OPINIONS ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BIO-PSYCHO-PHYSICAL COMPONENT IN MILITARY CONFRONTATIONS CARRIED OUT IN EXTREME CONDITIONS

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Abstract: *The adaptation of the fighter to the combat situations within the different missions, as well as the need to face any request coming up during the confrontations, imposes an extremely complex training system. Having an essential role in combat, the fighter must acquire qualities both in terms of mental, biological and physical features. Due to the threats that hang over the fighters at any time in this type of conflicts, the emphasis in their training is aimed at training in conditions as close to the existing reality as possible, with a focus on the impact that the battlefield has on his psyche and physique, so that at the same time he can adapt his systems of action of the body to the requirements of any nature imposed by each mission. The paper highlights that the process of training this type of fighters includes, among the training pillars, physical and mental training as a support for exceptional training and effective exercise of roles and missions entrusted to the military organization in peacetime, in situations of crisis and especially at war. In the economics of the formative process, physical and mental training represents the essence of a high level of acquiring the qualities specific to the successful conduct of combat, a fact for which their development has been and will always remain a priority objective throughout the continuous training of fighters.*

Keywords: combat, physical and mental training, modern battlefield, missions, fighters

1. Introduction

Due to the development of combat actions in increasingly complex and unpredictable conditions, it has been concluded that there is a training process to provide fighters with knowledge, skills, abilities and a bio-psycho-motor potential much higher than normal. In addition to these aspects, the fighter must also have the appropriate equipment, of the latest generation, able to help him on the battlefield in order to complete his mission, regardless of its specificity.

Representing the organized set of different training procedures aimed at developing and using the athlete's motor skill, physical training is one of the most important factors

in the training of a military individual, because the more developed his motor skills are, namely speed, skill, endurance, strength, mobility and suppleness, the higher the activity potential of the functions and systems of the body, contributing at the same time to the development of mental and moral qualities. Along with these, a well-defined role is played by the technical, tactical and intellectual training.

Continuous physical demands, due to a wide variety of combat actions carried out in unusual conditions, such as cold, heat, swampy areas, areas affected by natural disasters, etc. can severely affect the combat capability of fighters who are not prepared at a level well above normal.

Intense physical and mental training, performed at major standards, can allow fighters to get through even more stressful conditions while being able to have a very high level of work and combat. Repeated daily physical activities can teach fighters how to control and coordinate their body, strengthening their muscles, improving their reflexes, increasing their joint elasticity, and ultimately their fighting potential.

The fighter must be constantly aware of the impact that the battlefield has on the psyche and the physique so that he can adapt the systems of actioning on his body at the same time with the requirements of each mission.

The solution for all these situations is always continuous training, at a level at least higher than usual.

2. War carried out in extreme conditions. Characteristics

Military operations carried out in extreme conditions are unusual combat actions that involve a very high level of difficulty, far above the usual combat missions, a level *imposed by "the uncertainty and unpredictability of the situations in which they are projected"* [1]. The extreme character of these types of military operations is given, on the one hand, by the natural characteristics of the terrain and climate and, on the other hand, by the complexity of the different operational contexts. The natural characteristics are specific to certain areas of the planet and are totally different from other areas in that they do not provide exactly favorable or normal conditions for the conduct of military actions. This hostile environment requires fighters with a very high and very advanced training, as well as appropriate equipment to allow them to properly adapt to the conditions that characterize the combat, knowing the fact that these geographical areas require maximum biological, psychological and motor qualities of the fighters.

Therefore, the development of military actions in extreme conditions is inconceivable without adequate training,

having the capability to cause problems for unprepared fighters from a bio-psycho-motor point of view.

The complexity of these operational contexts strictly refers to the conduct and planning of combat missions or actions, characterized by the insecurity of information about the enemy, such as the disposition of enemy forces, the potential of its military structures, which automatically reduces the chances of preventing capture. These have a negative impact in terms of maintaining cooperation, providing permanent resupply of troops and also assuring support by their own echelons.

