety, adolescents, war.

#### Relevance

In the context of a full-scale war in Ukraine, the study of the socio-psychological context of the lives of adolescents and young men is of particular relevance, since this age is characterized by increased sensitivity to chronic stress. The full-scale invasion has disrupted basic feelings of security, stability, and predictability of the future, causing separation from relatives, forced relocation, and training in air raid conditions. In the communication of young people, the themes of loss, fear, guilt for their own joy, and the experience of forced adaptation are intensifying, and appeals to online psychological services show that the war becomes the background to most difficulties and affects interpersonal relationships and the subjective sense of security (Hakala et al., 2024). Of particular importance are the psycho-emotional state, the level of stress and anxiety, emotional stability and resilience as indicators of the ability to maintain internal balance in conditions of prolonged danger.

Family, school, and the immediate environment for adolescents and young men can be both a resource of support and a source of additional stress when everyday life requires increased emotional stability, flexibility, self-regulation skills, and reliance on social support.

### **Theoretical background**

The psycho-emotional state of adolescents and young men is considered as a complex integrative formation that encompasses emotions, thought processes, ways of interpreting events and the general level of internal psychological balance. Modern Ukrainian scientists emphasize that today there is a noticeable relationship between the deterioration of the psycho-emotional state of young people and the experience of traumatic episodes that form an impact on their psychological state, which emphasizes the need to expand psychological support for young people in wartime conditions. Voronova et al. (2025); Beketova et al. (2025).

In adolescence and young adulthood, the development of psycho-emotional states is determined by a combination of gender and biological factors that shape the specific features of personality development. Scientific observations show that girls, as a rule, enter puberty earlier, which can lead to increased emotional sensitivity and a greater focus on social relationships. In contrast, boys at this time often show more impulsive and outwardly expressed behavioral reactions (Leadbeater & Thompson, 2011).

The concept of family socialization also finds various definitions in scientific sources. Bronfenbrenner (1979) interprets it as a fundamental process of internalization by a child of social norms, basic beliefs and patterns of behavior that the child adopts in the family environment, which forms the foundation of emotional and social development. The family is the main center of socialization, within which the key behavioral traits of children are formed. The nature of their development largely depends on the style of family relationships, the distribution of roles and interaction between parents and children, which can both increase and decrease the level of anxiety (Anoprienko, 2012).



O. Vlasova (2005) notes that socialization, especially in the field of education, is a key process of including a young person in the cultural and social environment. It is through organized education and upbringing that an individual learns the norms, values, behavioral patterns, and social roles necessary for full participation in social life. With increasing autonomy, self-education and independent mastery of knowledge are added to this, which contribute to the development of competencies and the ability to act in a socio-cultural context. T. Tytarenko (2003) emphasizes the influence of crisis events on the behavior and emotional strategies of young people, while V. Panok (2010) considers socialization as a multi-level process of including an individual in the system of social relations. Summarizing these approaches, socialization can be defined as a multi-component process of a person's inclusion in the social environment through the mastery of norms, roles, values, and the gradual formation of identity.

School socialization contributes to students' mastery of certain social rules, beliefs, and behavioral patterns in the educational space of the school, as well as social interaction skills with peers and older people. Wang & Liu (2024) showed that adolescents' adaptation is shaped by their individual psychological traits, learning environment conditions, and family support. The online format that is now dominant in the educational process makes it possible to more accurately identify factors that influence students' ability to adapt to different types of distance education.

Literature analysis demonstrates different approaches to understanding emotional regulation and the factors that determine it. Loevaas et al. (2018) define emotional regulation as processes that help a person to be aware of their own emotions, assess their significance, and regulate the intensity and duration of experiences in accordance with the circumstances. According to scientific data, disruption of this mechanism can contribute to the emergence of anxiety and emotional disorders. It has been proven that difficulties in managing emotional reactions increase the manifestations of anxiety and complicate the course of therapeutic interventions (Cisler et al., 2018).

One of the most influential factors shaping the contemporary experience of adolescents and young adults is the digital environment and daily interaction with the Internet. A meta-analysis by Kerr et al. (2025) shows that a significant proportion of studies report a direct relationship between social media activity and increased levels of anxiety in youth samples. The greatest danger is the excessive or uncontrolled use of online platforms, which is considered a significant risk factor for emotional well-being. Therefore, the influence of the digital environment can significantly change the psycho-emotional state of young people.

