

## Distinctive Features of Developing a Culture of Interpersonal Relations in Military Teams

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**Abstract:** This scientific article analyzes the issue of developing a culture of interpersonal relations in military teams through various scientific theories based on philosophical, social, and psychological approaches. The article examines the views of Eastern scholars, as well as thinkers of the ancient period, the Middle Ages, and modern and contemporary Europe in the fields of military pedagogy and psychology. It substantiates that the culture of interpersonal relations is an important factor in ensuring military discipline, team stability, and the effectiveness of service.

**Keywords:** Interpersonal relations, culture, military team, philosophy, psychology, socialization, ethics.



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In the context of contemporary globalization, intense information pressure, and complex geopolitical conditions, the study of moral, professional, and psychological interpersonal relations among military personnel during their service has become one of the most relevant research areas, as in all spheres of social life. The effectiveness of service activities in military teams depends not only on organizational or material and technical factors, but also directly on the culture of interpersonal relations among team members [1]. This is because the culture of interpersonal relations plays an important role in strengthening military discipline, preventing personal, collective, and various forms of psychological conflicts, and improving the moral and ethical environment within military organizations.

Throughout several millennia of human history, individuals have been formed as social beings within a social environment, and interpersonal relations have undergone a gradual historical development. In the modern era, due to the continuous dissemination of information with both positive and negative characteristics related to interpersonal relations through contemporary information technologies, social networks, and various digital platforms, deviant forms of interaction are increasingly observed alongside positive interpersonal relations in human consciousness. Therefore, the comprehensive study of the culture of interpersonal relations in military teams has remained relevant not only today, but for centuries.

This is because ensuring the comprehensive security of the state system in every historical period has been entrusted to military personnel. Consequently, the study of the culture of interpersonal relations in military teams has remained a pressing issue from the emergence of the state and

society to the present day. At this point, it is necessary to focus on the core aspects of the issue, namely the culture of interpersonal relations, its essence, existing problems in the field, and development trends. The culture of interpersonal relations is a complex socio-philosophical phenomenon that is inextricably linked to the social nature of the individual.

When examining the views of major representatives of ancient philosophy in this field, the great philosopher Socrates emphasized that the foundation of interpersonal relations is ethics, that is, morality. Through morality, a person attains self-knowledge, which in turn enables the establishment of fair and just relations with others. Socrates regarded dialogue as a means of attaining truth. Aristotle, known in world scholarship as the “First Teacher,” interpreted the human being as a “social being” and considered friendship (*philia*) and mutual respect among citizens to be the foundation of social stability [6].

Among Eastern thinkers, the great philosopher Abu Nasr al-Farabi, who holds the status of the “Second Teacher” in world science after Aristotle, in his doctrine of the “Virtuous City” emphasized that the unity and moral perfection of community members constitute the basis of social prosperity and happiness [8]. The great poet, philosopher, and statesman Alisher Navoi highlighted compassion, justice, and humanism as the foundations of the culture of interpersonal relations [5].

Representatives of modern and contemporary philosophy have developed a number of theories concerning interpersonal relations. In particular, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant advanced the idea of recognizing human dignity as an “end in itself,” emphasizing that another person should never be treated merely as a means to an end, but rather as an autonomous being possessing intrinsic value. This principle represents the highest level of the culture of interpersonal relations. The philosopher Erich Fromm, in *The Art of Loving* and within the framework of humanistic psychology, identified mutual respect, responsibility, devotion, and solidarity as the fundamental principles of interpersonal relations [7]. According to the author, the culture of relations is a form of love and humanism.

Jürgen Habermas, in his theory of communicative action, argues that genuine communication is interaction based on respect, equality, and rationally grounded arguments. In his view, the culture of communication constitutes the foundation of social consensus and justice. Albert Bandura, within the framework of social learning theory, emphasizes that the culture of interpersonal relations is largely formed through observing and imitating the behavior of others. According to the author, culture is a learned behavioral model. In contemporary philosophy, Habermas’s theory of communicative action and Fromm’s humanistic ideas substantiate that the culture of interpersonal relations is grounded in social consensus and humanism [3].

