



## RISKS OF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY OF A FAMILY MEMBER (AFSU, MIA, SES) AS A FACTOR IN THE MANIFESTATION OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES OF SPOUSES AND THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF THEIR CHILDREN

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### Abstract

*Relevance.* Given the duration of military operations in Ukraine, the problem of preserving the psychological health of children and supporting effective family functioning is of particular importance. That is why the study of the relationship between professional risks of parents, their educational attitudes and psychological well-being of children is.

*Methodology.* Methods. For data collection, the following were used: the Children's Life Satisfaction Scale (SWLS); a shortened version of the PSM-25 for measuring the level of psychological stress; the methodology of family education analysis (FAA) by A. Eidemiller and V. Justickis; a questionnaire of socio-demographic data. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis, and comparative statistical methods.

*Sample.* 105 children aged 3–12 years participated in the study. 49 male fathers and 56 mothers also participated in the data collection, who acted as respondents and evaluators of the emotional state of their own children.

*Results.* The comparison results show that children from families with occupational risk demonstrate significantly higher levels of psychological stress than children from civil families. A decrease in the subjective well-being of both children and parents of the risk group compared to civil families was also found. It was found that parents with occupational risks more often use hyperprotection, increased demands, strict restrictions and demonstrate ambivalence of educational attitudes.. Two-factor analysis of variance showed a significant impact of parents' professional activities on the level of life satisfaction of children and their level of stress.

*Conclusions.* The results obtained determine the need for psychological support for families where one or both parents work in risky conditions, as well as the development of programs to support the emotional stability of children. higher levels of stress and lower levels of life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** occupational risk; stress;. family, children; parental educational attitudes,; subjective well-being.

### Relevance

Families in which parents are engaged in high-risk professions—particularly military service, work in law enforcement agencies (the Ministry of Internal Affairs), or the State Emergency Service—are exposed to specific stress-inducing factors. Constant threats to safety, significant psychological workload, prolonged periods of separation, and the



potential risk to life shape a distinctive socio-psychological context of family functioning. Under the conditions of war in Ukraine, these factors become especially acute, intensifying their impact both on individual family members and on society as a whole. Therefore, this issue is of particular interest within contemporary scientific research conducted between 2020 and 2025 and is reflected in the works of both international scholars (B. K. Barber, C. Buehler, V. Durand, M. R. Fitzpatrick, K. E. Miller, A. Neal, K. M. Perrone-McGovern, K. Rath, Y. Xiong, etc.) and Ukrainian researchers (Avksentieva O., Haidash I., Zaika V., Zakharenko I., Ivanchenko L., Ilna O., Karpenko A., Kuzio O., etc.).

Children growing up in such family systems experience the indirect effects of parental professional risks through transformations in adults' emotional states, as well as communication and adaptation difficulties caused by the specific nature of service-related activities. In these conditions, mothers often play a particularly important role by providing emotional support and stability within the family environment, thereby maintaining children's psychological resilience in challenging circumstances. The study of the subjective well-being of parents and children is crucial for understanding the mechanisms of emotional regulation, social functioning, and adaptation in situations of heightened stress.

Under contemporary conditions, the relevance of this topic is determined by the need for scientific substantiation and the development of practical recommendations aimed at supporting families of military personnel, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Emergency Service. The study of parental attitudes and their impact on children's development in such families, as well as the subjective well-being of parents as key figures ensuring the emotional stability of all family members, will contribute to the creation of effective psychological and pedagogical support programs that promote successful socialization and development of children whose parents work under special conditions.

The purpose of the article is to summarize the results of theoretical and empirical research on the psychological characteristics of spouses' parental attitudes and the well-being of children in families of professionals exposed to increased occupational risks (military personnel, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Emergency Service).

Given the high relevance of supporting the psychological well-being of children and parents in families of military personnel, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Emergency Service under contemporary conditions, the object of the study is spouses' parental attitudes, while the subject of the study is the impact of spouses' parental attitudes on children's subjective well-being in families of individuals working under special conditions.

### **Theoretical Background**

A number of contemporary studies on this issue emphasize that prolonged paternal absence due to professional duties creates not only a physical distance but also disrupts the system of emotional and psychological support for the child, which is a key factor in the

formation of their sense of security (Avksentieva, 2022; Lemko, 2024; Neal & Durand, 2020). As a result, children attempt to compensate for the lack of protection in various ways—from hyper-dependence to aggressive behavior—which serves as a form of adaptive mechanism. It is noted that in such families, children often develop either excessive responsibility or, conversely, feelings of helplessness and confusion. This phenomenon is especially relevant for military and emergency service families, where children are prone to anxiety disorders due to the absence of a constant source of support.

Children's subjective Well-being in the context of their social adaptation is significantly challenged during periods of separation from the father caused by military service (Zaika, 2023; Miller, 2021). In these conditions, children often withdraw, experience difficulties in establishing peer relationships, and exhibit challenges in social interaction. A child's adaptive resources develop through interaction with an emotionally available and stable adult. If the mother herself is experiencing distress, she cannot effectively serve as a source of support. Consequently, the child forms a distorted perception of the world as dangerous and unstable, which substantially diminishes their subjective sense of happiness and security.