The results of existing research demonstrate the potential for mutual support and solidarity among Ukrainian youth, which can become the basis for programs to develop emotional resilience, self-regulation, awareness of one's own emotions, strengthening social ties (Giordano et al., 2024) and the implementation of innovative psychosocial interventions using digital technologies and online support (Raknes & Chorna, 2024). The

study of the dynamics of psycho-emotional states of adolescents and young men during the war has theoretical and practical significance, deepens the understanding of personality adaptation in conditions of prolonged stress, and creates an empirical basis for targeted programs of assistance and prevention of anxiety and stress disorders.

As a result of the analysis of scientific literature, we created a conceptual model of the study. The model indicates that the main indicators of the impact of war conditions are the level of stress and the severity of anxiety reactions. These indicators are related to how adolescents and young men assess their emotional state, because prolonged stress reduces their ability to correctly understand, comprehend and combine their own emotional experiences.

Deterioration of emotional self-regulation and the formation of persistent states of tension can serve as predictors of difficulties in establishing interpersonal contacts. In this context, emotional imbalance reduces social openness, increases vulnerability to conflicts, and leads to a decrease in the effectiveness of communicative interaction.

The socialization conditions, encompassing family, educational, and broader social contexts, are considered in the model as a systemic moderator of these processes. They can perform both compensatory and risk-generating functions: they can help stabilize the emotional state of the adolescent/young man, support his adaptive response strategies, or, conversely, exacerbate the negative consequences of the military environment.

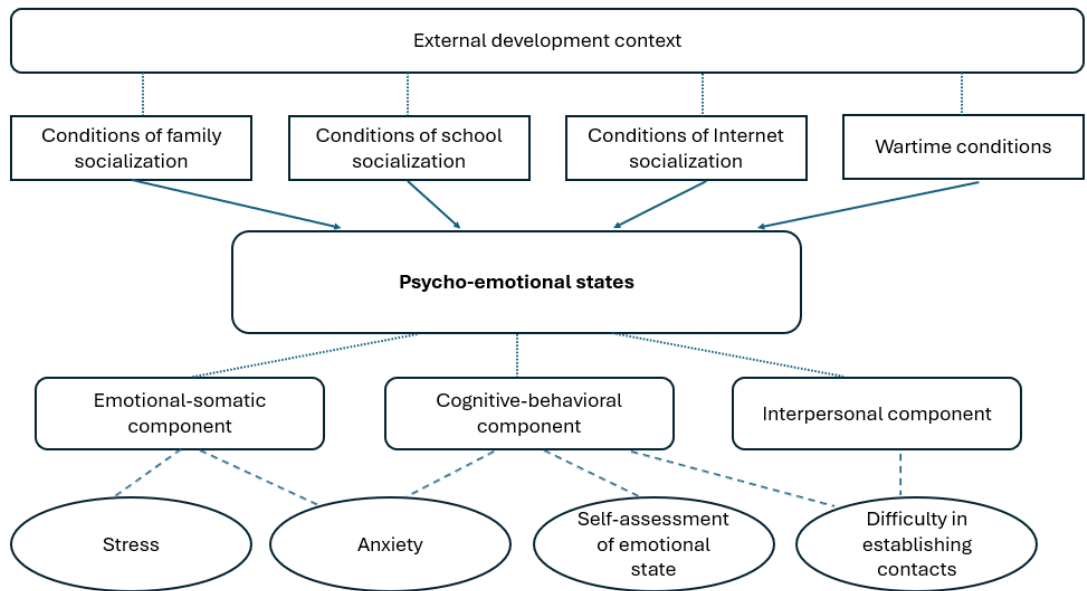


Fig. 1. Conceptual model for studying the psycho-emotional states of adolescents and young men



The aim of the study is a comprehensive analysis of the factors and structure of the psycho-emotional states of adolescents and young men of advanced age in war conditions and the development of a training program aimed at supporting emotional stability and reducing the level of anxiety of adolescents and young men in the conditions of family, educational and Internet socialization during the war. It was assumed that excessive use of the Internet is a factor that increases anxiety manifestations and reduces stress resistance of adolescents and young men, and a higher level of involvement in family interaction and the school environment is associated with a lower level of anxiety and better emotional self-regulation of adolescents and young men.