It should be noted that in situations where these combat actions take place in certain geographical areas characterized by extreme climatic conditions, special physical efforts as well as actions that require maximum mental qualities will make military operations extremely difficult, which will demand maximum quality from the fighters.

The delta areas, the mountain areas, the jungles, the desert areas, but also natural disasters strongly influenced by insecurity and lack of support, clearly amplify to the maximum the demands on the fighters, making their action much more difficult, the action rates provided in the plan of operations categorically decreasing.

In addition, within the military actions, the extreme character is also highlighted by the not quite common operational context, in which military structures are employed, that invoke a high degree of risk and insecurity followed by a territory completely and utterly under enemy control.

3. Physical training, the main pillar of ensuring the biophysical potential of the fighter in military conflicts carried out in extreme conditions

Physical training is one of the most important components of training, as it has the ability to achieve at very high indices the parameters of all the other basic components of motor ability, and in

correlation with other types of training, namely the technical training, the tactical training, the mental and intellectual training, are the essential elements necessary for the preparation process. In the magazine “*Sports Training*”, physical training has a different percentage in

importance, depending on the type of mission. Compared to the civilian environment, the military physical training is divided into several levels of training: general physical training, auxiliary physical training and specific physical training. (Figure 1)

Figure 1 – Physical training – levels of instruction
(Robert Stănciulescu, 2017)

The first level, namely the general physical training, has the role of developing the basic motor skills, as well as strengthening as many basic motor skills as possible.

The second level, namely the auxiliary physical training, has a role in “*developing the physical qualities in direct relation to the activity, depending on the individual*” [2], because through this form of training we can understand the type of training of each fighter, and the particularization the training of each individual, all these details aiming at the development of both the weaknesses and the strengths of each fighter.

The third level, i.e. the specific physical training, has the role of “*increasing the ability to act quickly, using the weapons and equipment provided; training and developing endurance for long-term physical exertion, when walking, when riding in cars, on skis in mountainous terrain and the ability to withstand static positions and reduced mobility for a long*

time; developing physical strength in weight transport; increasing the speed of reaction and execution, skill and strength, in the execution of jumps, throws ...; adapting and increasing the body's resistance to overloads imposed during flight, pitch and roll, to vibrations and tremors, to the sudden changes in temperature and pressure” [3].

It helps to develop the endurance capacity, but we should not forget that it also helps to develop the motor skills if we take into account the demands of the motor skills in order to achieve a higher efficiency, at a higher level, without any problems

The physical training programs necessary for the physical training of the fighter are aimed at improving his general physical condition and developing the ability to withstand stress, having a great contribution to increasing productivity, promoting survival in terms of combat ability, the process of physical training being oriented to the motor tasks that the

military servicemen encounter in combat. Here are some of the main motor skills and abilities that fighters need in different combat situations:

- a) techniques specific to moving in the tactical field: *walking, running, jumping, crawling, lunging, squatting, climbing, descending, rolling, changing direction;*
- b) techniques specific to throwing hand grenades and anti-tank grenades: *squats, crawling, lunges, throws, transporting loads, stops, squatting, jumps, taking the position for fighting lying down and on your knees;*
- c) techniques specific to the reaction to the contact with the enemy: *walking, running, positions for combat, squatting, lunge, blows with the arms, kicks, positions for shooting, throwing.*

4. Psychic training, the main pillar of ensuring the combat potential in military conflicts carried out in extreme conditions

The role of training the fighter from a mental point of view is to form skills and abilities in managing emotions or for resolving extreme situations that combat actions always create during conflicts. The result of this mental training is a major one, which in most cases results in success in battle.

During combat operations, whether you like it or not, there are always difficult situations that have a very deep and dangerous impact on the psyche of the fighter. For example, you run out of ammunition in conditions of extreme isolation for a long time or a colleague is injured and you do not have the necessary tools to help him since the connection with the upper echelon is interrupted, etc., thus, the fighter must show an extremely exceptional training in order to be able to

resist on the battlefield regardless of the situation.

