

Socio-Psychological Predictors of Developing Meta-Communicative Competencies in Future Officers: The Role of Emotional Intelligence, Communicative Adaptability, And Social Identification

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Abstract

The development of meta-communicative competencies in future officers is one of the crucial directions of modern military education. This article highlights the essence of meta-communicative competencies and the socio-psychological factors influencing their formation. It analyzes the role of emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification in enabling future officers to conduct effective communication, accurately assess professional situations, establish mutual cooperation within a team, and ensure communicative effectiveness in service activities. Furthermore, the correlation between these factors and meta-communicative competencies is explained based on scientific sources, and modern approaches aimed at their development are outlined.

Keywords: Future officer, meta-communicative competence, emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, social identification, socio-psychological predictors, military education, professional competence, interpersonal communication, communicative activity.

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1. Introduction

Globalization and changes in the modern security environment impose new requirements on the military training system. Today, a future officer must possess not only deep professional knowledge and practical skills, but also competencies to conduct effective communication in various service situations, coordinate team activities, constructively resolve conflict situations, and consciously manage their own communicative behavior. From this perspective, meta-communicative

competencies hold special significance as an essential component of the professional preparedness of future officers.

Meta-communicative competencies express an individual's ability to perceive, analyze, manage, and, if necessary, effectively organize the communication process. These competencies serve as an important factor in service activities for delivering information accurately, correctly assessing the psychological state of communication participants, strengthening mutual trust

and cooperation, and ensuring the effectiveness of leadership activities. Particularly in military units, the sufficient development of meta-communicative competencies is of special importance in the processes of decision-making, conveying orders, and ensuring service discipline.

The formation of meta-communicative competencies is determined by numerous socio-psychological factors. Specifically, while emotional intelligence expands an individual's capabilities to perceive and manage their own emotions and the emotional states of others, communicative adaptability serves to select effective communication strategies in various social and professional situations. Social identification, on the other hand, helps an individual accept the values of the military collective, develop professional self-awareness, and strengthen team cooperation. Harmoniously combined, these factors manifest as key socio-psychological predictors for developing the meta-communicative competencies of future officers.

Therefore, deeply studying the socio-psychological factors influencing the development of meta-communicative competencies in higher military educational institutions, determining their interrelationships, and applying them to the practical educational process are of current scientific and practical importance. Research in this direction serves to enhance the professional competence of future officers, develop their leadership potential, and improve the quality of modern military education.

2. Method

In modern psychological research, it is emphasized that the development of meta-communicative competencies is intrinsically linked with an individual's emotional, communicative, and social characteristics. In particular, in the professional training of future officers, emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification are recognized as the primary socio-psychological predictors influencing the formation of meta-communicative competencies.

The founders of emotional intelligence theory, P. Salovey and J. Mayer, explain emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to identify, understand, manage, and utilize their own and others' emotions to enhance activity efficiency[1]. Furthermore, D. Goleman developed this theory by highlighting the core components of emotional intelligence, such as self-

awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. In his view, empathy and social skills in leadership and military management activities are considered among the main factors of effective communication and team management[2]. Thus, the development of emotional intelligence in future officers serves as an important psychological foundation for meta-communicative competence.

In studies dedicated to communicative adaptability, D. Hymes emphasizes that communicative competence is not limited to knowing language norms, but also includes the ability to organize communication appropriately according to various situations [3]. C. Rogers points to empathy, congruence (genuineness), and respect for the interlocutor as the psychological factors of effective communication[4]. According to M. Argyle, communicative behavior is a system of learned social skills, where adapting to the situation, listening, feedback, and the effective use of verbal and non-verbal means determine communication success[5]. These approaches constitute the theoretical basis for rapidly adapting to various service situations and establishing effective communication in officer activities.

Representatives of social identity theory, H. Tajfel and J. Turner, scientifically substantiated that an individual's self-perception as a member of a specific social group directly affects their values, behavior, and communication style[6]. As a cadet's professional identity as a "future officer" develops in a military educational institution, their loyalty to the collective, responsibility, leadership qualities, and meta-communicative behaviors also develop. For this reason, social identification is evaluated as an important socio-psychological factor of meta-communicative competence.

G. Bateson, the founder of meta-communication theory, emphasizes that in the process of communication, besides the content of information, there are secondary signals that indicate how this information should be interpreted [7]. P. Watzlawick shows that any communication consists of content and relationship levels, and it is precisely the relationship level that determines meta-communicative processes [8]. These views serve as an important methodological foundation in explaining the effectiveness of orders, tasks, and service communication in military command.

Additionally, according to A. Bandura's social-cognitive theory, an individual's behavior develops through

observation, modeling, and belief in self-efficacy [9]. In the military education system, cadets acquire meta-communicative competencies by observing the communicative behavior of experienced commanders and instructors. K. Lewin, in group dynamics theory, substantiated that the group atmosphere, leadership, and intragroup interaction exert a strong influence on an individual's communicative development (Lewin, 1947).

Overall, analysis shows that while emotional intelligence serves the future officer in managing their own and others' emotional states, communicative adaptability ensures effective communication in various service situations, and social identification shapes professional identity while strengthening team cooperation. Integrated together, these three factors act as crucial socio-psychological predictors ensuring the development of meta-communicative competence. Therefore, the comprehensive development of these factors during the training of future officers is an essential prerequisite for increasing professional competence and management efficiency.

