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PERSONNEL

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# THE DUAL NATURE OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: CHALLENGES OF ADAPTATION AMONG MONGOLIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL

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## ABSTRACT

The United Nations (hereinafter referred to as the UN) has continuously deployed over 90,000 military personnel from multiple nations-collectively known as the “Blue Helmets”-to participate in peacekeeping operations with high levels of organization and coordination. These operations have become one of the UN's most effective tools in assisting host nations through the difficult transition from conflict to peace. For Mongolia, participation in peace support operations holds growing importance, and various measures have been taken to expand cooperation and engagement in the defense sector. This study employed quantitative survey methodology and consolidates findings from questionnaires distributed to peacekeeping personnel, their families, and the general public. Results show that participation in peace operations leads to increased income and helps resolve certain social issues for the personnel; however, adverse effects on physical and mental health are also evident. This research contributes to understanding the socio-economic and health-related challenges faced by military personnel in peacekeeping operations and identifies the influencing factors behind them.

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## KEYWORDS

United Nations, Peacekeeping and Peace Support Operations, Basic Needs, Values, Adaptation, Social Issues, Health

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### Introduction.

Since May 2, 1948, under the mandate of the United Nations (UN), the UN Security Council has authorized a total of 68 peacekeeping operations in various regions of the world. Mongolia officially began participating in UN peacekeeping and other military operations in 2002, when, based on a government resolution, two military personnel were deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since then, more than 20,000 Mongolian military personnel have successfully fulfilled their duties in multiple missions across different global regions.

Mongolia has now been participating in UN peace support operations for over two decades. This engagement has significantly contributed to enhancing Mongolia's international reputation, strengthening its global position, and expanding its foreign relations. The operations have created favorable conditions for further diplomatic expansion and cooperation. However, alongside these achievements, several post-deployment adverse effects have emerged. These negative outcomes have begun to affect the social lives of deployed personnel, leading to reduced interest and participation in future missions and diminishing the perceived value and effectiveness of peace operations. Consequently, the number of volunteers willing to serve in such operations is declining, and the potential for negative repercussions is increasing.

Therefore, the fundamental issues surrounding UN peacekeeping operations and the role of participating military personnel must be viewed as a new and pressing "social phenomenon" warranting thorough investigation within the field of sociology. It is necessary to scientifically analyze and study the activities of peacekeepers, their values, and the social challenges they face, using the tools and approaches of sociological science.

### Literature Review

The research literature and sources related to peace support operations can be categorized as follows.

First, there are works that address the history and theoretical-methodological stages of peacekeeping operations. Notable among these are:

- Richard K. Betts (1994), *The Delusion of Impartial Intervention*,
- Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992), *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*,
- T.V. Bordachev (1998), *Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention and Its Role in Ensuring Global and Regional Security: Contemporary Theories and Practical Experience* (Doctoral Dissertation),
- I.M. Vorobyev (1994), *Peacekeeping Operations* (Textbook),
- *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (2016).

Furthermore, there are studies that link the political processes during and after the Cold War-including disasters, internal conflicts among local populations, and wars such as in Iraq, Yugoslavia, and the interventions of regional organizations-to the development of international peacekeeping communities. These include examples from countries such as the United States, Germany, Japan, and Russia. For instance:

- V.I. Batyuk (1996), *UN Peacekeeping Operations and the Great Powers*,
- P. Frydenberg (1964), *Experience and Assessment of Peacekeeping: The Oslo Document*,
- Lynn E. Davis (1993), *Peacekeeping and Peacemaking After the Cold War*,
- Sabina Collmer (2016), *Between the Federal and the Domestic Front: The German Armed Forces and Public Opinion on Security Issues*,
- A.V. Toropygin (2000), *Peacekeeping Activities of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of CIS Member States* (Doctoral Dissertation).

Among Russian scholars, peacekeeping operations have been studied in the context of military sociology, focusing on institutional processes, their interrelation with military science and political dynamics, and the individual's role in these processes. For example, R.N. Azyavin, in his monograph *Peacekeeping Processes in the Modern Context: A Sociological Analysis* (2011), interprets peacekeeping through the lens of conflict theory. He applies theoretical models such as Lewis Coser's positive-functional conflict theory, Ralf Dahrendorf's social conflict model, and Kenneth Boulding's general theory of conflict to analyze various dimensions of conflict involved in peacekeeping, offering comparative evaluations.

In Mongolia, scholars and researchers have studied peacekeeping operations and the role of peacekeepers mainly from the perspectives of military science, security studies, international relations, and politico-military theoretical methodologies. Important contributions in this field include:

- Ts. Gandorj (2017), *State Policy and Implementation Strategies for Deploying Military Forces in Peace Support Operations* (Doctoral Dissertation),
- O. Anar (2008), *International Peace Support Operations and Mongolia*,

- B. Uuganbayar (2017), *Psychological Preparedness Strategies for Military Personnel Participating in Peace Operations*,
- P. Uyanga (2019), *Participation, Experience, and Lessons of Border Protection Troops in Peace Support Operations*.

