



Religiosity and coping strategies as determinants of the psychological resilience of combatants: A comparative model of adaptation

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◆ **Abstract.** The article presents the results of an empirical study on the role of religiosity and coping strategies in shaping the psychological resilience of military personnel who are participants in combat operations. The relevance of this study stems from the need to identify effective psychological resources for the adaptation of personnel under conditions of prolonged combat stress. The aim of the study was to investigate the structure of predictors of psychological resilience among military personnel with different types of worldview identification and to determine the role of religiosity and coping strategies in the process of adaptation to extreme conditions. The study involved 106 military personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine who had participated in combat operations; they were divided into two groups according to their type of worldview orientation: religiously centred and non-religious combatants. To collect empirical data, the Individual Religiosity Test by Yu.V. Shcherbatykh, the Combat Stress Questionnaire by O.A. Blinov, and the COPE inventory were used. The results were processed using correlation and multiple regression analysis. The data obtained demonstrated the stability of the worldview attitudes of the military personnel and the absence of statistically significant differences in levels of combat stress between religious and non-religious combatants. At the same time, significant differences were identified in the structure of coping strategies. Among non-religious military personnel, rational-instrumental mechanisms of coping with stress play a leading role, primarily “active coping” and “planning”. Among religiously centred combatants, the dominant strategies are “positive reappraisal”, “acceptance” of the situation, and “seeking emotional and social support”. The results of the study indicate the existence of two different structures of psychological resilience in combatants, which are formed depending on their worldview orientation. Non-religious combatants are characterised by a rational-instrumental model of coping with combat stress, whereas religiously centred individuals demonstrate an existential-social model of psychological adaptation. It was established that religiosity does not act as a direct factor in reducing combat stress, but indirectly influences the choice of adaptive coping strategies and the ways of interpreting traumatic experience. The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of using the obtained results to develop differentiated approaches to the psychological support of military personnel with different worldview orientations and to improve the interaction between military psychologists and chaplains within the system of supporting the psychological resilience of personnel

◆ **Keywords:** positive reappraisal; acceptance; moral injury; social support; chaplaincy; combat stress

Suggested Citation:

Levenets, A., & Sakevych, A. (2026). Religiosity and coping strategies as determinants of the psychological resilience of combatants: A comparative model of adaptation. *Bulletin of National Defence University of Ukraine*, 21(2), 39-52. doi: 10.33099/2617-6858-26-21-2-39-52.

Article's History: Received: 26.10.2025; Revised: 28.02.2026; Accepted: 30.03.2026; Published: 16.04.2026



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♦ Introduction

The Russian Federation's full-scale armed aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally transformed the operating conditions of the national security system and presented military personnel with unprecedented psychological challenges. In the modern combat environment, prolonged exposure to life-threatening conditions, high-intensity combat operations and uncertainty about the future is accompanied by significant psycho-emotional stress. In this context, the issue of maintaining the mental health and psychological resilience of military personnel takes on strategic importance for sustaining the combat readiness of personnel. This highlights the need to identify the key determinants of combatants' adaptation to combat stress, in particular the role of worldview beliefs and coping mechanisms in the process of overcoming traumatic experiences. The effectiveness of combatants' performance in extreme conditions depends to a large extent on their capacity for psychological adaptation, regulation of emotional states, and the use of effective stress-coping strategies. In the scientific literature, the concept of psychological resilience is viewed as an integral personality trait reflecting a person's ability to maintain effective functioning under conditions of intense stress, to recover quickly from traumatic events, and to preserve psychological balance (Tytarenko, 2025). In a military context, psychological resilience is directly linked to the combat effectiveness of personnel, as it determines a service member's ability to make decisions, control emotions, and act effectively in high-risk situations. One of the key mechanisms for ensuring psychological resilience is coping behaviour. According to Y.-A. Ra & K. Shin (2025), within the transactional model of stress and coping, coping is viewed as a set of cognitive and behavioural strategies that a person uses to overcome internal or external demands that exceed their adaptive resources. Coping strategies may be directed both at changing the situation itself (problem-focused coping) and at regulating emotional reactions (emotion-focused coping).

In combat conditions, problem-oriented coping strategies are the most adaptive, in particular "active coping", "planning", and "seeking social support". It is these mechanisms that enable combatants to maintain a sense of control over the situation and respond effectively to threats. O.M. Kokun *et al.* (2022) analysed the psychological resilience resources of military personnel in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, emphasising the importance of individual coping strategies for maintaining the effectiveness of military units. The authors noted that the ability to employ problem-focused coping strategies is one of the key factors in preserving psychological stability under combat load. An important factor influencing the choice of coping strategies is the system of an individual's worldview beliefs. In this regard, the role of religiosity in stress-coping processes is of particular interest. The study by S.L. Kravchuk (2023) examined psychological factors of post-traumatic growth among volunteer veterans. It was empirically demonstrated that positive religious coping, in combination with

resilience and social support, serves as a significant predictor of personal recovery following participation in combat operations. Religious beliefs contribute to the formation of new life meanings, spiritual development, and the re-evaluation of life priorities after traumatic experience. The work by T. Kyrylenko & I. Horbyk (2024) examines the role of military chaplaincy as a vital element of the psychological support system for military personnel. The researchers emphasised that the chaplain's work helps to strengthen the moral and psychological state of personnel, foster spiritual support, and overcome existential crises arising during combat operations. H.G. Koenig & F.N. Al-Zaben (2020) demonstrated that spirituality and religiosity can serve as important psychological resources that help reduce levels of anxiety, depressive symptoms and post-traumatic symptoms in military personnel experiencing extreme stress.

The issue of moral injury among military personnel and the role of worldview beliefs in its resolution was examined by J.M. Currier (2021). The author demonstrated that combat experience is often accompanied by the experience of moral dilemmas related to responsibility, guilt, and value conflicts. In such situations, religious and spiritual beliefs may serve an existential support function, helping military personnel to make sense of traumatic experiences and restore internal psychological balance. In the study by I. Niewiadomska *et al.* (2021), it was established that turning to religion may function as one of the coping strategies among participants in military operations in Ukraine. In this context, religious faith facilitates a deeper interpretation of traumatic events and is accompanied by spiritual transformations of the individual that ease adaptation to combat experience. At the same time, contemporary research indicates that effective psychological adaptation to extreme conditions may be based not only on religious beliefs. Thus, C.L. Park (2022) notes that both religious and non-religious belief systems can fulfil a meaning-making function in the process of coping with traumatic experience, contributing to the cognitive integration of complex life events and the maintenance of psychological resilience. Thus, contemporary research demonstrates that the process of psychological adaptation of military personnel to combat experience is shaped by a complex interaction of individual psychological resources, social support, and worldview beliefs. In this context, a comparative analysis of different worldview models of psychological adaptation becomes particularly important, as the system of beliefs determines the nature of the interpretation of traumatic experience and the selection of coping strategies in extreme situations. At the same time, the issue of a direct comparison of the predictor structure of psychological resilience among religious and non-religious combatants, particularly in the context of the full-scale war in Ukraine, remains insufficiently explored. In this regard, there is a clear need for research aimed at identifying differences in the structure of psychological resilience among combatants depending on their worldview orientation and the coping strategies they employ.