Identifying the factors influencing the development of meta-communicative competencies is one of the important scientific and practical directions in the professional training of future officers. Modern socio-psychological research demonstrates that meta-communicative competencies are formed not only in connection with communicative skills, but also in close connection with an individual's emotional, social, and psychological traits. From this perspective, emotional

intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification are viewed as key socio-psychological predictors enabling future officers to organize effective communication in service activities, adapt to various service situations, engage in constructive cooperation with the team, and correctly perceive and rationally utilize subtle communicative signals in management processes.

These predictors are intrinsically interconnected, with each developing a specific structural aspect of meta-communicative competence. Specifically, while emotional intelligence provides the perception and management of emotional states, communicative adaptability allows for the effective selection of communication strategies in various service situations. Social identification, through shaping an individual's professional identity, enhancing the sense of belonging to the team, and internalizing service values, contributes to the sustainable development of meta-communicative competencies. Hence, systematically analyzing these factors holds significant importance in defining the theoretical and practical foundations for developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers.

The table below systematically presents the socio-psychological predictors of developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers: the role of emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification, alongside key scholars who advanced scientific views in this field.

Table 1

Socio-psychological predictors of developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers: the role of emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification

Socio-Psychological Predictor	Content / Description	Impact on Meta-Communicative Competence & Key Scholars / Sources
Emotional Intelligence	The ability of an individual to perceive, assess, manage, and effectively utilize their own and others' emotions in activities.	Develops empathy, strengthens emotional self-control, helps resolve conflicts constructively, and aids in understanding and managing implicit meanings in communication.
Communicative Adaptability	The ability to adjust communication style, strategy, and behavior in accordance with situational demands across various social and professional contexts.	Ensures effective communication in diverse service scenarios within military duty, enabling accurate interpretation of verbal and non-verbal signals and management of meta-communicative messages.

Social Identification	An individual's self-perception as a member of a specific social and professional group and internalization of group values.	Shapes professional identity, enhances loyalty to the collective, boosts mutual trust, and increases the efficiency of service communication.
Meta-Communication	A system of signals during communication that determines not only the content of information, but also how it should be received and interpreted.	Fosters the understanding and management of implicit meanings, attitudes, and intentions in orders, assignments, and official communication.
Social Learning & Group Dynamics	Development of professional competencies through observation, modeling, intragroup interaction, and leadership processes.	Meta-communicative behavior is formed by observing experienced officers, while teamwork and leadership skills are actively cultivated.

The table data indicates that developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers is a multi-factorial socio-psychological process. While emotional intelligence serves to manage the emotional aspects of communication effectively, communicative adaptability enables the organization of communication in accordance with diverse service situations. Social identification reinforces the officer's professional self-identity, sense of group belonging, and dedication to service values. Meanwhile, meta-communication theory enhances interaction effectiveness in service activities by clarifying implicit content and relationship levels. Simultaneously, social learning and group dynamics contribute to shaping meta-communicative competencies as cadets observe experienced commanders and engage in teamwork. The harmonious integration of these predictors constitutes an essential condition for fostering effective management, leadership, and communication competencies necessary for military-professional activity.

3. Conclusion

The process of developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers represents a complex socio-psychological system where an individual's emotional, communicative, and social traits manifest in an integrated manner. Theoretical analysis demonstrates that emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification constitute the primary socio-psychological predictors in forming these competencies.

Emotional intelligence expands future officers' capabilities to manage their emotional state, comprehend

the emotional experiences of their interlocutor, and display empathy and social sensitivity. This serves to establish effective communication, manage conflict situations, and enhance the efficacy of leadership communication during service activities.

Communicative adaptability, on the other hand, determines officers' ability to adjust communication strategies across varied social and professional situations, accurately interpret verbal and non-verbal information, and effectively organize cooperation during service processes. This quality is regarded as one of the practical implementation mechanisms of meta-communicative competence.

Social identification ensures the formation of a future officer's professional identity, fosters a sense of belonging to the military collective, promotes the internalization of shared values, and guarantees active, responsible participation in team activities. An individual's self-awareness as a representative of a professional group positively impacts their communicative behavior and service relationships.

Thus, developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers is not limited to cultivating basic communicative skills; it demands the comprehensive development of emotional self-regulation, social adaptation, and professional identification processes. The harmonious development of these factors stands as an essential psychological condition for increasing officers' leadership potential, managerial competence, and service efficiency.

4. Recommendations

Based on the role of socio-psychological predictors—emotional intelligence, communicative adaptability, and social identification—in developing meta-communicative competencies in future officers, the following recommendations are proposed:

it is recommended to introduce psychological training programs aimed at developing emotional intelligence into the military education process. Particular attention should be paid to developing skills in self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and effective communication in stressful situations;

the practical training system should be improved to form communicative adaptability among future officers. Specifically, role-playing games, service situation modeling, negotiations, and exercises on conflict resolution yield highly effective results;

educational and psychological activities aimed at fostering professional social identification should be strengthened. Focus should be placed on military professional values, collective responsibility, leadership, and service ethics;

the use of psychodiagnostic tools to assess meta-communicative competencies is recommended. Diagnostic methodologies for determining levels of emotional intelligence, communicative ability, empathy, and social adaptation enable the design of individual development trajectories for future officers;

it is necessary to reinforce the role of military educators and commanders as communicative role models. Future officers effectively master meta-communicative skills by observing the communication styles, managerial culture, and service behavior of experienced leaders;

it is advisable to establish "meta-communicative competence" as a distinct professional-psychological competence within future officer training curricula. This will enhance future officers' capabilities in managerial activities, teamwork, and effective decision-making during complex service situations.

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