Thus, supporting a child's adaptive capacity directly depends on the socio-psychological balance of the mother. Disruptions in the mother's psychological stability and heightened anxiety provoke an imbalance in the family system, manifesting through changes in roles and interdependencies within the household. In such circumstances, mothers often assume responsibilities not only for upbringing but also for the emotional protection of children, leading to burnout and deterioration of their mental state. This negatively affects their ability to serve as a reliable source of support for the child, as emotional exhaustion undermines the quality of communication and support. Consequently, children develop protective mechanisms such as withdrawal or conflict-prone behavior, which complicates their socialization and overall development.

Numerous empirically grounded studies emphasize that, for maintaining a child's psychological well-being, not only the mother's emotional state but also the ways in which she organizes the child's daily life under conditions of danger are crucial (Karpenko, 2021; Perrone-McGovern et al., 2021).

It is also important to highlight the profound impact of social challenges arising in families of military personnel on the overall psychological climate within the household. Material difficulties, often associated with unpredictable income or additional expenses, create a chronic stress background for all family members. Prolonged separations due to professional duties contribute to a sense of instability and emotional distance between parents and children. In particular, the emotional exhaustion of the mother, who typically assumes the primary caregiving role in such families, significantly complicates the family's adaptive processes. Instability in life circumstances leads to weakening of traditional family roles and disrupts the normal rhythm of interactions among family members. Situations become especially challenging when parents are absent for extended periods, leaving



children under the care of a single caregiver who may lack sufficient resources to provide comprehensive emotional support. The uncertainty of the future and the persistent stress prevailing in the family exacerbate psychological discomfort for both children and parents.

Several researchers highlight the special role of the mother in families exposed to professional risks: despite her own emotional exhaustion, she remains the main source of support for children and ensures the stability of family functioning (Kovalchuk, 2023; Stadnik & Melnyk, 2023; Volling et al., 2020). Often, she assumes the role of protector and emotional support, attempting to compensate for the father's absence and stabilize the family's emotional climate. However, continuous pressure and stress lead to the depletion of her resources, negatively affecting the quality of family communication. Maternal emotional fatigue may reduce sensitivity to the child's needs, creating additional barriers to the development of trusting relationships. In this context, the creation of additional support resources becomes essential, as they help alleviate the mother's burden and improve the family environment. Without adequate support, mothers risk experiencing chronic stress, which in turn compromises the well-being of the entire family.

Scientific research on this topic indicates that effective family communication is based on mutual respect, emotional openness, and consistency in expectations toward the child (Haidash, Karpenko & Kuzio, 2023; Ilina, 2022; Neal & Durand, 2020). However, in families exposed to professional risks, communicative tension may arise due to the irregular presence of one parent. The lack of stable interaction often leads to the emergence of conflict patterns and inconsistent adult responses to the child's behavior. Under such conditions, a unique type of communication frequently develops—a distant or detached pattern—which can reduce levels of trust. Furthermore, the mother, who assumes the primary support role, plays a decisive role in stabilizing the family's emotional atmosphere. Thus, communication often acquires a complementary character, where parental functions are unevenly distributed.

As a result, the child may develop compensatory adaptation mechanisms in response to the unstable presence of one parent. A primary barrier in communication is unreflected parental stress, which is transmitted through aggressive or indifferent-avoidant reactions. In families with professional risks, disturbances in feedback between adults and children are frequently observed. In such circumstances, the child often does not receive emotional validation of their own significance. This can pose a threat to the development of low self-esteem, fear of punishment, or, conversely, a tendency toward overcontrol. In contrast, effective family communication involves emotional acceptance, active listening, and understanding. The lack of these elements leads to emotional deprivation. In the long term, such deficiencies can affect the child's interpersonal relationships in adulthood.

A number of contemporary studies have highlighted that the emotional engagement style is one of the most adaptive approaches for families experiencing challenging life circumstances (Ovoschnikova & Babayan, 2024; Ternovska, 2023; Chernyakova & Vasylychenko, 2024). This approach emphasizes the creation of a safe emotional space in

which the child feels accepted. Such communication fosters the child’s capacity for emotional self-regulation and trust toward adults. The development of a democratic parenting style is considered the most effective in working with families exposed to professional risks. This style is based on acceptance, limited autonomy, and active listening.

This combination lays the foundation for the development of a positive self-concept in the child. The formation of empathy in children depends on the parents’ emotional availability. For example, according to A. Karpenko, the “reflective listening” style promotes the development of self-reflection, social sensitivity, and reduces conflict-prone behavior (Karpenko, 2021). In families exposed to professional risks, where emotional vulnerability is heightened, such an approach is particularly valuable. The author notes that the use of “open” parenting styles with an emphasis on partnership allows for the maintenance of a child’s psychological well-being even under conditions of instability. Communication based on this principle is built on mutual recognition rather than coercion, providing the child with a space to develop emotional maturity.