The aim of the study was to identify predictors of psychological resilience in military personnel depending on the type of worldview identification and to determine the role of religiosity and coping strategies in their adaptation to extreme conditions. In accordance with this aim, the following research objectives were formulated: (1) to conduct a comparative analysis of the structure of individual religiosity, levels of combat stress, and characteristics of coping strategies in groups of religious and non-religious combatants; (2) to identify relationships between indicators of individual religiosity, stress-coping mechanisms, and predictors of psychological resilience among representatives of different worldview groups; (3) on the basis of the obtained results, to develop regression models of the predictor structure of psychological resilience and to formulate practical recommendations for military psychologists and chaplains.

◆ Materials and Methods

To achieve the aim and address the research objectives, a set of interrelated methods was employed, ensuring a comprehensive approach to the study of the psychological resilience of military personnel in the context of combat stress and religious coping. General theoretical methods included the analysis of scientific literature, as well as the generalisation and systematisation of data on combat stress and religious coping, alongside comparison and interpretation of findings. The use of these methods made it possible to outline the theoretical framework of the study and to establish a conceptual basis for the development of the empirical model. Among the sources consulted, particular importance was attached to works focusing on coping strategies and the role of religious faith as a psychological resource, including studies by K.I. Pargament (2011), S.M. Southwick & D.S. Charney (2012), and F. Dolcos *et al.* (2021).

The empirical study was conducted between 2023 and 2025 and involved military personnel who had participated in combat operations ($n = 106$). The inclusion criterion for the sample was experience of direct participation in combat operations lasting more than 4 months. The choice of the lower threshold for combat participation (4 months) was dictated by the need to study stable psychological constructs that form after the initial phase of combat adaptation. During this period, initial emotional reactions to extreme events gradually stabilise, whilst coping strategies and worldview attitudes transform from situational reactions into relatively stable adaptive mechanisms that counteract cumulative combat stress. Exclusion criteria were: the presence of acute mental disorders preventing the adequate completion of psychodiagnostic procedures; a service member's refusal to participate in the study. The sample consisted predominantly of men (93.4%) and women (6.6%) aged between 21 and 62 years ($M = 35.2$; $SD = 8.1$). The duration of the respondents' direct participation in combat operations ranged from 0.4 to 3.2 years. At the time of

the survey, some respondents were serving in line units, while others were undergoing professional training. In terms of service status, 70.8% of the sample consisted of personnel mobilised for service, whereas 29.2% were contract military personnel.

For the purposes of comparative analysis, respondents were divided into two contrasting groups according to their type of worldview orientation, based on self-identification. Participants independently defined their religious identity by responding to a corresponding item in the questionnaire. On this basis, two groups were formed:

1. Religiously centred combatants (50% of the sample) – individuals who identified themselves as deeply religious (100% Christians).
2. Non-religious combatants (50% of the sample) – individuals who identified themselves as atheists, agnostics, or religiously indifferent.

The equal distribution of respondents between the groups ensured the validity of statistical comparisons and increased the reliability of the results when applying both parametric and non-parametric methods of analysis. To simplify the presentation of results, the terms “religious” and “non-religious” will be used throughout the text to refer to these groups. Socio-psychological characteristics of the respondents (gender, age, religious identity, and combat experience) were recorded using an author-designed demographic questionnaire consisting of basic structured questions without complex psychometric scales. This made it possible to obtain the necessary information for describing the sample and conducting subsequent comparative analyses. The study was conducted offline under two conditions:

- ◆ at a department of the Military Institute of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (the name of the unit is withheld for security reasons). Testing was conducted in a group format, which ensured standardised conditions for the study;
- ◆ in line units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, where testing was carried out in both group and individual formats depending on access conditions and unit schedules.

The average duration of one assessment session across all methods was approximately one hour. All respondents participated voluntarily after receiving full information about the purpose of the study. The research adhered to principles of confidentiality and ethical standards of psychological research in accordance with the provisions of the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki (2024). A set of psychodiagnostic instruments was employed:

1. The Individual Religiosity Test Questionnaire by Yu.V. Shcherbatykh. This method allows for the assessment of the degree of an individual's involvement in a religious system and differentiates between external (formal) and internal (intrinsic) religiosity. The test scales cover: epistemological roots of religiosity; attitude towards magic; interest in pseudosciences; need for psychological support; external manifestations of religiosity; level of religious self-awareness; and perception of religion as a source of moral norms. This methodology was chosen because of its

ability to provide a comprehensive assessment of religiosity as both a worldview and a psychological resource that may influence the formation of coping strategies and indirectly determine the characteristics of psychological resilience in military personnel.

2. The Combat Stress Questionnaire by O.A. Blinov is designed to assess the intensity of combat-related psychological stress in military personnel operating under extreme conditions. The method makes it possible to determine the individual level of combat stress and to evaluate characteristic psycho-emotional responses to combat load. As the level of combat stress reflects the degree of a serviceman's adaptation to an extreme environment, these indicators may be considered an important measure of the psychological resilience of combatants.

3. The COPE inventory adapted by Yu.V. Kovalenko (2020) was used to identify dominant coping strategies. The questionnaire allows for the assessment of a wide range of stress responses, including the strategy of turning to religion as a means of coping with difficult life situations. The choice of this methodology is due to the fact that coping strategies are regarded in modern psychology as one of the key mechanisms of psychological resilience, since it is through them that the individual regulates emotional reactions and adapts to extreme stressful conditions.

The use of a set of complementary methods enabled a comprehensive analysis of the psychological resilience of combatants, combining an assessment of the level of combat stress as an indicator of adaptation to extreme conditions, the structure of individual religiosity as a worldview resource, and dominant coping strategies as behavioural mechanisms for overcoming stress. The following statistical methods were applied for data analysis:

1) Student's t-test and the Mann-Whitney U test – to compare indicators of individual religiosity and coping strategies between groups of combatants. The choice of parametric or non-parametric test was based on the assessment of distribution normality using skewness and kurtosis indices. The level of statistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$;

2) Pearson's χ^2 test – to determine the significance of differences in the frequency distribution of levels of combat stress. The formula for the test is: $\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$, where O_i represents observed frequencies and E_i expected frequencies;

3) Correlation analysis (Pearson's r) – to identify relationships between levels of individual religiosity, indicators of combat stress, and coping strategies;

4) Multiple regression analysis – to determine the influence of religious attitudes and coping strategies on the level of psychological resilience. The dependent variable was the level of combat-related psychological stress as an indicator of psychological resilience in military personnel, while the independent variables included indicators of individual religiosity and coping strategies.