Within the framework of psychology, interpersonal relations have been consistently studied, and this discipline has long addressed problems related to human interactions. Issues concerning the development of positive emotions in this field have been explored in the works of G.M.Andreyeva, A.A.Bodalev, Y.I.Golovakh, N.A.Grishina, A.A.Leontiev, V.N.Myasishchev, and other psychologists, as well as military psychologists such as V.I.Varvarov, V.G.Demin, M.I.Dyachenko, L.E.Merzlyak, and Y.V.Podolyaka [2]. However, despite the multifaceted consideration of interpersonal relations in psychology, it should be noted that the culture of interpersonal relations in military teams has not been studied as an independent subject.

At the same time, in military psychology, the issue of formal (regulated) relations – an integral component of this research – has been thoroughly investigated. Nevertheless, the entire spectrum of interpersonal relations in military teams is not limited solely to formal relations. The main focus of this study is to examine the system of interpersonal relations in military teams while taking into account the permanent (contract-based military personnel) and variable (conscripted military personnel) composition, as well as gender and age characteristics.

Taking into account the specific characteristics of military service, it can be emphasized that the psychology of interpersonal relations in military teams is a distinctive socio-psychological phenomenon that is studied in detail from the perspectives of military, youth, and social psychology, as well as conflictology. In addressing the psychological foundations of the development of the culture of interpersonal relations in military teams, it is first necessary to focus on the essence and mechanisms of the emergence of interpersonal relations. Personality develops in genuine relationships between people. Based on the psychology of direct communication and interpersonal relations within a group and society, interpersonal relations manifest themselves in the form of characteristic patterns.

In a military team, relationships are manifested in two main forms: formal and informal. As we know, military service is regulated by relevant normative standards, including military regulations, and this is also reflected in interpersonal relations. The hierarchical relationships between superiors and subordinates are based on the principles of command and obedience, mutual respect, and the authority of the leader. The foundation of formal interpersonal relations is built on leadership and obedience, as well as cooperation during joint military operations. It should be emphasized that formal relations play a leading role compared to informal relations.

Although military rules fully regulate interpersonal relations within military teams, they cannot cover all possible situations of interaction. This is because, not only in military organizations but also in other social groups, various informal relationships arise and develop spontaneously in connection with work or everyday life, and they are not regulated by any formal rules.

Informal personal relationships develop as a system of interpersonal preferences, likes and dislikes, respect and hostility. At the same time, in our view, misconceptions about informal relationships have emerged in practice. Their character depends on the level of personal culture of the participants, their environment, and the norms of interaction accepted in the military team. These relationships can be both positive and negative. An example of such processes in military organizations is hazing (*dedovshina*). The first and primary cause of the emergence of hazing is deficiencies in the organization and management of military labor. The second cause is related to the low level of cohesion within the military team and the passivity of the public in combating hazing. Among leaders, there are those who violate military discipline, intensify hazing, and create a situation in which younger servicemen become dependent on the “elders,” causing tension in the unit. Such “leaders” are characterized by selfishness, immorality, low moral awareness, cruelty, and a desire for unjust privileges. Their pursuit of power is accompanied by violence and the threat of its use. Therefore, commanders and the entire team must quickly identify and eliminate these negative phenomena.

For these reasons, it is possible to say that the origin of the problems of *dedovshina* can be attributed to deficiencies in the personal, professional, moral, legal and spiritual knowledge of the military team vertically, that is, from the military chiefs to the middle and lower ranks of commanders. Therefore, in the formation of military teams, taking into account its peculiarities, it is necessary to pay attention to the above aspects in the selection of personnel according to their individual abilities, the distribution of their functional responsibilities. At the same time, we can conclude that in order to form a sense of patriotism in servicemen, it is necessary to organize group activities that have the greatest impact on each soldier and unite all subgroups into a single entity. Many years of experience in pedagogical work of V.N.Myastshev have shown that only in the collective experience can he impart his pedagogical influence to the “educator-student” [4].