These scholarly works are grounded in the theoretical and methodological framework of military science and security studies. In writing this article, we aim to align with these research trends while also addressing the specific challenges and realities currently faced by Mongolian peacekeepers.

### **Theory and Methodology**

Within the framework of structural functionalist theory, peacekeeping operations are interpreted by aligning individual actions and behavior with social structures, norms, and societal needs. For instance, American sociologist Talcott Parsons posited that every society possesses a specific structure, which is formed by individuals' social roles and positions within that society (O. Munkhbat, 2008). According to Parsons, social structure is not merely a mechanical construct but rather an interrelation of individuals' social status, functional roles, and mutual interactions. He defined society as "a system of social interaction in which the point of integration lies in norms and values" (Ritzer, G., 1996).

From this theoretical lens, the United Nations peacekeeping force can be viewed as a macro-level organization characterized by structured, rule-based, and continuous operations involving personnel from multiple national contingents. The functioning of such an organization is conditioned by the interaction between its members, all operating within a defined regulatory and institutional framework. Within this broader structure, UN peacekeeping operations serve as a subsystem that implements the functional interactions between institutions—a collective of states working to uphold global peace and security.

Against this backdrop, it becomes especially relevant to examine how individual military personnel navigate their choices, needs, and adaptation processes within the structured system of peacekeeping. Under the framework of needs theory, micro-level issues such as basic human needs, values, individual challenges, and specific characteristics of social adaptation are analyzed.

Social adaptation is not only a state of the individual but also a process through which the social organism achieves balance and stability in response to external stimuli. It encompasses multiple forms—physiological, economic, psychological, and professional adaptation. Among these, environmental adaptation refers to how individuals adjust to new professional tasks, social environments, and the specific conditions and requirements of their occupational roles. Adaptation ranges from basic experiences of adjusting to surroundings to complex processes of socialization, whereby individuals undergo deep psychological and social alignment with new roles and contexts.

Therefore, in order to comprehensively study the adaptation conditions of military personnel, it is necessary to consider multiple influencing factors, including systems, individual organization, socio-psychological aspects, physical-physiological responses, and social interactions.

Dekkers, Van Daalen, and Van den Wurff (2016) noted that the previously held assumption that military personnel naturally possess high adaptability is undergoing reevaluation. This shift is supported by the review of studies conducted by Bowden, Laux, Keenan, Knapp (2003), Kozlowski and Gunter (2005), Thompson (2008), and Pernin and Thompson (2013). Researcher Dandeker emphasized that in the military profession, the ability to rapidly assess, decide, and adapt in new, evolving, ambiguous, or sudden operational conditions is an indispensable requirement.

In this study, we attempted to identify both the positive and negative factors influencing the adaptation of peacekeepers to operational environments based on the perceptions and feedback of mission participants themselves.

### **Research Results**

A sociological survey conducted by the Ministry of Defense's Institute for Defense Studies (IDS) collected responses from 805 military personnel who had served in peace support operations. The reliability analysis of the measurement indicators used in the survey yielded a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = 0.75$ , indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency and justifying further statistical analysis.

In terms of the organizational affiliation of the respondents:

- General Staff of the Armed Forces (GSMAF): 197 respondents
- Peacekeeping Operations Command (PKOC): 231
- Border Troops Command (BTC): 181

- National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA): 114
- Civil Aviation Command (CAC): 58
- Ministry of Defense (MoD): 3
- Combined Arms Brigade Command (CABC): 1

Regarding gender distribution, the vast majority of respondents were male-727 individuals, or 90.3%. Female respondents numbered 58, accounting for 7.2%. Approximately 2.5% of the respondents did not indicate their organizational affiliation.

In terms of age distribution, the majority of peacekeeping personnel belonged to the younger age groups, specifically between 26 and 37 years old. A breakdown of age demographics shows that:

- 32-37 years: 37.9%
- 26-31 years: 26.1%
- 38-43 years: 21%

With regard to educational background, the majority of respondents held either vocational or higher education degrees. Specifically:

- 48.1% had completed vocational secondary education
- 39.8% held higher education degrees
- 9.2% had completed general secondary education
- 0.7% had incomplete secondary education

These findings suggest that educational attainment is a significant criterion in the selection of military personnel for peacekeeping missions, with approximately two-fifths holding higher education degrees and nearly half possessing vocational qualifications.

