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Ethics and Moral Standards in Military Service: Social Aspects and Legal Regulations

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Abstract. This article presents a sociological analysis of the status, concepts, and constitutional-legal aspects of the modern military personnel, considering its historical roots and transformation. The study covers a wide range of concepts related to the military sphere, including military policy, combat skills, weaponry, defense systems, and the history of wars. Special attention is given to issues of military ethics, professional behavior norms, and their impact on military discipline. The authors examine the historical development of military service in Uzbekistan, emphasizing its deep historical roots and inseparable connection with the evolution of national statehood. It is noted that military service in Uzbek society has traditionally been perceived as a strategically important sector, ensuring the protection of the state, stability, and security of citizens. A separate section of the article is devoted to the normative and legal aspects of military ethics and its regulation. The key principles of military service are considered, including respect for human rights and freedoms, prevention of disciplinary violations, respectful treatment of colleagues and citizens, as well as the standards of conduct in both service and non-service time. The authors emphasize that adherence to ethical norms not only strengthens military discipline but also enhances the prestige of the armed forces in society. The analysis of international experience (USA, Bulgaria, Argentina, Moldova, Russia, Kazakhstan) demonstrates that the effective implementation of ethical codes helps to strengthen trust in the military profession and reduce corruption risks. In this regard, it is crucial for Uzbekistan to continue improving the mechanisms of ethical regulation in military service and to introduce modern methods of training military personnel. Thus, the article highlights the importance of military ethics in shaping the professional self-awareness of military personnel and their responsibility to society. The authors conclude that it is necessary to strengthen career guidance work among young people, develop a pre-university military training system, and improve legislative norms in the field of military service.

Keywords: military ethics, professional ethics, military service, armed forces, sociological analysis, legal regulation, moral norms, discipline, patriotism, social guarantees.

Introduction

In conducting a sociological analysis of the status, conceptual framework, and constitutional-legal dimensions of the modern servicemember, it is imperative first to refer to their historical genesis. The history of military affairs encompasses a broad array of concepts related to the military domain, including military policy, combat proficiency, armaments, defense systems, military art, and the chronicle of wars. In Uzbekistan, military activity possesses profound historical roots and constitutes a significant facet of the multifaceted and rich cultural heritage of our people, who stood at the origins of ancient civilizations. Particularly noteworthy is the role of military art in the history of Uzbek statehood, which has undergone a developmental trajectory spanning nearly three millennia. Throughout the entirety of history, the security of the state and society, peace and stability within the country, the inviolability of borders, the freedom and independence of the nation, alongside cultural development, have invariably necessitated the presence of robust armed forces. Consequently, military affairs have consistently been regarded as one of the paramount functions of the state.

Already in prehistoric times, when statehood was only beginning to take shape and society was yet to be fully structured, diverse tribes and clans inhabiting extensive territories coalesced into alliances aimed at protection from external threats. Initially, weapons such as bows and arrows, knives, maces, and battle axes were devised for hunting but subsequently were repurposed to ensure security. It was during this formative period that the earliest military techniques and tactics began to take shape, marking the inception of military art. With the emergence of the first states, societies commenced erecting defensive fortifications to safeguard borders and ensure the safety of the populace, while the establishment of armies and the enhancement of armaments became central state functions [1]. For the rule of law to be actualized within society, adherence to laws must transcend mere obligation and become a virtue; this necessitates fostering democratic consciousness such that every individual internalizes personal responsibility, rendering compliance with moral norms an intrinsic necessity.

Methodology of the Study

Primarily, what constitutes etiquette, and why is it essential for individuals? Etiquette can be defined as the possession of sound upbringing and moral conduct, whereby a person abstains from wrongful actions and is therefore deemed cultured and well-mannered. Etiquette represents a critical attribute for every individual. The German philosopher Nietzsche asserted: "Morality initially presents itself as a stringent requirement. People comply with it out of necessity. Over time, this compliance evolves into voluntary habit, and ultimately, it becomes an instinct, a natural and pleasurable trait for the individual" [2]. A person endowed with morality and etiquette must foremost serve as a paradigm in daily life and familial relations. The eminent scholar Abu Rayhan Beruni emphasized: "A person is capable of mastering their passions, modifying and regulating them, cultivating themselves, and shaping their personality." Theodore Roosevelt, the American statesman, stated: "To educate a person's intellect without educating their morality is to create a threat to society."