In order to develop a culture of interpersonal relations in military units and to ensure a stable healthy environment in the unit, it is necessary to treat the soldiers individually, taking into account professional, moral and psychological aspects, as well as to take into account the laws of pedagogy and managerial psychology in the management of the military unit by commanders.

The principles of unity between commanders and subordinates are enshrined in legal documents such as the military oath, regulations, and manuals. However, these legal documents only define the general principles of building interpersonal relationships among servicemen. They do not describe the entire spectrum of moral relationships in detail.

Officers and sergeants differ slightly in their level of education, and they possess sufficient life experience and cultural development. Therefore, when considering issues of interpersonal relations, servicemen of this category can be grouped together. A leader himself must set an example for his subordinates in all matters, must not abuse his position, and must not demand such behavior from subordinate commanders.

Although the commander is the official leader, he is also responsible for the education and upbringing of all servicemen under his command. The commander manages the unit's activities as a means of social control and authority based on his legal powers and social norms. Leadership, however, is a process of internal socio-psychological self-organization and self-management of interpersonal relationships and activities among unit members through the individual initiative of subordinates. Therefore, it is important that a leader's authority is formed only through communication and joint activities with others.

Developing the culture of interpersonal relationships among servicemen is of particular importance because they often shape the tone and emotional atmosphere within a military unit. It is formed through a combination of the commander's personal qualities and the structure of relationships within the group, based on which a person is recognized, chosen, and nurtured as a leader. According to the opinion of the unit, the leader becomes a person who is suitable for this role under certain conditions of activity. In a genuine unit, his goals hold equal value for all members of the military community.

The highest level of military unit development significantly influences who performs leadership functions in the unit and how they carry them out.

If we summarize the characteristics of servicemen's age, the general level of culture and physical development enables most of them to adapt to the military environment and solve the tasks assigned to the unit.

Therefore, issues related to supporting young servicemen should always be under the commander's constant attention. This requires unit commanders to take into account the socio-psychological and age-specific characteristics of servicemen in each category. Relationships between people are defined by moral and legal norms, and they should be built on principles of friendship and humanity. Without these rules, relationships and connections cannot exist. This is related to the fact that these norms of human society have a regulatory function.

Based on the above, interpersonal relationships should be regarded as a system of human relations that arises during joint activities and communication, and which conforms to the moral and legal laws developed in the process of human progress.

Relations among servicemen are the foundation and an important aspect of discipline, and their condition significantly affects the level of combat readiness of a military unit. Numerous studies have been conducted on strengthening morality and military discipline within military communities. Under military service conditions, many moral norms, personal characteristics, and ethical relations manifest in a specific way and carry the force of law. Violations of moral norms by a serviceman are always strongly condemned by public opinion.

**Military discipline** is a specific type of social relationship in which the relationships within a military team are regulated. It is characterized by strict and precise adherence to the rules and regulations defined in military codes by all military personnel. A serviceman is considered

disciplined if they consciously accept and follow military rules and regulations, and carry out interpersonal relationships based on military culture.

The discipline of each serviceman is manifested in their communication, behavior, speech, and appearance. This reflects the level of their moral culture. If moral norms and principles demand it, then the culture of behavior shows how these norms and principles have actually been learned and applied in life. Moral norms form a model of ethical behavior in likely typical situations.

Correct application of the principles and rules of codes in specific real-life situations depends on the person, their decisions, and skills. Most importantly, the requirements of such moral documents are accepted by the whole being of the person and express their personal beliefs.

The culture of interpersonal relations among military personnel can be observed in their military attire, service conduct, solving everyday problems, pedagogical and positive psychological behavior.

**In conclusion**, it can be said that the culture of interpersonal relations is an important condition for the stability and effectiveness of military units. It is formed through the harmony of philosophical values, moral norms, and psychological mechanisms. A systematic approach aimed at developing the culture of interpersonal relations in military communities serves to increase the efficiency of military service and to improve the socio-psychological environment.

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