For the group of religious combatants, a hierarchical approach was employed in constructing the regression model. Predictors were entered in successive blocks using the Enter method: at the first stage, constructive coping strategies ("active coping", "positive reappraisal", "acceptance") were included; at the second stage, additional variables were introduced, namely less adaptive coping strategies (in particular "denial" and "behavioural disengagement") and the "perception of religion as a source of moral norms". This approach made it possible to assess the contribution of the main adaptive mechanisms of psychological resilience in explaining the variance in combat stress and to examine the additional influence of other variables. For the group of non-religious combatants, all potential predictors were entered simultaneously using the Enter method, which allows for the identification of the strongest factors without prior categorisation of variables. The statistical parameters of the models for the non-religious group were $R = 0.62$; $R^2 = 0.39$; $F(2,50) = 10.45$; $p \leq 0.001$. For the religious group, the parameters were $R = 0.57$; $R^2 = 0.32$; $F(3,49) = 6.72$; $p \leq 0.05$. For each predictor, t-statistics and levels of statistical significance (p) were determined. Thus, the applied set of psychodiagnostic methods and mathematical-statistical techniques made it possible to conduct a comparative study of the psychological resilience of religious and non-religious combatants and to identify the structure of its predictors.

◆ Results and Discussion

In the first stage of the study, the validity of the common saying "there are no atheists in the trenches" was examined, and the specific features of religiosity among military personnel who are participants in combat operations were identified. For this purpose, the Individual Religiosity Test by Yu.V. Shcherbatykh was used, which allows for the assessment of both qualitative and quantitative characteristics of an individual's religious attitude. The results of the study of the structure of individual religiosity among combatants with different worldview orientations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Determining the structure of individual religiosity of military personnel – participants in combat operations with different worldview orientations

	Non-religious, %			Religious, %		
	High level	Medium level	Low level	High level	Medium level	Low level
1. Attitude towards religion as a philosophical concept	-	56.6	43.4	58.5	41.5	-
2. Attitude towards magic	-	16.9	83.1	18.9	62.2	18.9
3. Seeking support in religion	-	9.4	90.6	41.5	51	7.5
4. External religiosity	-	11.3	88.7	32.1	43.4	24.5
5. Interest in "pseudosciences"	-	13.2	86.8	30.2	62.3	7.5

Table 1. Continued

	Non-religious, %			Religious, %		
	High level	Medium level	Low level	High level	Medium level	Low level
6. Belief in a Creator and higher powers	-	11.3	88.7	16.9	49.5	33.6
7. Religious self-awareness	-	16.9	83.1	43.4	51	5.6
8. Perception of religion as a source of moral norms	-	15.1	84.9	73.6	26.4	-

Source: compiled by the authors

The results obtained indicate that a philosophical interpretation of religion is characteristic of representatives of both groups under study. For the majority of respondents, the concept of “sin” is viewed primarily as an ethical category, “salvation” as an existential idea, and “heaven” and “hell” as symbolic models of being. At the same time, the degree of such interpretation differs significantly between the groups. In the group of religious participants, high (58.5%) and medium (41.5%) levels of understanding of religious canons and religious explanations of the world predominate. In contrast, the non-religious group is characterised mainly by medium (56.6%) and low (43.4%) levels, indicating the presence of an intellectual interest in religious concepts even in the absence of personal belief. However, across other test scales, non-religious military personnel demonstrate predominantly low levels of individual religiosity. Testing the statistical significance of differences between the groups using Student’s t-test and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test confirmed a high level of significance ($p \leq 0.001$). The results allow the conclusion that combat experience does not lead to the automatic disappearance of atheistic beliefs; thus, the widespread sociocultural assumption of “total religiosity under combat conditions” is not empirically supported.

The analysis of the structure of religiosity also made it possible to identify specific features of combatants’ attitudes towards irrational phenomena. As magic is considered in the scientific tradition to be a historical precursor of religious beliefs, the findings confirm that religious individuals are somewhat more inclined to show interest in mysterious phenomena, in the perception of which faith plays a more significant role than rational or scientific explanation. In particular, belief in mystical phenomena and symbolic rituals is characteristic of 81.1% of religious participants in combat operations, predominantly at a medium level (62.2%). In contrast, non-religious military personnel demonstrate a predominantly sceptical attitude towards such phenomena: 83.1% of respondents in this group show low levels on the “attitude towards magic” scale. A similar pattern is observed for the “interest in pseudosciences” scale. As parascientific concepts are largely based on belief rather than scientific knowledge, they may also be considered a form of quasi-religious belief. Interest in ideas such as the “subtle energies” of the universe is reported by 92.5% of religious combatants, again predominantly at a medium level. At the same time, military personnel who are indifferent to religion display a much more critical attitude towards such concepts, as evidenced by low scores in 86.8% of representatives of this group.

Of particular interest is the scale “seeking support in religion”, which reflects the use of religious resources as a psychological mechanism for coping with difficult life situations. In the group of religious combatants, this orientation is represented predominantly at medium (51%) and high (41.5%) levels. At the same time, an important finding is the presence of a small proportion of religious individuals (7.5%) who do not use religious consolation in their personal coping experience. This indicates that even in the presence of a religious identity, turning to religion is not an automatic response in stressful situations. Among non-religious respondents, 9.4% demonstrated a medium level on this scale, which may indicate situational recourse to religious categories under conditions of extreme psycho-emotional strain. The analysis of external religiosity indicators showed that the performance of public religious rituals and the wearing of religious symbols are not dominant characteristics among the majority of religious combatants. In particular, low (24.5%) and medium (43.4%) levels on this scale were recorded in 67.9% of religious military personnel. This suggests that, for most participants in combat operations, intrinsic religiosity predominates, manifesting in a personal relationship with God rather than in demonstrative forms of religious behaviour (Allport & Ross, 1967).

A high level of external ritual expression is characteristic of only 32.1% of religious individuals. This distribution corresponds with Christian ethical principles, in which demonstrative use of religious symbols may be perceived as self-aggrandisement, contradicting the ideal of humility. By contrast, among non-religious military personnel, the overwhelming majority (88.7%) display low levels of external religiosity, confirming their distance from religious practice. The analysis of the scale “belief in a Creator and higher powers” revealed a certain paradox: 33.6% of religious respondents showed a low level on this indicator. A likely explanation lies in the wording of the scale. Within the Christian tradition, the concept of “higher powers” is often perceived as abstract or pantheistic, whereas believers typically adhere to the idea of a personal God. It is therefore unsurprising that 88.7% of non-religious respondents demonstrate low levels on this scale. The final test scales confirmed that religious self-awareness, understood as an internal need to find meaning in life through faith, is formed in 94.4% of religious respondents. At the same time, the commandments of God as a moral standard are recognised by 100% of this group (73.6% at a high level and 26.4% at a medium level). In contrast, the majority of non-religious combatants (84.9%) rely on autonomous secular ethical norms.