The scientific literature presents several classifications of parenting styles based on levels of control and warmth. The table below summarizes the key characteristics of communication styles in families with professional risks, as well as their potential consequences for children’s psycho-emotional development (Table 1).

**Table 1. Parenting Styles and Features of Family Communication**

Parenting Style	Communication Features	Possible Consequences for the Child
Authoritarian	High control, low warmth	Obedience, low self-esteem, fear
Democratic	High control, high emotional support	Emotional stability, responsibility
Permissive	Low control, high warmth	Impulsivity, dependence on adults
Neglectful / Indifferent	Low control, low emotional involvement	Alienation, tendency toward deviant behavior
Partner / Reflective	Mutual respect, active listening	Developed empathy, self-reflection, emotional maturity

The theoretical analysis conducted allows the formulation of the following hypotheses for the empirical study:

H1. The subjective Well-being of children from families of professionals working under high-risk conditions will be lower compared to children whose parents are not employed in high-risk professions. It is assumed that constant tension and stressors associated with occupational hazards create an unstable emotional environment within the family.



H2. Parents in these conditions may exhibit lower levels of their own subjective well-being due to increased psychological workload, responsibility for the children's safety, and anxieties related to the professional activities of their partner.

H3. In families exposed to professional risks, fathers are more likely to adopt an authoritarian parenting style, which may affect the child's emotional state and adaptive capacities, while mothers tend to compensate for this influence through greater emotional support and a more democratic approach.

H4. Children from families in which parental work is not associated with professional risks will demonstrate higher levels of subjective well-being due to a more stable and less stressful family environment.

### **Methodology**

**Methods.** Empirical data were collected using the Family Upbringing Analysis Method (FUAM) developed by A. Eidemiller and V. Yustitskis; the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) for adults and its adapted version for children; a shortened modification of the Psychological Stress Measure (PSM-10) based on PSM-25; and a socio-demographic questionnaire (including child's age and gender, family composition, parents' professional activity, and upbringing conditions). Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

**Sample.** The study involved 105 participants—parents and children aged 3–12 years—from families varying in professional risk levels: military personnel, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), State Emergency Service (SES), and civilians. Among the participants, there were 49 men and 56 women. The distribution of families according to parents' professional background was as follows: 19 families with a father serving in the military; 3 families where both parents serve in the military; 1 family in which both parents work in the Ministry of Internal Affairs; 26 families with one parent employed in the MIA; 3 families where the mother is a military service member; 25 families with one parent working in the SES; 3 families in which the father is a military service member and the mother is a healthcare worker; and 25 civilian families where neither parent is employed in high-risk professions.

Thus, the sample included both families exposed to professional risks and civilian families, allowing for comparisons between groups and the identification of the impact of professional factors on children's psychological development.

**Research Strategy.** A comparative research strategy was employed to identify statistically significant differences between civilian families and families with professional risks. The combined use of self-report and partner-proxy methods provided more objective data regarding family interaction patterns and children's subjective well-being in high-risk occupational contexts.

Data were collected remotely using Google Forms, which allowed coverage of various regions and provided convenience for participants. Parents received a link to the questionnaire and completed it independently. Since younger school-age children often

have difficulties with accurate self-reporting, the partner-proxy method was employed: adult family members (parents) answered questions concerning the child's condition and behavior based on their daily observations.

This approach enabled the collection of more objective data on children's psychological Well-being while maintaining their comfort. The study was conducted during August–September. At this stage, an empirical examination of the psychological characteristics of children's development in families exposed to professional risks was carried out, specifically focusing on parent-child interactions and subjective well-being of family members.

In the first stage of the study, a descriptive analysis of the data was performed to determine mean values, variability, and overall distribution trends of key indicators within the sample. This provided a general overview of parenting styles, levels of well-being, and stress characteristic of both types of families.

The second stage involved a comparison of results between the two groups—families exposed to professional risks and civilian families. This allowed for the identification of statistically significant differences in children's and mothers' well-being, children's stress levels, and the characteristics of parental attitudes and upbringing strategies depending on the parents' professional context.

The results were presented in the form of graphs illustrating major trends and patterns. Data interpretation was conducted with consideration of the psychological significance of the indicators, the characteristics of the sample, and the specifics of families exposed to elevated professional risk.

## Results

The analysis of the obtained data clearly shows differences in psychological characteristics, family atmosphere, and parental attitudes between civilian families and families in which one or both parents are engaged in high-risk professions.

Specifically, children from civilian families exhibit the lowest average stress levels: for boys,  $M = 19.4$ ,  $SD = 4.72$ ,  $Me = 19.0$ ; for girls,  $M = 16.7$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ,  $Me = 17.5$ . This indicates relatively low tension and emotional comfort among children in this category. In military families, the average stress level is somewhat higher: for boys,  $M = 21.4$ ,  $SD = 7.74$ ,  $Me = 17.0$ ; for girls,  $M = 23.9$ ,  $SD = 5.89$ ,  $Me = 23.0$ . The calculated standard deviations indicate variability—some children experience moderate stress, while others show elevated psychological tension.