### **Methodology**

The study involved 90 respondents aged 10 to 16 years ( $M=12.8$ ), including 45.6% boys and 54.4% girls, divided into age groups: adolescents (10-13 years) and young men (14-16 years). The author's questionnaire and a set of standardized methods were used to assess anxiety, stress, interpersonal difficulties, socialization, and self-assessment of emotional state, including the Phillips School Anxiety Test, the method for determining difficulties in establishing contacts by V. Boyko, the "Test for determining the level of stress" by V. Shcherbatykh, the "Methodology of self-assessment of emotional state" by Wessman-Rix, and the questionnaire Institutes and mechanisms of socialization by N. Luchynkina. The survey was conducted online in Google Forms format. After data collection was completed, a two-week emotional support training program was additionally implemented with repeated measurement of indicators. Descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U-test, one-way ANOVA, Spearman correlation analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and Wilcoxon W-test were used to process the data.

### **Results**

According to the results of the study, the sample as a whole has a moderately elevated level of school anxiety with a pronounced social component. The greatest tension is associated with social stress, frustration of the need to achieve success, fear of failure and evaluation by the environment, as well as with situations of testing knowledge and self-expression, which reflects the understated confidence of the study participants in their own abilities. In the structure of influential institutions of socialization of the studied schoolchildren, the school remains the leading one as the main space of daily interaction, the second most important is the Internet environment, which enhances the influence of virtual communications on the emotional state, the last place is occupied by the family.

The results according to V. Boyko's method showed moderate but persistent difficulties in emotional communication among the study participants. Adolescents and young men find it difficult to openly express and regulate emotions, they are prone to the dominance of negative experiences and caution regarding emotional closeness, which creates barriers to the emergence of trusting relationships and increases the risk of social

isolation and anxiety reactions in such individuals. According to the Shcherbaty test, a moderately elevated level of distress was detected with pronounced physiological symptoms, supplemented by intellectual, behavioral and emotional manifestations of chronic stress. According to the Wessman-Rix method, the emotional sphere of the surveyed schoolchildren generally looks relatively balanced, however, a decrease in the indicators of calmness, energy, elation and self-confidence indicates their mild emotional exhaustion and moderate internal tension. The combination of increased anxiety, chronic stress and difficulties with emotional regulation in schoolchildren, growing up in conditions of martial law and powerful information influence, complicates their adaptation and increases psychological vulnerability.

Comparative analysis of age groups showed a similar overall level of school anxiety, but a different structure (see Table 1). Young men are more likely to experience fear of not meeting the expectations of their environment and have lower physiological resistance to stress compared to adolescents ( $p < 0.05$ ), which reflects the increased social pressure and responsibility in adolescence.

Table 1. Diagnostic results of measured parameters of schoolchildren depending on age

Variable	U, Mann-Whitney	P, Significance	Young men	Teenagers
Fear of not meeting the expectations of others	618	0,012*	3,1	2,63
Low physiological resistance to stress	635	0,011*	3,31	2,85
Internet environment	619	0,002*	15,6	12,8
School	358	0,001*	12,6	20,2
Inability to manage emotions, to dose them	585	0,016*	2,22	2,68
Overall stress score	657	0,033*	5,68	6,16
Calmness-anxiety	604	0,012*	5,18	6,02

*Note "\*\*\*" - statistical significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level; only statistically significant results are presented.*

According to the indicators of socialization institutions, young men are much more likely to focus on the Internet environment, while adolescents are mainly focused on school



( $p < 0.01$ ), with a relatively stable role of the family without age differences. In the field of emotional communication, adolescents often have difficulties with controlling and "dosing" emotions, while young men generally cope better with emotional regulation ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Adolescents also show higher overall stress levels compared to young men ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating their greater vulnerability to distress. The Wessman-Ricks self-report data confirm this, as adolescents have higher values on the calm-anxiety scale, while other emotional parameters do not reach statistical significance.