In summary, religious combatants tend to define their religiosity primarily as an internal theistic belief, clearly distinguishing it from magical or demonstrative forms of religiosity. At the same time, the presence of a substantial proportion of non-religious military personnel with low levels of individual religiosity confirms that combat experience does not lead to an automatic shift towards a theistic worldview. The next stage of the study involved examining the characteristics of combat stress experienced by military personnel participating in combat operations and identifying differences between the groups using the Combat Stress Questionnaire by O.A. Blinov. The integral indicator of combat stress in the groups of religious and non-religious combatants is presented in Figure 1.

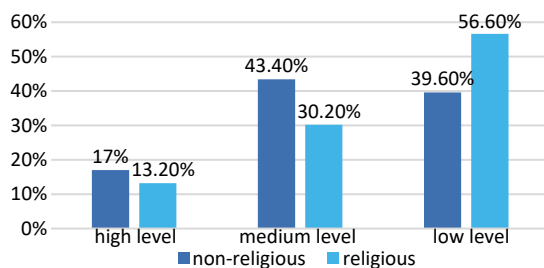


Figure 1. Assessment of combat stress levels among combatants who have taken part in combat operations with different worldview orientations

Source: compiled by the authors

According to the results of the assessment of the integral indicator of combat stress, a tendency towards a more stable psycho-emotional state was observed among religiously centred combatants. In particular, the group of religious participants showed a lower proportion of individuals with a high level of combat stress (13.2%) compared to non-religious military personnel (17%), as well as a significantly higher proportion with a low level of combat stress (56.6% versus 39.6% among non-religious individuals). As the distribution of values across the scales did not meet the criteria of normality, Pearson's χ^2 test was used to examine the statistical significance of differences between the groups. Despite noticeable differences in the distribution of raw indicators in favour of religious military personnel, the statistical analysis did not confirm significant differences between the groups in terms of combat stress levels ($p > 0.05$). This result is of fundamental importance for the interpretation of the psychological

resilience of combatants. It indicates that worldview identity in itself is not a direct factor in reducing the intensity of combat stress. At the same time, it may influence the structure of psychological resources through which a serviceman copes with extreme demands. To clarify this pattern, a correlation analysis of the relationships between the level of combat stress and indicators of individual religiosity was conducted. In the group of religious combatants, no statistically significant correlations between these variables were identified. This suggests that, for this group, religious faith functions as a relatively stable existential position that does not change situationally under the influence of combat events. A similar pattern was observed in the group of non-religious military personnel. The absence of significant correlations between combat stress levels and religiosity indicators confirms the autonomy of their psychological adaptation, which is based on secular mechanisms of coping with stress.

Thus, the results of the correlation analysis allow the conclusion that religiosity is not a direct determinant of psychological resilience; rather, its influence is manifested indirectly through the system of coping strategies and personal adaptive resources. To test this assumption, a multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the integral indicator of combat stress served as the dependent variable, and the scales of individual religiosity as independent variables. The results showed that, in the group of religious combatants, none of the individual religiosity scales acted as direct predictors of the level of combat stress. Thus, the comparatively lower stress levels observed among religious military personnel cannot be explained by the direct influence of religious consciousness. This leads to an important conclusion: religiosity does not function as a direct instrument for reducing combat stress, but may serve as a worldview resource that indirectly supports psychological resilience through other adaptive mechanisms. Such mechanisms may include coping strategies, personal characteristics, and social support resources. For this reason, the next stage of the study focused on examining differences in the selection of coping strategies for dealing with combat stress between religiously centred and non-religious combatants. For this purpose, the COPE inventory, adapted by Yu.V. Kovalenko (2020), was used; it allows for the assessment of a wide range of behavioural and cognitive strategies for coping with stressful situations, including religious coping. The results of the comparative analysis of coping strategies are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Coping strategies of military personnel participating in combat operations with different worldview orientations

	Non-religious		Religious		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotion-focused coping						
1. Positive reappraisal and personal growth	11.71	3.49	12.40	2.95	-1.10	0.274
2. Acceptance	11.19	3.52	12.82	2.74	-2.66	0.009**
3. Humour	11.08	3.14	10.17	3.44	1.42	0.158
4. Restraint	11.28	2.57	11.89	2.19	-1.31	0.193
Problem-focused coping						
5. Active coping	12.02	1.98	11.87	2.24	0.36	0.719

Table 2. Continued

	Non-religious		Religious		Table 2: Continued	
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Problem-focused coping						
6. Suppression of competing activities	11.70	2.49	12.73	2.76	-2.01	0.047*
7. Planning	12.39	3.16	11.33	3.58	1.62	0.108
Coping focused on social support						
8. Seeking emotional social support	10.65	3.67	12.04	3.63	-1.96	0.053
9. Use of instrumental social support	11.03	2.62	11.83	1.92	-1.79	0.076
10. Focus on emotions and emotional discharge	10.02	2.08	10.37	3.81	-0.59	0.556
Coping focused on avoidance						
11. Denial	7.41	2.02	8.26	2.70	-1.83	0.070
12. Behavioural disengagement	8.53	3.43	8.31	2.25	0.39	0.697
13. Use of "soothing" substances (alcohol, drugs)	4.75	2.28	5.31	2.14	-1.30	0.196
14. Mental disengagement from the problem	7.75	2.73	8.33	3.08	-1.02	0.310
Religious coping						
15. Religious coping	4.50	1.16	11.16	3.51	m13.12	<0.001**