Thus, morality, as a vital societal need, is categorized into several types:

- Universal ethics – moral norms that exist independently of an individual's professional or social affiliation;
- Professional ethics – behavioral norms and systemic principles defined by professional activity and specific working conditions.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, places particular emphasis on this vital issue, underlining: "Without establishing an effective system of selection and training of personnel endowed with new and independent thinking, responsibility, initiative, profound mastery of advanced management methods, patriotism, and honesty, qualitative transformations in the system of state governance remain unattainable" [3]. The questions of ethics and morality are relevant not only today but have occupied a prominent place in societal life throughout history.

We have examined key facets of national governance, legislation, and military art. Similar to other spheres, military service implies specific obligations and constraints. A servicemember who commits discrediting actions violates:

- The general statutes of the Armed Forces;
- Departmental normative-legal acts;
- Military discipline and norms of military honor.

Any intentional act (action or omission) detrimental to the reputation of a military unit or the entire army of the Republic of Uzbekistan constitutes a serious violation. Servicemembers are obligated not only to perform their official duties but also to strictly adhere to norms of military ethics and standards of conduct. These requirements are codified in regulatory documents [4].

For instance:

- When passing in formation, servicemembers salute in accordance with regulations.
- In service uniform, inappropriate gestures and behaviors (such as placing hands on the abdomen, hugging or kissing during salutes, walking with hands in pockets, etc.) are prohibited.

Behavioral requirements for civil servants include:

- Civil servants must comply with legislative norms and ethical rules.
- Senior officers or officials, regardless of rank or position, are tasked with supervising the discipline of junior personnel and implementing measures to address violations.
- Junior personnel must properly accept remarks and rectify deficiencies.
- Should a superior officer breach public order or traffic regulations, they are required to comply with lawful demands of a junior officer performing official duties.
- During official telephone conversations, employees must introduce themselves by stating their position, rank, and surname; limit communication strictly to official matters; avoid rude discourse; refrain from disclosing confidential information subject to restriction; articulate thoughts concisely, clearly, and precisely; and engage exclusively in official issues while at the workplace.

Experience of Foreign Countries in State Ethics

The Code of Ethics for civil servants was developed by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan taking into account international experience (USA, Bulgaria, Argentina, Moldova, Russia, Kazakhstan). According to the code:

- Civil servants must respect the traditions and customs of the peoples of Uzbekistan and other countries;
- Consider cultural and social particularities of various ethnic, social, and religious groups;
- Promote social stability, interethnic and interfaith harmony.

Therefore, ethical norms and military culture are enshrined in legislative and normative acts, which contributes to the formation of a responsible and disciplined society.

Results and Discussion

Since our study addresses a specialized topic, we can nevertheless share some insights on relevant social issues. For instance, when examining factors influencing the choice of a military profession, 600 selected respondents provided the results illustrated in Figure 1:



Figure 1. Factors Influencing the Choice of Profession

Analyzing key trends and the sociological significance of the obtained data, the largest share of respondents (30%) identified patriotic convictions as the primary motivation for choosing a military career. This indicates a high level of civic consciousness, sense of duty to the homeland, and commitment to protecting national interests. In contemporary circumstances, this factor may be related to state-driven promotion of military service, patriotic education within schools and universities, and the social prestige attributed to the military profession. A quarter of the respondents (25%) pointed to family tradition as a decisive factor, reflecting the intergenerational transmission of military values and service ethos. In families with relatives affiliated with the armed forces, youth are more inclined to perceive a military career as a natural life trajectory. A significant segment (19%) views military service as a means for professional advancement, indicating that the military sphere is considered not only through the lens of duty and responsibility but also as a pathway to stable career progression, rank acquisition, and

social status enhancement. Approximately 15% of respondents emphasized the importance of social guarantees such as stable salaries, healthcare provisions, benefits for servicemembers and their families, as well as early retirement opportunities. This confirms that material incentives play a substantial role in career choice. Merely 6% identified cadet corps, military universities, and specialized educational institutions as key influencers, a relatively low proportion that may point to inadequate engagement of educational institutions in shaping a positive image of military service. Nevertheless, future development of pre-university military training systems can potentially alter this dynamic. The remaining 5% elected the “Other” category, suggesting the presence of individualized and subjective factors outside the principal categories, possibly including external circumstances such as incidental decisions, peer recommendations, or media influence.

Thus, patriotism and family traditions remain the predominant motivations for pursuing a military career, underscoring the importance of national identity and socialization processes. Career prospects and social guarantees hold marked significance, indicating a pragmatic orientation among youths considering military service. The comparatively minor role of educational institutions highlights a need to intensify vocational guidance initiatives among young people.