Children from MIA families exhibit higher stress levels compared to the previous groups: for boys,  $M = 29.8$ ,  $SD = 3.71$ ,  $Me = 30.0$ ; for girls,  $M = 29.5$ ,  $SD = 4.69$ ,  $Me = 29.0$ . These results reflect a consistently moderate-to-high level of psychological stress, which may be associated with the nature of professional risks and family climate tension. The highest stress levels were observed among children from SES families: for boys,  $M = 29.8$ ,  $SD = 2.73$ ,  $Me = 29.5$ ; for girls,  $M = 30.3$ ,  $SD = 6.12$ ,  $Me = 30.0$ . Maximum scores (up to 46



points) indicate the presence of high stress experiences, likely reflecting the emotional impact of parents' professional hazards as rescue workers.

Overall, there is a clear trend of gradually increasing average stress levels: from children in civilian families to children of parents working in high-risk services (Armed Forces, MIA, SES). These findings support the assumption that parental professional risk is a significant factor influencing children's emotional state and subjective well-being.

Next, we present the results of the comparative analysis of parental upbringing attitudes. The Overprotection (OP) indicator of the Eidemiller and Yustitskis method reflects parents' tendency toward excessive care, overcontrol, restriction of the child's autonomy, and dependency on adults. In the high-risk group, higher levels of overprotection were observed:  $M = 3.69$  ( $SD = 1.83$ ) among fathers and  $M = 2.82$  ( $SD = 2.17$ ) among mothers, whereas in the civilian group, this indicator was lower:  $M = 2.57$  ( $SD = 0.79$ ) for fathers and  $M = 1.94$  ( $SD = 2.13$ ) for mothers.

The Underprotection (UP) scale reflects a lack of care, attention, and emotional involvement from parents. The results showed that in the civilian group, mean values were lower ( $M = 1.72$ ,  $SD = 1.96$  for mothers;  $M = 5.14$ ,  $SD = 0.69$  for fathers), whereas in the professional-risk group, the scores increased ( $M = 3.08$ ,  $SD = 2.20$  for mothers;  $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 1.85$  for fathers). The Indulgence (IDG) indicator in the Eidemiller–Yustitskis method reflects the degree of emotional warmth, softness, and tendency to satisfy the child's desires even at the cost of losing educational influence. According to the results, women in the civilian group demonstrated the highest levels of indulgence ( $M = 4.61$ ,  $SD = 2.12$ ,  $Me = 5.00$ ), while men in this group showed moderate levels ( $M = 2.71$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ). In the high-risk group, the pattern was reversed: fathers exhibited significantly higher levels ( $M = 5.07$ ,  $SD = 2.32$ ,  $Me = 5.50$ ) compared to mothers ( $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = 1.61$ ,  $Me = 2.00$ ).

The opposite pole of emotional involvement is Ignorance of the child's needs (IN), which reflects a lack of attention, indifference, or absence of empathetic response from parents. The mean values of this indicator in the civilian group remain low ( $M = 0.39$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ,  $Me = 0.00$ ), whereas in the high-risk group they are slightly higher ( $M = 0.55$ ,  $SD = 0.72$  for mothers;  $M = 0.64$ ,  $SD = 0.79$  for fathers). The Excessive Demands-Obligations (ED+) scale in the method reflects the degree of parental directiveness, their tendency to control, provide instructions, and impose elevated demands on the child. Higher scores on this scale indicate hypercontrol—a tendency to regulate the child's behavior in detail and instill a sense of duty through external pressure and authority. In the high-risk group, higher mean values of ED+ were observed ( $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = 1.32$  for fathers;  $M = 1.55$ ,  $SD = 1.27$  for mothers), whereas in the civilian group, this indicator was lower ( $M = 1.00$ ,  $SD = 0.58$  for fathers;  $M = 0.82$ ,  $SD = 0.53$  for mothers).

The Insufficient Demands-Obligations (ED–) indicator reflects the opposite extreme—leniency, inconsistency, or avoidance of setting rules. According to the study results, mean values in the civilian group were moderate ( $M = 1.61$ ,  $SD = 1.04$  for mothers;  $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = 0.79$  for fathers), whereas in the high-risk group, a slight increase was observed in mothers

( $M = 1.92$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ) and lower values in fathers ( $M = 1.19$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ).

### Discussion

A comparative analysis of statistically significant differences between civilian families and families with high-risk professions was conducted.

In high-risk families, higher levels of overprotection ( $t = -2.53$ ,  $p = .013$ ) and underprotection ( $t = -2.32$ ,  $p = .022$ ) were observed, indicating an ambivalent parenting stance: a combination of excessive care with periods of emotional distancing, likely caused by demanding schedules and occupational risks.