Note: M – mean; SD – standard deviation

Source: compiled by the authors

The analysis of mean values showed that in both groups under study, coping strategies aimed at active problem-solving and regulation of emotional states predominate in stressful situations. Avoidance coping strategies were the least utilised, indicating an overall high level of professional adaptability among respondents and their orientation towards constructive ways of overcoming combat-related difficulties. To identify statistically significant differences between the groups, Student's t-test and the Mann-Whitney U test were applied. The analysis revealed significant differences across several coping strategies. First, statistically significant differences were found on the "religious coping" scale ($t = -13.12$; $p \leq 0.01$). Among non-religious military personnel, turning to God is one of the least frequently used strategies ($M = 4.57 \pm 1.16$) and is likely to be situational in nature. This is consistent with the findings of S.M. Horning *et al.* (2011), according to which, unlike convinced atheists, individuals with an agnostic position may turn to religious practices only under conditions of peak psycho-emotional strain. In contrast, for religious combatants, religious coping represents a much more integrated component of the behavioural repertoire ($M = 11.16 \pm 3.51$). High scores on this scale indicate that religious faith functions as a stable internal resource of psychological support, which can be used for meaning-making and emotional stabilisation. The second strategy showing statistically significant differences is "acceptance" ($t = -2.66$; $p \leq 0.01$). Religious military personnel demonstrate higher scores on this scale ($M = 12.82 \pm 2.74$) compared to non-religious individuals ($M = 11.19 \pm 3.52$). In this case, religious belief may act as a factor contributing to a more balanced attitude towards difficult life circumstances. Acceptance of a situation according to the principle "it is what it is" helps to reduce anxiety and allows psychological resources to be directed towards constructive action, rather than being expended on ineffective resistance to unchangeable conditions. At the same time, acceptance does not imply passivity or indifference but rather constitutes a

conscious acknowledgement of objective circumstances, as noted by M.M. Linehan (2014) and F. Dolcos *et al.* (2021).

Statistically significant differences were also identified on the "suppression of competing activities" scale ($t = -2.01$; $p \leq 0.05$). Religious combatants use this strategy more frequently ($M = 12.73 \pm 2.76$) than non-religious individuals ($M = 11.70 \pm 2.49$). This coping strategy involves the ability to temporarily ignore distractions in order to concentrate on the execution of an important task. It may be assumed that this skill is partly associated with experience of religious practices, particularly prayer and liturgical rituals, which require a high level of attentional focus. Studies by H. Adams *et al.* (2017) and S. Pazer (2024) have shown that regular spiritual practices may contribute to the development of attentional focus and cognitive control. Overall, the analysis of coping strategy indicators makes it possible to outline the specific features of psychological resilience in each of the groups studied. The most frequently used strategies among religious participants are "acceptance" ($M = 12.82$), "suppression of competing activities" ($M = 12.73$), and "positive reappraisal and personal growth" ($M = 12.40 \pm 2.95$). These strategies constitute an important component of the psychological resilience of religiously centred military personnel.

The capacity for positive reappraisal of difficulties is likely facilitated by a specific worldview orientation towards finding meaning in suffering. In this context, difficult life events may be interpreted not merely as random occurrences, but as part of a broader life experience or a form of spiritual trial. This position is consistent with the principles of logotherapy proposed by V.E. Frankl (1969), according to which the experience of suffering may be transformed into a resource for personal growth if it acquires meaning. In addition, religious combatants actively employ the strategy of "seeking emotional and social support" ($M = 12.04 \pm 3.63$). This may be related to the specific nature of religious communities (gatherings for worship, prayer, religious practices, and general interaction),

where shared values and practices of mutual assistance foster an atmosphere of trust and support. Religious doctrines often conceptualise mutual aid as a moral norm; thus, seeking support is not perceived as a sign of weakness but as a natural element of “spiritual solidarity” (Jablonska, 2022; VanderWeele, 2025; Prati, 2025). At the same time, the findings revealed an important feature: although, according to the methodology of Yu.V. Shcherbatykh, religion serves as a significant worldview orientation for the majority of religious combatants (41.5% – high level of seeking support in religion; 51% – medium), within the structure of actual behaviour measured by the COPE inventory, religious coping does not occupy a leading position. Under real combat conditions, greater priority is given to strategies such as “acceptance”, “positive reappraisal”, “suppression of competing activities”, “restraint”, and “active coping”. This indicates that religiosity among religious combatants functions rather as a background existential resource supporting the overall system of adaptation, whereas the immediate management of acute combat stress is carried out through instrumental and social coping strategies.

The coping behaviour of non-religious combatants is characterised by the predominance of rational strategies, particularly “planning” ($M = 12.39 \pm 3.16$) and “active coping” ($M = 12.02 \pm 3.16$). This reflects an orientation towards rational analysis of situations and an effort to modify circumstances through one’s own actions and professional skills. Comparative analysis showed that the strategy of “humour” is used more frequently by non-religious combatants ($M = 11.08 \pm 3.14$) than by representatives of the religiously centred group

($M = 10.17 \pm 3.44$). This difference can be explained by variations in the structure of psychological resilience resources: whereas the adaptive potential of religious individuals is reinforced by specific forms of religious coping (such as prayer or interpreting events as “the will of God”), non-religious military personnel rely more heavily on secular mechanisms of emotional regulation, including humour. Although both groups use humour as a means of reducing anxiety and protecting psychological well-being, its use in extreme situations among religious individuals may be constrained by internalised norms of seriousness and humility derived from religious-ethical principles (Horning, 2011; Dolcos, 2021; Prieto, 2021). In contrast, for non-religious military personnel, humour may function as a form of emotional buffering, enabling temporary distancing from traumatic experience. An important characteristic of both groups is that the least frequently used strategy was the “use of soothing substances” (religious: $M = 5.31 \pm 2.14$; non-religious: $M = 4.75 \pm 2.28$). The low level of reliance on addictive forms of emotional regulation may be interpreted as an indicator of a relatively high level of psychological adaptation among respondents, regardless of their worldview orientation. The next stage of the study involved identifying predictors of psychological resilience among military personnel with different worldview orientations. The use of multiple regression analysis made it possible not only to establish differences between the groups but also to determine the structure of factors that shape psychological resilience within each worldview model. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Predictors of the psychological resilience of military personnel participating in combat operations with different worldview orientations (results of multiple regression analysis)

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Standard error	Beta (β)		
Non-religious*					
(Constant)	12.457	2.159		5.797	0.353
Active coping	-0.650	0.129	-0.443	-4.211	0.002
Denial	0.484	0.149	0.367	2.893	0.039
Religious**					
(Constant)	18.647	3.849		4.951	0.149
Use of emotional social support	-0.849	0.272	-0.480	-3.126	0.003
Positive reappraisal	-0.314	0.128	-0.349	-2.453	0.026
Perception of religion as a source of moral norms	-0.268	0.127	-0.271	-2.118	0.039

Note: B – unstandardised regression coefficient; Beta (β) – standardised regression coefficient

Source: compiled by the authors

The obtained regression models allow psychological resilience in combatants to be interpreted as a system of diverse adaptive mechanisms that form distinct structures for coping with combat stress. The results of the multiple regression analysis in the group of non-religious combatants made it possible to construct a statistically significant model ($R = 0.62$; $R^2 = 0.39$; $F(2,50) = 10.45$; $p \leq 0.001$), which explains 39% of the variance in the integral indicator of combat stress. The predictor structure included two coping strategies: “active coping” ($\beta = -0.443$; $p = 0.002$)

and “denial” ($\beta = 0.367$; $p = 0.039$). The negative coefficient for “active coping” indicates its adaptive function: the more actively a service member employs this strategy, the lower their level of experienced combat stress. Thus, “active coping” functions as a key psychological resource of resilience among non-religious combatants. At the same time, the identified positive relationship between combat stress and “denial” suggests that, when rational resources of control and action are depleted, non-religious combatants tend to resort to defensive avoidance of reality. This

strategy reveals a “vulnerable point” in their system of psychological defence: when active action becomes impossible, the psyche shifts towards denial of traumatic events, which may increase the risk of sudden psychological breakdown, the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and loss of operational effectiveness.