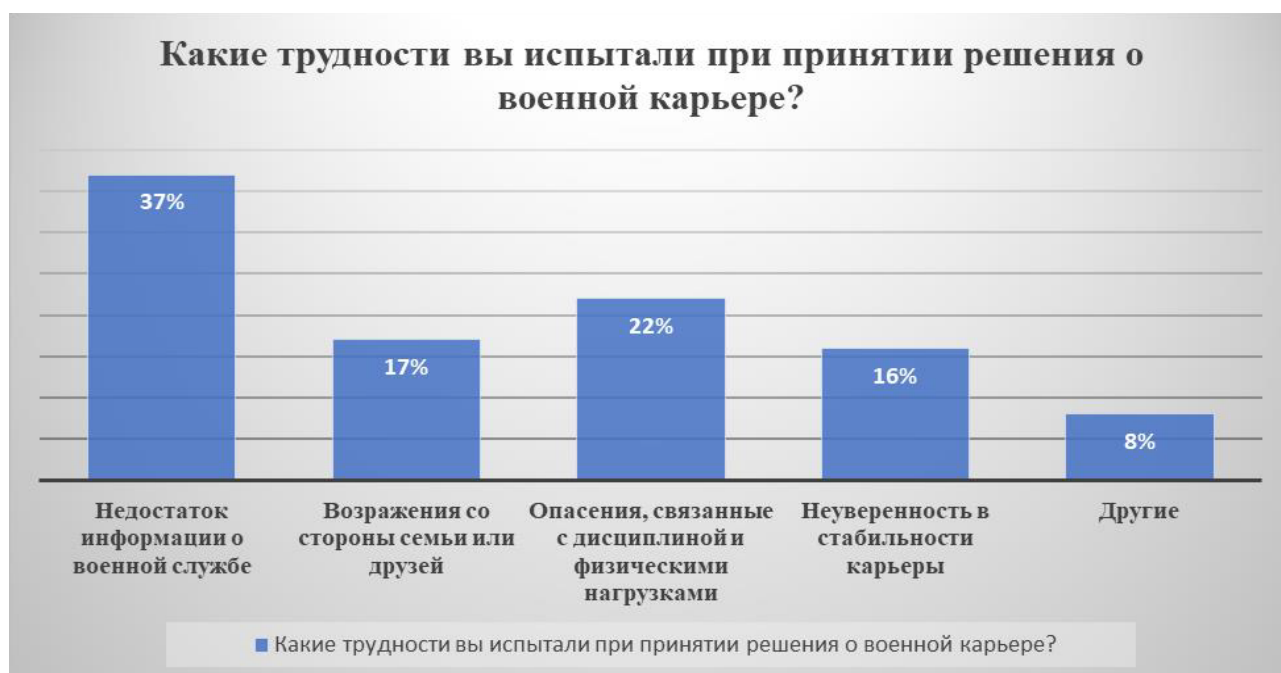


Figure 2. Difficulties in Deciding on a Military Career

Our study also examined the main difficulties encountered when deciding on a military career (Figure 2). The primary impediments and their sociological implications are as follows: the largest proportion of respondents (37%) identified insufficient information about military careers as the foremost challenge, signaling the necessity to enhance informational outreach

to youth regarding army service. Possible reasons include limited media coverage of service conditions, insufficient career guidance programs in educational settings, and restricted access to information about career opportunities and social benefits. The second most cited concern (22%) pertains to apprehensions about discipline and physical demands, reflecting perceptions of military service as a rigorous endeavor requiring substantial moral and physical effort. A considerable fraction (17%) reported encountering opposition from family members, while 16% expressed uncertainty regarding future stability and career prospects, reflecting ambivalence about the reliability and attractiveness of military professions. The remaining 8% chose "Other," representing individualized and less common factors.

Insufficient information constitutes the primary barrier to military career choice, emphasizing the imperative for enhanced vocational counseling programs. Anxiety regarding physical training and disciplinary requirements suggests the need for improved preparatory measures within schools and educational institutions. Family and close social circles play a crucial role in decision-making, with their attitudes capable of obstructing career choice. Uncertainty concerning career stability points to the necessity of improving the public image of military service and demonstrating its long-term prospects.

According to the norms of military ethics and morality, servicemembers are obliged to abstain from any conduct that might call into question their honest fulfillment of official duties, as well as to avoid situations that could damage their reputation or the authority of state institutions. Political, economic, personal motives, or other subjective factors cannot justify violations of legislation or ethical standards by public officials.