Additional analysis taking into account the leading institution of socialization showed no significant differences in the overall level of school anxiety, but revealed changes in its structure (see Table 2). Social stress is highest in the group with the dominance of the Internet environment, while the fear of not meeting the expectations of the environment is maximum in adolescents and young men oriented to the family and minimum in those for whom the leading environment is school ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Table 2. Diagnostic results of the studied schoolchildren depending on the leading socialization institute

Variable	ANOVA F	P, Sig.	Internet environment	Family	School
Experiencing social stress	2,047	0,017*	8,06	6,75	7,26
Fear of not meeting the expectations of others	1,295	0,049*	3,09	3,25	2,65
Internet environment	26,47	0,001*	18,1	12,6	12,2
Family	8,36	0,001*	10,3	16	11,3
School	45,49	0,001*	11,3	10,8	20,8
Inability to manage emotions, to dose them	4,567	0,018*	1,97	3	2,61
Calmness-anxiety	1,804	0,012*	6,09	4,58	5,46
Energy-fatigue	1,951	0,016*	5,56	6,58	5,93

*Note "\*" - statistical significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level; only statistically significant results are presented.*

Socialization profiles according to the methodology "Institutions and mechanisms of socialization" by N. Luchynkina differ significantly. Teenagers with a dominant preference for the Internet environment have the highest scores on the corresponding scale and the lowest on the family and school scales, while the family and school groups demonstrate the maximum values on their leading institutions with high statistical significance ( $p < 0,001$ ). In emotional communication, significant differences were found only on the scale of ability to manage emotions: the least difficulties are experienced by adolescents with a leading Internet environment, the greatest by those who are family-oriented ( $p < 0,05$ ), other emotional barriers do not differ significantly.

Stress indicators according to the method of "Test for determining the level of stress" by V. Shcherbatykh do not differ depending on the institute of socialization, which indicates an equally tense emotional background in all groups. According to the method of self-assessment of the emotional state of Wessman Ricks, the highest anxiety and the lowest energy are characteristic of Internet-oriented adolescents, while the focus on the family is associated with higher energy and lower anxiety ( $p < 0,05$ ). In general, adolescents appear to be more emotionally vulnerable and stress-sensitive than young men, and the orientation to the Internet environment as the leading institution of socialization is significantly associated with higher social stress, increased anxiety, and lower emotional stability compared to schoolchildren's focus on family or school socialization.

Correlation analysis using Spearman's coefficient revealed systemic relationships between the predominant type of socialization for students, anxiety, emotional barriers, stress, and the psycho-emotional state of the study participants. Higher scores on the value of family socialization are associated with reduced frustration of the need to achieve success ( $r = -0,290$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ) and fear of self-expression ( $r = -0,260$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ), and higher scores on a student's orientation to school socialization correlate with their fear of not meeting the expectations of others ( $r = 0,257$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ). Higher involvement in the Internet environment is significantly correlated with reduced physiological stress resistance ( $r = -0,278$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ) and greater depression in adolescents and young men, while the priority of school socialization is associated with increased energy in the surveyed students. The predominance of the value of family and school contexts of socialization is associated with a decrease in intellectual symptoms of stress in schoolchildren, which reflects the supporting role of relationships with parents and teachers in maintaining cognitive control. At the same time, a paradoxical partially protective effect of emotional distancing has been revealed: the dominance of negative emotions and reluctance to emotionally approach are combined with lower indicators of school anxiety and social stress, but increase the risks of isolation. The closest connections are traced between stress and the general emotional state, the increase in stress is accompanied by increased anxiety, depression, fatigue and increased cognitive, emotional, behavioral and somatic symptoms, which confirms the complex nature of the psycho-emotional vulnerability of young people.



Factor analysis summarized the obtained indicators into a three-dimensional model of psycho-emotional states, which reflects the combination of school anxiety, stress, and emotional self-regulation (see Table 3).