The coping strategy of “active coping” is a fundamental professional-adaptive survival strategy for non-religious combatants. During direct task performance (such as engineering fortifications, maintaining weapons, or executing tactical operations), the cognitive system shifts from a mode of being a “passive object of circumstances” to that of an “active agent of action”. This significantly reduces subjective anxiety, as attention is redirected from diffuse danger to a concrete course of action. Physical and intellectual activity in this context displaces destructive emotional experiences, implementing a pragmatic orientation: “I am doing everything possible to control the situation.” It is precisely this focus on directly changing circumstances that makes “active coping” the most powerful constructive predictor of psychological resilience in the non-religious group. However, when rational methods of control are exhausted and the situation becomes uncontrollable, “denial” emerges as a compensatory mechanism. The identified direct relationship between this strategy and combat stress in the non-religious group can be explained by several factors. Firstly, cognitive overload. Extreme combat factors (heavy shelling, the death of comrades, widespread destruction) create a flood of overwhelming stimuli that exceeds the mind’s capacity to process trauma. According to O.A. Blinov’s (2020) concept, the brain loses the ability to logically structure the volume of traumatic events. “Denial” becomes an “emergency filter”, blocking the perception of what cannot be processed rationally. Secondly, this is a reaction to a loss of control. For a non-religious combatant, the main source of resilience is confidence in one’s own agency and professionalism. However, in a situation of uncontrolled fire, this control can break down, giving rise to a state of helplessness. The psyche then adopts defensive avoidance of reality, creating an illusion of safety where rational methods of protection are no longer effective. Third, it corresponds to a phase of “shock freezing”, in which denial helps an individual endure loss and grief (Kübler-Ross, 1969). For non-religious fighters, who lack a religious framework for interpreting death as transition or trial, the loss of a comrade may appear as absolute and meaningless. In the absence of mechanisms for existential acceptance of mortality within their worldview, denial (“this could not have happened”, “this is not happening to us”) becomes the only way to temporarily halt emotional shock. According to the theory of S.E. Hobfoll (1998), such a strategy allows the maintenance of operational functioning through distancing from trauma; however, it creates a dangerous “loss spiral” of internal resources, as psychological energy is expended not on processing experience but on sustaining the illusion of its absence, thereby increasing the likelihood of subsequent psychological complications.

Correlation analysis in the group of non-religious service personnel further confirmed this relationship. In addition to a significant correlation between the level of combat stress and the coping strategy of “denial” ($r = 0.61$; $p \leq 0.001$), significant associations were also found with “behavioural disengagement from the problem” ($r = 0.53$; $p \leq 0.001$) and “mental distraction from problems” ($r = 0.38$; $p \leq 0.05$). These results indicate that when the adaptive capacity of the psyche is exceeded, non-religious combatants may shift from active coping strategies to mechanisms of psychological distancing from the problem situation. Such dynamics may be interpreted as an indicator of depletion of adaptive potential and a signal of the need for timely psychological support. A similar regression analysis in the group of religiously centred combatants made it possible to construct a statistically significant model ($R = 0.57$; $R^2 = 0.32$; $F(3,49) = 6.72$; $p \leq 0.05$), which explains 32% of the variance in the integral indicator of combat stress. The predictor structure in this group included: “use of emotional and social support” ($\beta = -0.480$; $p = 0.003$), “positive reappraisal” ($\beta = -0.349$; $p = 0.026$), and the individual religiosity indicator “perception of religion as a source of moral norms” ($\beta = -0.271$; $p = 0.039$). The negative coefficients of all predictors indicate their adaptive function: higher values on these variables are associated with lower levels of experienced combat stress. The strongest predictor in this model is “emotional and social support”, which is also confirmed by the strongest inverse correlation with combat stress ($r = -0.69$; $p \leq 0.001$). This suggests that for religious combatants, the ability to share experiences with others who share their values and worldview constitutes one of the key resources of psychological stabilisation, highlighting the importance of religious community and the institution of chaplaincy within their resilience system.

The religious environment creates a space of “spiritual solidarity”, where seeking help is perceived not as a sign of weakness but as the enactment of a moral imperative of mutual support, functioning as a principal antidote to social isolation in wartime conditions. The second important component of this model is “positive reappraisal”, which enables a transformation in the interpretation of difficult events and represents a dynamic process of reframing extreme experience. While the rational coping strategies of non-religious individuals are directed towards changing external circumstances, religiously centred reframing alters the internal attitude towards threat. This produces an effect of “cognitive immunity”: combat stress is no longer perceived as uncontrollable chaos that destroys the individual, but instead acquires the status of a “manageable trial”. Owing to its close association with the coping strategy of “acceptance” (only in the religious group was a statistically significant relationship found between “positive reappraisal” and “acceptance”: $r = 0.58$; $p \leq 0.05$), positive reappraisal enables the combatant to avoid expending psychological energy on futile resistance to the inevitable. The third component is the “perception of religion as a source of moral

norms”, which forms the value-based foundation of psychological resilience among religious combatants. For such individuals, commandments and ethical doctrines constitute an internal framework that provides moral legitimisation of their presence in war. This mechanism does not function as a “permission to kill”, but rather as a hierarchical structuring of moral principles: the foundational moral absolute “thou shalt not kill” enters into dialogue with a higher

imperative of sacrificial love for one’s neighbour. Within this ethical paradigm, military service is interpreted as a struggle against evil, and weapons are understood as instruments of protecting life. A comparative analysis of the regression models leads to the conclusion that, despite the absence of statistically significant differences in levels of combat stress, the psychological mechanisms of coping differ substantially between religious and non-religious combatants (Fig. 2).