Parents in the high-risk professional group also demonstrated higher levels of excessive demands ( $t = -3.29$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and excessive prohibitions ( $t = -2.70$ ,  $p = .008$ ), reflecting a tendency toward disciplinary control, structured routines, and greater strictness in upbringing. In contrast, civilian families showed a softer, more flexible interaction style.

Significant differences were also found for the "Child Qualities Preference" indicator ( $t = -2.16$ ,  $p = .033$ ): parents with high-risk professions more frequently perceived the child as "small" and vulnerable, indicating a focus on dependency and protective behavior. Meanwhile, the "Expansion of Parental Emotional Involvement" indicator did not differ between groups, suggesting that both groups maintain similar levels of emotional engagement.

No significant differences were found for the scales "Parental Insecurity", "Fear of Losing the Child", "Underdeveloped Parental Emotions", and gender-role orientations (male/female role attitudes). This indicates that professional affiliation does not alter the fundamental parenting attitudes regarding competence or gender-role expectations in child-rearing.

Overall, occupational risk is associated with the development of a stricter, more controlling, and emotionally ambivalent parenting style, which may reflect parents' internal anxiety and heightened desire to ensure safety.

The results of the Two-Way ANOVA showed that the type of parental professional activity is a statistically significant predictor of parental life satisfaction ( $F(3,97) = 21.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Parents from civilian families reported significantly higher levels of subjective well-being compared to those serving in the military, law enforcement (MIA), or the State Emergency Service (SES). This can be explained by the high professional workload, frequent life-threatening risks, and limited opportunities for family leisure and personal fulfillment experienced by high-risk professionals. Parent gender did not influence life satisfaction, indicating that the effect of professional environment on well-being is consistent regardless of gender.

Furthermore, family type significantly affected children's life satisfaction ( $F(3,96) = 14.77$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Children from civilian families demonstrated higher levels of subjective Well-being compared to children from families of military personnel, law enforcement



officers, and SES employees. The reduced life satisfaction in children from high-risk families may result from emotional tension within the family, limited communication with parents, and heightened anxiety associated with awareness of their parents' occupational dangers. No gender differences were observed, as boys and girls reported similar perceptions of their life satisfaction.

Finally, the type of parental professional activity had a pronounced effect on children's psychological stress ( $F(3,97) = 31.64, p < .001$ ). The highest stress levels were recorded in children from SES, MIA, and military families, which can be explained by frequent concerns for parental safety, family routine instability, and high emotional tension in the household. Children from civilian families demonstrated substantially lower stress levels, reflecting greater stability, security, and predictability in family life. Child gender did not influence stress levels ( $p = .990$ ).

The last step in the work was a regression analysis, in which the dependent variable was the subjective Well-being of the studied children. Table 2 displays the results of a stepwise linear regression analysis aimed at identifying factors that influence the level of life satisfaction of the studied children. The calculation of the regression model consistently included variables that, according to the study's design, are hypothetically related to the emotional state of children: the level of their psychological stress, the type of family, the characteristics of parental attitudes, the level of subjective Well-being of parents.

**Table 2. Regression model fit indices**

Модель	R	R <sup>2</sup>
1	0.644	0.414
2	0.654	0.428
3	0.662	0.438
4	0.741	0.549

Analysis of calculations gives grounds to assert that the highest level of explanatory power is demonstrated by the first model ( $R = 0.644; R^2 = 0.414; N = 104$ , (predictor - level of psychological stress of children), which covers 41.4% of the variation in children's subjective well-being, as well as the fourth model ( $R = 0.741; R^2 = 0.549; N = 104$ , in which the predictor is the level of subjective well-being of parents, added to the independent variables - the level of child stress, family type and parental upbringing attitudes, gave a significant 11% increase ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.11133; F(2,95) = 11.726; p < .001$ ) in explaining the variations of the dependent variable). This means that about 55% of the variation in child well-being is explained by a combination of factors such as the level of child stress, family type, parents' educational attitudes and the emotional state of the parents themselves,

among which the leading ones are indicators of children's stress and their parents' subjective well-being. The high value of R (0.741) indicates a significant linear relationship between the set of independent variables and the dependent indicator.

Thus, the results of the regression analysis confirm that the child's psychological Well-being is systematically related to the emotional stability of the parents and the socio-professional context of adult family members. The positive emotional background of adults' moods and the presence of a supportive family atmosphere are the leading factors in the formation of subjective well-being child, while increased levels of child stress and authoritarian parenting practices of parents have a destabilizing effect on children's life satisfaction.

The results obtained are consistent with the data of studies by Barber B. K. & ect. (Barber B. K., Xiong Y., & Buehler C. (2022), Miller K. E. (Miller K. E., 2021) and Avksentieva (Avksentieva O. M., 2022), which emphasize that parental Well-being serves as an emotional buffer in families with increased occupational risk.