Table 3. Factor loading of the statistical model of the structure of emotional states

Variable	Factor №1	Factor №2	Factor №3
General anxiety at school	0,849	-	-
Experiencing social stress	-	0,491	-
Frustration of the need to succeed	-	-	0,833
Fear of self-expression	0,506	-	-
Fear of a knowledge testing situation	0,660	-	-
Fear of not meeting the expectations of others	-	-	0,562
Low physiological resistance to stress	0,621	-	-
Problems and fears in relationships with teachers	-	-	0,591
Intellectual signs of stress	-	0,626	-
Behavioral signs of stress	-	0,650	-
Emotional symptoms of stress	-	0,643	-
Physiological symptoms of stress	0,538	-	-
Calmness-anxiety	-	0,454	-
Elevation - depression	-	0,369	-
Energy-fatigue	0,451	-	-
Self-confidence - helplessness	-	-	0,331

*Note: Bartlett's normality  $p < 0,001$ ; KMO  $> 0,786$ .*

The factor structure model was found to be adequate, the KMO coefficient is (0.786), the Bartlett criterion is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). The first factor with the highest loadings of general school anxiety (0.849), fear of knowledge testing (0.660), fear of self-expression (0.506), low physiological stress resistance 0.621 and the energy-fatigue scale

(0.451) describes the emotional-somatic dimension of psychoemotional states. The second factor combines intellectual (0.626), behavioral (0.650) and emotional (0.643) symptoms of stress along with anxiety and depression and reflects the cognitive-behavioral component of psycho-emotional states. The third factor with high loadings of achievement frustration (0.833), fear of not meeting the expectations of the environment (0.562), difficulties in relationships with the teacher (0.591) and a sense of helplessness (0.331) is interpreted as an interpersonal component of psycho-emotional states, associated with dependence on external evaluation and fear of social condemnation.

The two-week training (14 sessions of 45 minutes each) was built on the problems identified in the study: moderately increased school anxiety, social stress, physiological symptoms of stress, difficulties with emotional regulation, communication barriers, and exhaustion in conditions of dominant online socialization.

The program combined elements of psychoeducation, physical and emotional self-regulation, cognitive work with anxious thoughts, forming a more tolerant attitude towards assessment, developing emotional communication, media hygiene, and relying on support resources.

After the training, all the main indicators of school anxiety decreased statistically significantly, except for problems in relationships with the teacher (see Table 4). General anxiety at school decreased from 13.53 to 11.27 balvi ( $W=115$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), social stress from 7.48 to 6.34 ( $p=0.004$ ), achievement frustration from 8.14 to 7.06 ( $p=0.034$ ), fear of self-expression from 3.42 to 2.73 ( $p=0.002$ ), fear of knowledge testing from 3.56 to 3.04 ( $p=0.018$ ), fear of not meeting the expectations of others from 2.89 to 2.18 ( $p=0.003$ ), low physiological resistance to stress decreased from 3.10 to 2.58 ( $p=0,021$ ).

According to the socialization method, a decrease in orientation to the Internet environment was recorded from 14.30 to 12.93, while the importance of family and school increased, which corresponds to the training's emphasis on media hygiene and strengthening offline resources.

Indicators of emotional barriers according to the method of "Obstacles to establishing contacts" by V. Boyko demonstrated a decrease in indicators of inability to manage emotions, inadequate expression of them, dominance of negative experiences and reluctance to emotionally approach, which indicates an increase in emotional flexibility and greater openness in relationships. Stress symptoms according to the V. Shcherbatykh stress level test decreased at all levels, the total stress index decreased from 5.90 to 4.92, which reflects the formation of more effective self-regulation strategies and the reduction of chronic stress. At the same time, the indicators of subjective emotional well-being according to the Wessman Ricks emotional state self-assessment method improved, anxiety decreased, the indicators of elation, energy and self-confidence increased, the integral emotional state increased from 5.69 to 6.18 points. Positive, but statistically insignificant changes in relationships with the teacher, family and school socialization and emotional inflexibility indicate the need for longer or repeated intervention.



Overall, the results confirm the effectiveness of the training as a means of reducing school anxiety, stress, and emotional tension in wartime, correcting dysfunctional online socialization, and strengthening emotional regulation, confidence, and subjective well-being.