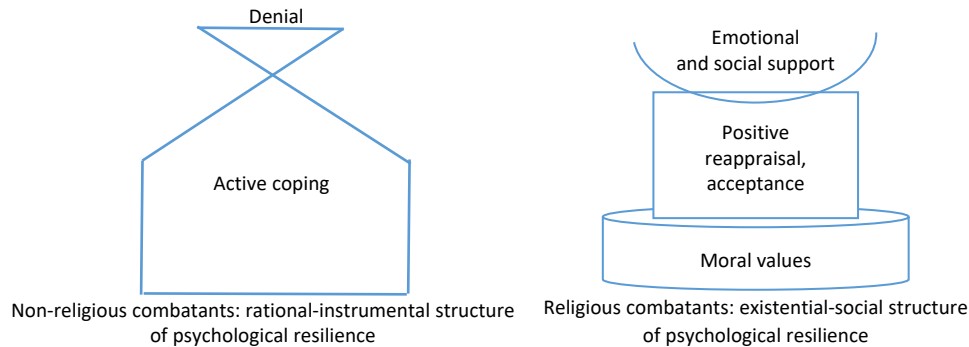


Figure 2. Graphical models of the predictor structure of psychological resilience of military personnel participating in combat operations with different worldview orientations

Source: compiled by the authors

Summarising the results of the study, it can be stated that, despite the absence of statistically significant differences in levels of combat stress between religious and non-religious combatants, the mechanisms underlying their psychological resilience differ substantially. The analysis of coping strategies and regression models demonstrated that the worldview orientation of service personnel determines the structure of psychological resources through which adaptation to combat stress occurs. The findings suggest the existence of two distinct models of psychological resilience among combatants. Among non-religious service personnel, a rational-instrumental structure of coping with combat stress is formed, in which the central resource is the coping strategy of “active coping”. Within this model, psychological resilience is maintained through an orientation towards one’s own actions, professional competence, and the effort to exert direct influence over events. In situations where the capacity for active control diminishes, the coping strategy of “denial” may serve as a compensatory mechanism, temporarily reducing the intensity of emotional experiences. In contrast, religiously centred service personnel are characterised by an existential-social structure of psychological resilience. In this case, value-based and meaning-oriented frameworks associated with religious beliefs play a crucial role, alongside social support and the capacity for positive reappraisal of life events. The combination of these factors creates a system of internal and interpersonal resources that facilitate the integration of traumatic experience into a coherent worldview and reduce the intensity of combat stress.

The results of the present study are consistent with the findings of other researchers who have examined

the determinants of psychological resilience in relation to religiosity and coping strategies among combatants. K.I. Pargament (2011) developed a conceptual framework in which religiosity does not function as a direct, isolated protective factor but rather as “positive religious coping”, which serves the function of meaning-making in response to stress. Faith enables individuals to perceive traumatic events not as chaos but as part of a coherent and meaningful worldview. This fully corresponds with the findings, particularly the absence of a direct linear correlation between levels of combat stress and indicators of religiosity. O.A. Blinov (2020) established that the integral indicator of combat stress is largely determined by objective factors of danger and the level of professional training, while worldview identity functions as an individual precondition for adaptation rather than its direct cause. The absence of statistically significant differences in combat stress levels between religious and non-religious combatants identified in current study (based on Pearson’s χ^2 test) is fully consistent with these conclusions. In the works of I. Prykhodko *et al.* (2019; 2024), it is argued that successful psychological adaptation of service personnel in conditions of modern high-intensity warfare is primarily determined by the individual’s ability to shift from passive or purely emotional reactions to problem-focused coping strategies. The findings of the present study support this proposition: both groups demonstrated low reliance on avoidance strategies and a high significance of instrumental methods of coping with stress. In particular, the mechanism of “active coping” identified among non-religious combatants corresponds to the “active-operational type of adaptation” described by I. Prykhodko *et al.*, in which resilience is grounded in

professional competence and clearly defined action algorithms. At the same time, the prominent role of “social support” and “acceptance” among religious service personnel aligns with the researcher’s conclusions regarding the importance of “socio-psychological cohesion” within military units as a collective survival resource. Thus, the results of this study extend the propositions of the aforementioned authors by demonstrating that, while the professional identity of the combatant constitutes the fundamental vector of resilience, its internal structure varies significantly depending on worldview orientation.

If adaptation in non-religious combatants is grounded in individual rational-instrumental control, then for religious combatants it is realised through engagement with a collective value-based resource (chaplaincy and community). In both cases, this ensures an adequate level of operational effectiveness under extreme conditions. The identified role of the coping strategies “positive reappraisal” and “acceptance” as key stabilisers of the emotional state of religious combatants is consistent with the concept of “active acceptance” described by S.M. Southwick & D.S. Charney (2012). In their study of the factors of psychological resilience, the authors demonstrated that religious faith enables individuals to cognitively reappraise danger: instead of exhausting resistance to unavoidable circumstances, the combatant accepts them as a difficult but meaningful part of existence. This is not passivity, but rather a mechanism for preserving internal resources, preventing emotional decompensation, and enabling the individual to find higher meaning in a combat situation. The complete recognition of divine commandments as an ethical reference point, identified in the study, along with the significance of the regression predictor “moral norms”, provides direct empirical evidence that the moral factor constitutes the foundation of psychological resilience among religious combatants, upon which the entire structure of their coping mechanisms is built. The stability of non-religious identity among 50% of the combatants in the sample, along with their high level of adaptability, is consistent with the concept of “secular resilience” proposed by P. Zuckerman (2016). The author challenged the notion of atheists’ vulnerability in crisis situations, demonstrating that the absence of religious belief may be compensated by “pragmatic realism”. The results of the present study support this theory: the predictor “active coping” ($\beta = -0.443$) indicates that a non-religious worldview provides an autonomous system of resources in which adaptive potential is grounded in rational control and professional competence, and is not inferior in effectiveness to the religious model of psychological adaptation. The obtained results made it possible to formulate a number of practical recommendations for specialists in psychological services and military chaplains regarding the organisation of psychological support for service personnel with different worldview orientations:

1. Differentiated approach to assessment and forecasting. For non-religious combatants, particular attention should be paid to monitoring the coping strategy of

“denial”. The intensification of this mechanism should be interpreted not as an adaptive response, but as an indicator of critical depletion of the rational resource of “active coping”. Statements such as “this could not have happened” or “this is not happening to me” signal a transition to a phase of shock decompensation. Psychological support should focus on the professional facilitation of processing loss-related trauma and on preventing the chronicisation of depressive states and the development of PTSD. For religious combatants, priority should be given to monitoring the level of social integration and the stability of emotional support within the unit, as these factors represent the most powerful resource of their psychological resilience. Signs of social withdrawal, loss of “spiritual solidarity”, or disruption of moral frameworks and the capacity for positive reappraisal (a “crisis of meaning”) indicate critical resource depletion and a potential risk of moral injury. Such cases require coordinated work between a psychologist and a chaplain to restore the socio-existential structure of the servicemember’s psychological resilience.

2. Strengthening the rational-instrumental structure of resilience (for non-religious combatants). Since “active coping” is the primary predictor in this group, interventions should aim to reinforce the subjective sense of control over the situation. This can be achieved through detailed briefing on operational tasks, clear distribution of responsibilities, and continuous development of professional skills according to the principle of “control through competence”. This approach minimises uncertainty and prevents the shift towards maladaptive denial, allowing the combatant to remain an active agent even under critical conditions.