Overall, the results of the study confirm that the occupational risk of one or both parents is an important psychological factor influencing family dynamics. It affects not only parenting style but also the emotional well-being of the entire family. Specifically, in such families, the following patterns were observed:

- An increase in control and demandingness in parenting;
- A tendency toward overprotection and reduced autonomy in children;
- A decrease in life satisfaction among both adults and children;
- Elevated levels of psychological stress in children.

Thus, professional risks have an indirect negative impact on the psychological climate of the family, contributing to parental emotional exhaustion and increased anxiety in children. At the same time, the results indicate the preservation of fundamental parenting values and the absence of distortion in children's gender-role orientations, which reflects the adaptive socialization potential of both civilian families and families of high-risk professionals, even under conditions of elevated occupational stress.

### **Conclusions**

The analysis of scientific literature demonstrates that employment in the military, law enforcement, or emergency services directly affects the emotional and psychological state of family members. This determines the specificity of their perception of personal well-being, the nature of family interactions, and the choice of parenting strategies.

The conducted empirical study allowed for the identification of patterns describing the impact of parental occupational risks on parenting attitudes, the subjective Well-being of family members, and the psychological states of children.

Results of the two-way ANOVA showed that the type of parental occupation is a statistically significant predictor of life satisfaction. Parents from civilian families demonstrated significantly higher levels of subjective well-being compared to military



personnel, Ministry of Internal Affairs employees, and State Emergency Service workers.

The data confirm that the professional risk of one or both parents is an important psychological factor in family dynamics. It affects not only parenting style but also the emotional Well-being of the entire family. Specifically, such families exhibit increased control and demandingness in parenting; tendencies toward overprotection and reduced autonomy in children; lower life satisfaction among adults and children; and higher levels of psychological stress in children.

Occupational risks have an indirect negative impact on the family's psychological climate, contributing to parental emotional exhaustion and increased anxiety in children. At the same time, the results indicate the preservation of fundamental parenting values and the absence of distortions in children's gender-role orientations, reflecting the adaptive potential of families even under conditions of elevated occupational stress.

Summarizing the results of the correlation analysis and their interpretation with respect to the formulated hypotheses, which were confirmed in the study, it can be concluded that children's psychological well-being in families with professional risks is determined by the interaction of several factors: parents' emotional state, the characteristics of the family microclimate, and specific parenting strategies. The identified patterns indicate that adult subjective well-being, anxiety levels, parenting style, and the ability to provide emotional support are key conditions for enhancing children's stress resilience, life satisfaction, emotional stability, and adaptability. Deterioration in parents' emotional state, characteristic of families facing occupational stressors, leads to increased psychological burden on the child, heightened anxiety, and reduced overall life satisfaction. Conversely, positive parental emotions, family stability, and supportive interactions create a foundation for children's sense of security, emotional balance, and development of autonomy.

As a general conclusion, it is important to emphasize the need for implementing psychological support measures for families where one or both parents work in high-risk occupations. A logical direction for further research on this topic is the development of modern, effective technologies for strengthening family resources, improving parental emotional regulation skills, and creating a favorable upbringing environment, which are necessary conditions for minimizing the negative consequences of parental occupational stress and ensuring the psychological well-being of children from families of high-risk professionals.

*Conflict of interest. The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.*

*Disclaimer. The author declares that her opinions and views expressed in this manuscript are independent of the influence of any organizations.*

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## PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF STRESS RESISTANCE OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTHS IN WAR TIME

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### Abstract

Relevance. In conditions of military aggression in Ukraine, citizens face stressful and traumatic situations every day. Adolescence, which includes adolescence and young adulthood, is a critical period full of emotional, social and psychological changes. At this time, it is extremely important to be able to adapt to difficult and extreme conditions, withstand significant intellectual, volitional and emotional loads, manage one's own emotions, and successfully carry out life activities without harmful consequences for health, which is mainly determined by such a personality characteristic as stress resistance.

The purpose of the article is to present the results of theoretical justification and empirical research, as well as the development and testing of training to strengthen stress resistance of adolescents and young people through the impact on such psychological properties as self-esteem, anxiety and emotional intelligence.

Methodology. The main research methods are: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10); M. Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale; J. Taylor's Anxiety Scale; Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Test (N. Hall), formative experiment method, psychological training; methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of empirical data. Sample: 110 adolescents and young people: 60 girls and 50 boys aged 11-15 years.

Results. The results obtained indicate the following: a relationship between stress resistance and such psychological factors as anxiety, self-esteem, emotional intelligence has been established. Based on the established connection, a training program for the development of stress resistance in adolescents was developed and tested.

Conclusions. The tested author's training program for the development of stress resistance in adolescents confirmed its effectiveness in the current study as an evidence-based practice.

**Keywords:** stress resistance, adolescence, psychological factors, self-esteem, anxiety, emotional intelligence.

### Relevance

In conditions of military aggression in Ukraine, citizens face stressful and traumatic situations every day. Adolescence is a critical period full of emotional, social and psychological changes, but today Ukrainian adolescents face a high level of stress due to constant social problems, instability and uncertainty. There are also many regular stress factors, such as pressure at school, peer relationships, hormonal changes, a tense psychological atmosphere at home, family conflicts. These factors can lead to increased emotional instability, low self-esteem and difficulties in overcoming daily stress.