**Table 4. Results of testing the effectiveness of the training after its completion**

Variable	Wilcoxon T-test	P, Significance	Before the training	After training
General anxiety at school	115	0,001*	13,53	11,27
Experiencing social stress	142	0,004*	7,48	6,34
Frustration of the need to succeed	210	0,034*	8,14	7,06
Fear of self-expression	98	0,002*	3,42	2,73
Fear of a knowledge testing situation	175	0,018*	3,56	3,04
Fear of not meeting the expectations of others	104	0,003*	2,89	2,18
Low physiological resistance to stress	167	0,021*	3,1	2,58
Internet environment	185	0,019*	14,3	12,93
Inability to manage emotions, to dose them	120	0,005*	2,43	1,88
Inadequate expression of emotions	138	0,009*	2,44	2,03
Dominance of negative emotions	200	0,037*	1,96	1,69
Unwillingness to get close to people on an emotional basis	150	0,012*	1,9	1,57
Intellectual signs of stress	130	0,006*	5,68	4,86
Behavioral signs of stress	122	0,005*	5,93	5,02
Emotional symptoms of stress	118	0,004*	5,67	4,74
Physiological symptoms of stress	105	0,002*	6,33	5,17

Variable	Wilcoxon T-test	P, Significance	Before the training	After training
Overall stress score	92	0,001*	5,9	4,92
Calmness-anxiety	110	0,003*	5,57	4,83
Elevation-depression	165	0,016*	5,79	6,28
Energy-fatigue	172	0,020*	5,89	6,37
Self-confidence - helplessness	158	0,014*	5,53	6,08
Emotional state	119	0,004*	5,69	6,18

*Note "\*" - statistical significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level; only statistically significant results are presented.*

## Discussion

The data obtained are consistent with modern research showing that war worsens the mental health of adolescents, increases anxiety, fear, depressive symptoms, and reduces emotional resilience (Klochko, 2024), and also increases anxiety, social stress, and dissociative experiences even with indirect influence through the media space (Maftai et al., 2022). The stabilizing role of family support is consistent with evidence of the buffering effect of parental acceptance and involvement on anxiety, stress, and school maladjustment (Halidu & Kotera, 2024). Evidence on emotion regulation is consistent with meta-analyses that cognitive reappraisal and acceptance of emotions are protective mechanisms, while emotional suppression increases the risk of anxiety and depression, and studies of adolescents who have experienced armed conflict demonstrate a link between deficits in emotional competence and increased anxiety and stress (León Rodríguez & Moncaleano, 2024). The effectiveness of the proposed program is consistent with reviews of the benefits of cognitive-behavioral, mindfulness, and group interventions for reducing anxiety and developing adaptive coping strategies (Kholifah et al., 2024). The identified combination of emotional-somatic, cognitive-behavioral, and interpersonal components of psychoemotional states reflects universal patterns of psychoemotional response in adolescents and young men who develop in the context of war conditions. The dependence of the level of anxiety on the type of socialization and family support emphasizes the systemic nature of emotional resilience, and the positive changes after the training demonstrate the potential of psychoprophylactic programs to strengthen the psychological adaptation of youth during war.



### Conclusions

The psycho-emotional state of adolescents and young men during war is characterized by increased anxiety, social stress, and difficulties in emotional regulation, with adolescents being more emotionally vulnerable and stress-sensitive, while young men are more likely to experience the pressure of expectations and have lower physiological resistance to stress. The leading agents of socialization are school and the Internet, with orientation to the online environment increasing social stress and emotional instability, while family support mitigates negative experiences and reduces anxiety. Correlation and factor analysis demonstrated the relationship between anxiety, stress, self-assessment of emotional state and type of socialization and made it possible to distinguish three components of psycho-emotional states: emotional-somatic, cognitive-behavioral and interpersonal, which reflect the complex nature of the emotional response of young people during the war. The emotional support training we developed proved to be effective, as it helped reduce anxiety, stress, and emotional barriers and increase the confidence, energy, and overall psychological well-being of adolescents and young men. The results confirmed the hypotheses put forward and emphasized the importance of family support, control of information influence, and the development of emotional self-regulation. Further research should be directed at studying the long-term effects of psychological interventions, the role of the media environment in the development of resilience, and the specifics of adaptation strategies in the post-war period.

**Conflict of interest.** The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

**Disclaimer.** The authors declare that their opinions and views expressed in this manuscript are not subject to the influence of any organizations.

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