3. Work with the socio-existential structure of resilience (for religious combatants). Given that “emotional-social support” is the strongest predictor of resilience in this group ($\beta = -0.480$; $p = 0.003$), it is necessary to encourage the formation of support groups and involvement in shared religious or value-based practices. This strengthens the sense of “spiritual solidarity”, which serves as a key buffer against combat stress. At the same time, psychological and chaplaincy support should promote the development of coping strategies such as “positive reappraisal” and “acceptance” through the activation of narratives centred on the higher meaning of service. Such a comprehensive approach enables the combatant not only to withstand stress but also to integrate traumatic experiences into a coherent and meaningful life framework.

4. Development of flexible coping skills and communication. For both groups, training in psychological mutual support and unit cohesion is recommended, including mastery of battlefield psychological first aid algorithms (e.g., ICOVER, MARCH-P protocols). This allows religious combatants to effectively utilise their primary resource – social support – through practical assistance to fellow soldiers. For non-religious combatants, these algorithms serve as an additional tool of “active coping”, structuring behaviour under conditions of uncertainty and preventing maladaptive denial in critical situations.

5. Optimisation of psychologist-chaplain interaction. Effective support within a unit should be based on functional cooperation and a clear division of roles: the military psychologist focuses on strengthening the rational-instrumental structure of resilience (active coping, planning, rational adaptation), while the chaplain focuses on reinforcing the existential-social foundation (activation of moral norms, positive reappraisal of traumatic experience, and meaning-oriented acceptance of circumstances). This approach ensures comprehensive psychological support across all levels, regardless of the service-members' worldview orientation.

Thus, the results of the study indicate that the psychological resilience of combatants is shaped not only by individual personal resources, but also by a system of worldview beliefs that determine the nature of coping behaviour and the ways in which traumatic combat experience is interpreted.

◆ Conclusions

The obtained results refuted the widespread sociocultural stereotype that “there are no atheists in the trenches” and the assumption of a total conversion of military personnel to religion during war. It was established that low levels of individual religiosity among non-religious combatants indicated that combat experience in itself did not lead to an automatic shift in worldview identity towards a theistic one. At the same time, religiously centred participants in combat operations demonstrated a predominance of intrinsic religiosity and personal experience of faith over external ritual practices, whereas among non-religious individuals only a small proportion (9.4%) occasionally turned to religious categories in critical psychological situations. Coping behaviour and psychological resilience were analysed. It was found that both groups predominantly employed problem-focused strategies, reflecting a high level of professional adaptability. Among non-religious combatants, “planning” and “active coping” were dominant, whereas among religiously centred individuals the leading strategies included “acceptance”, “positive reappraisal”, “suppression of competing activities”, and “seeking emotional and social support”.

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A fundamental difference in the orientation of adaptive mechanisms was identified: non-religious military personnel were oriented towards rational control and modification of external circumstances, whereas religiously centred individuals focused on meaning-making and the mobilisation of social support. The indirect influence of religiosity was also examined: it did not directly reduce levels of combat stress but operated through the formation of a specific structure of coping resources. For religious combatants, religion functioned as a stable existential resource that supported positive reappraisal, acceptance of circumstances, and the integration of traumatic experience, whereas among non-religious individuals psychological resilience was grounded in rational mechanisms of control and active engagement. A comparative analysis of regression models made it possible to distinguish two structures of psychological resilience: a rational-instrumental structure among non-religious combatants and an existential-social structure among religiously centred combatants. The analysis of individual religiosity demonstrated that religiosity primarily performed a worldview and moral function and did not always translate into direct coping strategies. The findings made it possible to formulate recommendations for military psychologists and chaplains regarding differentiated support for military personnel with different worldview orientations, the strengthening of rational-instrumental and existential-social structures of psychological resilience, and the development of flexible coping skills. Further research may focus on the interaction between psychologists and chaplains in supporting the resilience of military personnel, the role of specific coping strategies among religious combatants, and the development of training programmes that integrate psychological and chaplaincy practices to enhance internal resilience resources.

◆ Acknowledgements

None.

◆ Funding

None.

◆ Conflict of Interest

None.

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Релігійність і копінг-стратегії як детермінанти психологічної стійкості комбатантів: порівняльна модель адаптації

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✦ **Анотація.** У статті представлено результати емпіричного дослідження ролі релігійності та копінг-стратегій у формуванні психологічної стійкості військовослужбовців – учасників бойових дій. Актуальність зумовлена необхідністю пошуку ефективних психологічних ресурсів адаптації особового складу в умовах тривалого бойового стресу. Метою роботи було дослідження структури предикторів психологічної стійкості військовослужбовців із різним типом світоглядної ідентифікації та визначення ролі релігійності й копінг-стратегій у процесі адаптації до екстремальних умов. У дослідженні взяли участь 106 військовослужбовців Збройних Сил України – учасників бойових дій, які були розподілені на дві групи за типом світоглядної орієнтації: релігійно-центровані та позарелігійні комбатанти. Для збору емпіричних даних використано тест індивідуальної релігійності Ю. В. Щербатих, опитувальник бойового стресу О. А. Блінова та методику COPE. Обробка результатів здійснювалася із застосуванням кореляційного та множинного регресійного аналізу. Отримані дані засвідчили стабільність світоглядних установок військовослужбовців та відсутність статистично значущих відмінностей у рівнях бойового стресу між віруючими і позарелігійними комбатантами. Водночас виявлено суттєві відмінності у структурі копінг-стратегій. У позарелігійних військовослужбовців провідну роль відіграють раціонально-інструментальні механізми подолання стресу, насамперед «активне подолання» та «планування». У релігійно-центрованих комбатантів домінують стратегії: «позитивна переоцінка», «прийняття» ситуації та «пошук емоційно-соціальної підтримки». Результати дослідження засвідчили існування двох різних структур психологічної стійкості комбатантів, які формуються залежно від їхньої світоглядної орієнтації. Для позарелігійних комбатантів характерна раціонально-інструментальна модель подолання бойового стресу, тоді як для релігійно-центрованих – екзистенційно-соціальна модель психологічної адаптації. Встановлено, що релігійність не виступає прямим чинником зниження бойового стресу, але опосередковано впливає на вибір адаптивних копінг-стратегій та способи інтерпретації травматичного досвіду. Практична значущість дослідження полягає у можливості використання отриманих результатів для розробки диференційованих підходів до психологічного супроводу військовослужбовців із різною світоглядною орієнтацією та вдосконалення взаємодії військових психологів і капеланів у системі підтримки психологічної стійкості особового складу

✦ **Ключові слова:** позитивна переоцінка; прийняття; моральна травма; соціальна підтримка; капеланство; бойовий стрес