It is extremely important for adolescents to be able to adapt to difficult and extreme conditions, withstand significant intellectual, volitional and emotional loads, manage their own emotions, and successfully carry out life activities without harmful consequences for health, which is mainly determined by such a personality characteristic as stress resistance.

An additional source of stress and traumatization for adolescents and young men in Ukraine is war. In this context, retraumatization manifests itself when one trauma is superimposed on another: the threat to life and stability in the native environment is combined with the need to adapt to unfamiliar conditions, which becomes an additional factor of psychological stress (secondary trauma).

The aim of the article is to present the results of an empirical study on the development and testing of a training program for the development of stress resistance by reducing anxiety and increasing self-esteem of adolescents and young adults.

### **Theoretical background**

Analysis of the scientific and psychological literature shows that many scientists have addressed the study of the phenomenon of stress resistance. The complexity and multifaceted nature of this concept has led to its interpretation within different scientific schools, which can be conditionally combined into three key approaches.

The first approach considers stress resistance as an integrative quality of the personality, which provides the ability to act effectively and maintain emotional balance in conditions of increased stress. This focuses on the internal structure of the personality, which is formed under the influence of life experience and genetic factors. Stress resistance here acts as a general feature that allows a person to function without significant destructive changes even in difficult, unpredictable conditions, and is also implemented through the functions of self-control, self-regulation, emotional stability, and is manifested in the level of development of emotional intelligence and emotional competence (Tsyganchuk T., 2017; Kohut O., 2021; Berdnyk G. et al. ).

Within the framework of the second approach, stress resistance is the ability to resist the negative impact of stress factors, overcome them and maintain internal stability in difficult life circumstances. In this context, the emphasis is shifted to the process (resistance, overcoming, adaptation) and coping mechanisms. Stress resistance is interpreted as the active interaction of an individual with the environment, aimed at minimizing the harm from stress (N. Melnyk, G. Dubchak, G. Bonanno, 2018, etc.).

The third approach considers stress resistance as a complex, complex, systemic multi-component characteristic that encompasses the interaction of psychological, emotional, cognitive, physiological and social components that ensure the effective functioning of the individual in stressful conditions. This approach is the most comprehensive and recognizes that stress resistance is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but is a complex dynamic system.

The analysis of scientific research allows us to conclude that stress resistance is a multi-component dynamic property of the individual, which determines the ability of a



person to withstand significant intellectual, volitional and emotional loads, to resist the influence of stress factors and to cope with many stressful situations, without any particular harmful consequences for the activities of people around them and their own health.

Adolescence (11–15 years) is a critical period full of intense emotional, social and psychological changes. The formation of stress resistance at this time is crucial, as adolescents face both normative and non-normative stress factors (Shovkova K., 2018)

Normative stress factors include:

- Hormonal changes and physical maturation.
- Intense academic pressure and choosing a future profession.
- Identity crisis and the need to separate from parents.
- Peer pressure and the formation of a hierarchy in the group.

In the context of military aggression in Ukraine, these normative factors are superimposed on extreme stress factors: threat to life, instability, loss of familiar social environment, experience of forced displacement and retraumatization (Wenger O., Yastremska S., Rega N., 2016).

Stress resistance in adolescence is manifested through the ability of the individual to maintain emotional balance, adequately respond to difficulties and adapt to changes without developing destructive forms of behavior. Traits that indicate the formed stress resistance of a teenager: self-regulation of emotions, conscious choice of strategies for overcoming problems, ability to self-organize and constructively interact with the social environment. In behavior, this can be manifested in the ability to remain calm in difficult situations, not to lose motivation, to think critically and make a balanced choice. At the same time, in adolescence these manifestations are unstable in nature, which is due to age-related emotional sensitivity, incomplete self-knowledge processes and the influence of the social environment.

V. Korolchuk considers a number of factors that influence the formation of stress resistance, in particular internal factors: personal resources, which include self-concept, locus of control, level of cognitive development, communicative sphere, ability to empathy, emotional stability, endurance, level of anxiety, self-esteem, specificity of reality assessment.

Among the many factors that influence the development of stress resistance of people of different ages, in this study we will focus on such psychological characteristics as self-esteem, personal anxiety and emotional intelligence, which, from the point of view of the authors of the article, are significantly related to the features of resistance to stress of a person of adolescent age.

Self-esteem is a key component of the self-concept and is defined as an individual's assessment of himself, his abilities, qualities and place among other people. High, adequate self-esteem builds confidence in the ability to cope with difficult situations (self-efficacy), which is a powerful internal resource for stress resistance (Bezdushko O., 2020)

On the contrary, low self-esteem creates high vulnerability to stress. Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to: interpret neutral or ambiguous events as a threat or failure; use destructive coping strategies (avoidance, self-blame); experience significant emotional stress due to fear of judgment and inadequacy (Stepova A., 2018).