Public servants must take all necessary measures to preserve and protect confidential information obtained during professional activities. In cases of disclosure, they bear responsibility in accordance with the legal framework. Public officials are expected to exhibit:

- Courtesy and respect;
- Patience and goodwill in communication with citizens and colleagues;
- Intolerance of rudeness, insults, humiliation of human dignity, or unjustified psychological and physical pressure.

While performing official duties, the external appearance of public officials must conform to the official style, emphasizing formality, restraint, and organization, thereby fostering respectful attitudes toward government bodies among citizens.

Ethical Norms of Servicemembers. Even during non-duty hours, servicemembers are required to observe generally accepted moral standards and avoid antisocial behavior. Ethical norms aim to:

- Prevent violations of service discipline and legislation;
- Eliminate conditions and causes conducive to misconduct;
- Cultivate servicemembers in the spirit of strict adherence to the Constitution, laws, and regulatory acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- Respect human rights and freedoms.

The Code of Ethics encompasses a set of moral norms and professional ethics, spiritual values and human qualities, obligations related to ethical conduct both on duty and in everyday life, standards of interpersonal relationships among personnel, and anti-corruption behavioral

norms. The military ethics code serves as a foundational document defining loyalty to service of the homeland, courage, and self-sacrifice in the interests of the people and the state.

Fundamental principles of official ethics include legality, supremacy of rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of citizens, patriotism, devotion to duty, and fidelity to state and societal interests. Military ethics is based on the following principles:

- Honest fulfillment of service duties;
- Genuine loyalty to the motherland;
- Selfless assistance to citizens;
- Protection of material and spiritual values;
- Respect for national traditions [5].

A servicemember is required:

- Not to interfere in matters unrelated to service;
- Not to leave their place of duty or post without commanding officer's permission;
- To abstain from gambling and other inappropriate entertainments;
- Not to use official identification for personal interests or to transfer it to third parties;
- Not to publish photo or video materials on social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Odnoklassniki).

Servicemembers must avoid:

- Indecent acts, unethical behavior, and corrupting habits;
- Rudeness, dishonor, obscene language and gestures;
- Arrogance, distrust, and suspicion toward colleagues;
- Indifference toward official duties.

Public officials are expected to be humane and educated, modest, honest, and devoted to their work, patient, courageous, and reliable. They should not substitute official responsibilities with personal conjectures or biased opinions, yield to misleading ideas of individuals or groups, exert pressure on subordinates, or ignore such occurrences.

Conclusion

Thus, adherence to military ethics and professional standards plays a pivotal role in maintaining discipline, the authority of the armed forces, and the integrity of statehood. Responsibility for breaches of ethical norms by public officials is clearly established, as violations committed by a civil servant may constitute grounds for holding them accountable in accordance with the procedures prescribed by legislation. Compliance with ethical standards is taken into consideration during certification processes and in the formation of personnel reserves for appointments to senior and other positions. Violations of ethical norms are examined by public tribunals within military collectives, which review the outcomes of official investigations conducted concerning alleged ethical breaches. Upon completion of these reviews, appropriate conclusions are drawn regarding the presence or absence of violations. If a violation is confirmed, recommendations for disciplinary measures may be proposed. Depending on the nature of the offense, its severity, and the circumstances of the breach – as well as taking into account the

employee's prior work record and conduct – a warning may be issued with a requirement to avoid similar infractions in the future.

Author Contributions:

F. Akhmedova – scientific supervision, formulation of the research concept, explanation of methodological aspects, editing in accordance with journal policy, provision of academic recommendations and suggestions.

F. Mirzhavkharova – thematic theoretical review, literature review, development of methodology, data analysis, interpretation of research results.

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Әскери қызметтегі этика мен әдептік нормалары: әлеуметтік аспектілер және құқықтық реттеу

Андатпа. Бұл мақалада қазіргі заманғы әскери қызметшілердің мәртебесі, ұғымдары және конституциялық-құқықтық аспектілері олардың тарихи тамырлары мен трансформацияларын ескере отырып, әлеуметтанулық тұрғыдан талданады. Зерттеу әскери салаға қатысты кең ауқымды ұғымдарды қамтиды, оның ішінде әскери саясат, ұрыс шеберлігі, қару-жарақ, қорғаныс жүйелері және соғыс тарихы. Әскери этика, кәсіби мінез-құлық нормалары және олардың әскери тәртіпке әсері мәселелеріне ерекше назар аударылады. Автор Өзбекстандағы әскери қызметтің тарихи дамуын қарастырып, оның терең тарихи тамырларын және ұлттық мемлекеттіліктің эволюциясымен ажырамас байланысын атап көрсетеді. Өзбек қоғамында әскери қызмет дәстүрлі