One of the most difficult factors leading to trouble for the military in any situation, be it minor or major, is always stress. Stress can come from a variety of sources, from those that the fighter encounters every day outside of the military environment, family, friends, etc., to stress derived from improvised explosive devices, mass killings, attacks, ambushes, etc.

Any fighter must have a psychological balance to achieve performance and cope with any unforeseen situation. This psychological balance emerges and is maintained through a series of activities that have a positive effect in his preparation through real training, through a close, sincere and good communication with the team members, taking responsibility and assuming mistakes if necessary, as well as sacrifices. A serious, repeated and good training gives the fighter confidence in his own strength, gaining confidence in his colleagues or commanders, greatly reducing the less pleasant effects of stress in the military confrontations on the battlefield.

The appearance of negative effects, as well as of positive effects on fighters, is due both to the environment in which military actions take place and to its characteristics. In any military action the fighter is subjected to a series of both external and internal stimuli, which can negatively influence his fighting ability.

If these stimuli act on the fighter at a high level for a continuous and long period of time, they gradually turn into factors of stress, influencing him to complete the mission safely. In figure number 2, the component of the combat stress is schematically presented.

Figure 2 – Combat stress
(A Cosmovici, 1996)

The mental factors of stress play a negative role in the military servicemen's ability to act, putting them in a difficult situation. For example, they are not able to make the right decision, thus reaching the impossibility of fulfilling the combat mission which they have received.

The physical factors of stress greatly affect the blood circulation and the functionality of the body systems and of the organs, thus their motor capacity is gradually or suddenly reduced, the result being also the impossibility to fulfill the combat mission.

Before carrying out any combat action in the Theaters of Operations, the fighters must go through psychological training since this is an essential and important component of their training because *"the development of the physical, mental, spiritual and social skills to achieve an ever-greater efficient adaptation to the conditions of the theater of operations and to the requirements of a risky mission represents a significant influencing factor for achieving the success of the mission"* [3].

Military psychologists state that one of the truly decisive effects on the adaptation and hardening of a fighter's psyche is represented by the circumstances in which he has to control his calmness and composure. They must learn to develop the habit of overcoming their own states of fear, panic and stress. One of the specific methods, being the most important one for

the development of the psychic potential, is represented by the shooting sessions, exercises and trainings at a very dominant level in order to harden the psyche.

I will further present some steps that must be taken to help develop the potential of the fighter, being quite beneficial in a real-life situation.

The first stage is the training of fighters in relatively normal conditions, in which the physical and mental demands are at a not easy but medium level, the environment being known and the time interval being a determined one. The purpose of this stage is for the fighter to be able to acquire his knowledge, to be able to form and develop his skills, followed by aptitudes, attitudes and qualities in order to be able to handle the weapons and equipment very well.

The second stage is the training of the fighter in the presence of factors of stress specific to the battlefield today. This training presents essential changes in terms of pace of execution, higher intensity of psychophysical demands, the environment of missions, such as time, season, weather, unknown terrain, etc., but also the creation of unfavorable, problematic situations for the fighter, that induce negative mental states.

The third and last stage is represented by going at the same time through a circuit of special exercises and trainings that have a role in developing the interpretive qualities

of memory, thinking, attention and self-regulation of the mental states in order to control stress.

The very high-level efforts exert quite a lot of demand on the fighter, who is almost completely at the limit of his possibilities. Thus, without having an intense and exceptional physical and mental training, he cannot live up to the expectations. Regardless of the training that the fighter is subjected to, physical training must always be performed.

5. Conclusions

The configuration of the combat carried out in extreme conditions imposes major

requirements in the training system. The fighters must be competent in a wide range of combat actions, must physically, cognitively and emotionally be able to adapt to the unexpected challenges of the combat actions, must acquire and master competencies in the context of these actions, having a morale commensurate with the exigencies that characterize this type of actions. Thus, more than ever before, the fighters must attend a training which is complex both intellectually, technically, tactically, and especially from a physical and mental point of view, mastering the elements that support military actions in achieving the objective.

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