Thus, self-esteem determines whether a teenager will perceive a stressful situation as a challenge (with high self-esteem) or as an insurmountable threat (with low self-esteem).

Anxiety is a stable personality trait that reflects an individual's tendency to experience anxiety, readiness for emotional response in various life situations. Anxiety is closely related to stress mechanisms: a high level of anxiety leads to excessive hyperreaction to stimuli that are objectively not threatening (Teptyuk Yu, 2021).

Adolescents with high anxiety demonstrate: increased emotional instability and sensitivity to criticism; difficulties with concentration and decision-making under stressful conditions; a constant state of internal tension, which depletes mental resources and reduces overall stress resistance. The positive correlation between the level of anxiety and perceived stress indicates that high anxiety is one of the most powerful factors in reducing stress resistance in adolescents, as it prevents the effective use of available resources (Kosheleva N., Trenbach I., 2024).

Emotional intelligence consists of four components: identification, recognition of emotions, verbalization, and differentiation of emotions. The use of emotional potential, i.e. the ability to consciously manage one's own emotions, helps to solve the tasks set and use any mood in practical activities. Understanding the complex of emotions, the relationships between them, the transitions from one emotion to another, their causes, as well as the ability to predict their occurrence. Managing emotions involves awareness, control and regulation of the emotional state, reducing the intensity of negative emotions, solving emotionally charged problems without restraining negative emotions (Nosenko E., Kovryga N., 2003 )

The components of emotional intelligence have significant potential for protection against stress, as they contribute to the implementation of the main tasks of the coping strategy, in particular, minimizing negative impact, patience, adaptation, regulation, maintaining positive self-esteem, emotional balance and social ties. People with low levels of EI are more likely to use maladaptive coping strategies, such as: avoidance, substance abuse, denial, aggression. The study demonstrates a close relationship between EI and stress resistance. It was found that people with high levels of EI cope with stress more effectively, as they are able to better understand their emotions, manage them and use them to solve difficult life situations. Emotional intelligence is an important factor that influences the choice of coping strategies during stress. Usually, people with high emotional intelligence prefer adaptive strategies that contribute to the successful overcoming of stressful challenges (Vasylykivskyi P., 2018)

Thus, the hypothesis of this study is that the formation of stress resistance in adolescents is influenced by self-esteem, emotional intelligence and anxiety. The essence of the null hypothesis is the absence of a relationship between stress resistance in



adolescents and their level of self-esteem, emotional intelligence, anxiety, and the alternative hypothesis is the presence of such a relationship.

### **Methodology**

**Methods.** To achieve the goal, general scientific methods of theoretical research were used (analysis, synthesis, classification, generalization of scientific literature); special empirical methods: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) adapted by O. O. Veldbrecht and N. I. Tavrovetska; "Self-Esteem Scale by M. Rosenberg" adapted by O. Veldbrecht, N. Zinchenko, N. Tavrovetska; J. Taylor's "Anxiety Scale" method; Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Test (N. Hall); methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of empirical data: Pearson's linear correlation, Student's t-test for independent samples, descriptive statistics method. Data processing and interpretation were performed using the SPSS program.

**Sample.** The sample consists of students of grades 7-9 of the Hanniv Lyceum of the Petriv Settlement Council of the Oleksandrovsky District of the Kirovohrad Region, the Iskriv Branch of the Hanniv Lyceum, the Volodymyr Branch of the Hanniv Lyceum, and Gymnasium No. 236 of the city of Kyiv. The total number of people who participated in the study was 110 (60 girls and 50 boys aged 10-16 years).

The research procedure took place in three stages: the theoretical stage, the psychodiagnostic (confirmatory) and formative stages with subsequent verification of the effectiveness of the interventions.

At the theoretical stage, the concept of stress resistance as an integrative quality of the personality, which provides the ability to effectively function and adapt in difficult conditions, as well as the features of its manifestation in adolescence in conditions of increased stress, was considered in detail. Conceptual approaches to understanding internal psychological factors that influence this quality, including the structure of the self-concept, emotional stability and coping mechanisms, were analyzed. Particular attention is paid to the specifics of the influence of self-esteem, anxiety level and emotional intelligence on the ability of adolescents to resist the influence of stress factors.

The empirical part of the study was devoted to the collection and analysis of factual information regarding the features of the relationship between diagnosed psychological factors (self-esteem, anxiety and emotional intelligence) and the level of perceived stress in adolescents, as well as the development and testing of a training program aimed at correcting anxiety reduction and increasing self-esteem for the general strengthening of the stress resistance of the subjects.

The data obtained served as the basis for the development of a training program for individuals who were found to have low self-esteem and high anxiety levels.

The training program "Resilience Formula: How to Cope with Stress and Believe in Yourself" was created and is designed for 10 separate meetings, each lasting 1.5 hours. It is divided into three main phases: introductory (1st meeting), main (2nd-9th meetings) and final (10th meeting). Psychotraining is designed taking into account the semantic and