түрде мемлекеттің қорғанысын, тұрақтылығын және азаматтардың қауіпсіздігін қамтамасыз ететін стратегиялық маңызды сала ретінде қабылданады. Мақаланың жеке бөлімінде әскери этиканың нормативтік-құқықтық аспектілері мен оның реттелуі қарастырылады. Әскери қызметтің негізгі қағидаттары, соның ішінде адам құқықтары мен бостандықтарын сақтау, тәртіптік бұзушылықтардың алдын алу, әріптестер мен азаматтарға құрметпен қарау, сондай-ақ қызметтік және қызметтен тыс уақытта мінез-құлық стандарттарын сақтау мәселелері қарастырылады. Автор этикалық нормаларды сақтау әскери тәртіпті нығайтып қана қоймай, қоғамда қарулы күштердің беделін арттыратынын баса айтады. Халықаралық тәжірибені (АҚШ, Болгария, Аргентина, Молдова, Ресей, Қазақстан) талдау этикалық кодекстерді тиімді енгізу әскери мамандыққа деген сенімді нығайтуға және сыбайлас жемқорлық тәуекелдерін төмендетуге ықпал ететінін көрсетеді. Осыған байланысты, Өзбекстанда әскери қызметтегі этикалық реттеу механизмдерін жетілдіруді жалғастыру және әскери қызметшілерді даярлаудың заманауи әдістерін енгізу маңызды. Осылайша, мақалада әскери этиканың әскери қызметшілердің кәсіби өзіндік санасын қалыптастырудағы және олардың қоғам алдындағы жауапкершілігін нығайтудағы маңыздылығы көрсетілген. Автор жастар арасында кәсіби бағдар беру жұмыстарын күшейту, университетке дейінгі әскери даярлау жүйесін дамыту және әскери қызмет саласындағы заңнамалық нормаларды жетілдіру қажеттігін атап өтеді.

Түйін сөздер: әскери этика, кәсіби этика, әскери қызмет, қарулы күштер, әлеуметтанулық талдау, құқықтық реттеу, моральдық нормалар, тәртіп, патриотизм, әлеуметтік кепілдіктер.

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Этика и нравственные нормы в военной службе: социальные аспекты и правовые регуляции

Аннотация. В данной статье проводится социологический анализ статуса, понятий и конституционно-правовых аспектов современного военнослужащего с учётом его исторических корней, и трансформации. Исследование охватывает широкий спектр понятий, связанных с военной сферой, включая военную политику, боевое мастерство, вооружение, систему обороны и историю войн. Особое внимание уделяется вопросам военной этики, профессиональных норм поведения и их влиянию на военную дисциплину. Авторы рассматривают историческое развитие военной службы в Узбекистане, подчёркивая её глубокие исторические корни и неразрывную связь с эволюцией национальной государственности. Отмечается, что военная служба в узбекском обществе традиционно воспринимается как стратегически важная сфера, обеспечивающая защиту государства, стабильность и безопасность граждан. Отдельный раздел статьи посвящён нормативно-правовым аспектам военной этики и её регуляции. Рассматриваются ключевые принципы военной службы, включая соблюдение прав и свобод человека, предотвращение нарушений дисциплины, уважительное отношение к коллегам и гражданам, а также стандарты

поведения в служебное и неслужебное время. Автор подчёркивает, что соблюдение этических норм не только укрепляет воинскую дисциплину, но и повышает престиж вооружённых сил в обществе. Анализ зарубежного опыта (США, Болгария, Аргентина, Молдова, Россия, Казахстан) показывает, что эффективное внедрение кодексов этики способствует укреплению доверия к военной профессии и снижению коррупционных рисков. В этой связи в Узбекистане важно продолжать совершенствование механизмов этической регуляции военной службы и внедрение современных методов воспитания военнослужащих. Таким образом, статья подчёркивает значимость военной этики в формировании профессионального самосознания военнослужащих и их ответственности перед обществом. Автор делает вывод о необходимости усиления профориентационной работы среди молодёжи, развития системы довузовской военной подготовки и совершенствования законодательных норм в сфере военной службы.

Ключевые слова: военная этика, профессиональная этика, военная служба, вооружённые силы, социологический анализ, правовое регулирование, моральные нормы, дисциплина, патриотизм, социальные гарантии.

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