### **Military Personnel's Perceptions on Selection for Peace Support Operations**

For military personnel, participation in peace support operations appears to have become a highly competitive process. Within the framework of this study, participants who had taken part in peace support operations were asked for their opinions on various aspects of the selection process, including selection criteria, fairness, physical fitness assessments, and medical screenings.

Specifically, they were asked: *"In your opinion, how fair is the approval process of the affiliated unit or organization when selecting personnel for peacekeeping operations?"* Respondents expressed differing views on this matter, indicating a diversity of perspectives regarding the integrity of the selection process.

**Table 1.** Perceived Fairness of Unit/Organizational Approval in Peacekeeping Selection Processes

<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Fair	436	54.2
Uses official position for advantage	53	6.6
Paid money or gave gifts as bribe	32	4.0
Selected based on personal connections	222	27.6
No response	62	7.7

From the responses above, it is evident that there are perceived instances of unfairness not only in the approval process within organizations but also in the selection process itself. Additionally, in response to the question: *"In your opinion, which of the post-selection assessments for peace support operations is conducted with the least fairness?"*, military personnel who participated in peace operations provided the following answers.

**Table 2.** Which Post-Selection Assessment for Peacekeeping Operations Is Perceived as the Least Fair?

<i>Assessment Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Medical examination	237	29.4
Foreign language test	43	5.3
Physical fitness assessment	182	22.6
Work experience and job performance	227	28.2
No response	116	14.4

*Orange bars represent percentage; blue bars represent frequency.*



According to military personnel who have participated in peace support operations, certain criteria in the selection process are perceived as particularly unfair. These include: medical assessment (29.4%), years of service and job performance (28.2%), physical fitness (22.6%), and foreign language skills (5.3%). Respondents also indicated that the same criteria-medical condition, physical fitness, years of service, job performance, and foreign language-are considered overly strict. These responses suggest that the higher the threshold for a specific criterion, the more likely it is to be perceived as unfairly implemented.

In response to the question, *"In your opinion, how appropriate is the physical fitness requirement for peace support operations?"*, 363 personnel (45.1%) viewed the standard as reasonable, while 232 (28.8%) believed it was high, and 149 (18.5%) considered it very high. The remaining 7.6% stated that the criteria were either too low, they were unsure, or did not respond.

When participants were asked *"How accurate and reliable is the medical examination and diagnostics conducted by the Central Military Hospital?"*, 38.5% gave a positive response, stating the process was very accurate and truthful. However, there were also a significant number of doubtful and critical responses:

- 25.1% said that test results often differed from those obtained at other hospitals,
- 18.8% believed that bureaucracy, bribery, favoritism, and personal connections played a major role,
- 2.7% expressed the view that the hospital's examinations were poorly conducted or inaccurate.

Military personnel also shared their opinions regarding the effectiveness and quality of the pre-deployment training for peace support operations. A majority-67.2%-rated the training as good. Meanwhile, 23.7% considered it average, 2.6% rated it as poor, and 6.4% either did not know or did not respond.

When asked *"How should pre-deployment training for peace support operations be improved?"*, the following suggestions were made:

- The duration should be shortened - 40.4%
- The training methods should be changed - 38.9%
- The training curriculum should be revised - 10.8%
- The duration should be extended - 2.7%

These responses indicate that, although the training is generally considered effective, adjustments are needed based on time constraints and the diverse needs and circumstances of participants.

The study also explored the average personal expenses incurred by military personnel during the preparation phase for deployment. According to the participants:

- 12.5% spent 3 million MNT or more,
- 24.2% spent between 2-3 million MNT,
- 39.1% spent between 1-2 million MNT,
- 19.9% spent up to 1 million MNT.

When compared to the average salary of a military service member, this shows that expenses incurred during the preparation phase for peace support operations can range from the equivalent of one month's salary to as much as two to three months' salary.

### **Preparation and Adaptation of Peacekeeping Personnel and Influencing Factors**

As part of the study, participants who had served in peace support operations were surveyed about several aspects of their deployment, including the adequacy of logistical provisions and supplies, compatibility of weapons and equipment with mission tasks, and the preparedness of personnel in terms of physical and psychological readiness, as well as mission-specific capabilities.

A majority of respondents gave relatively low evaluations regarding the quality and sufficiency of equipment and supplies provided before deployment. Specifically, 387 respondents (48.1%) rated the logistical support as "average," while 291 (36.1%) rated it as "poor." Notably, less than 10% of respondents rated the support as "good," which raises concern.

Similarly, when asked about the compatibility and adequacy of weapons and military equipment for mission-specific tasks, respondents also gave predominantly moderate to negative assessments:

- 48.2% rated it as "average,"
- 32.7% as "poor,"
- and only 12.3% as "good."

These responses suggest that the quality of logistical support and the suitability of weapons and equipment are closely interrelated and jointly influence mission performance perceptions.

The study also inquired whether the pre-deployment training and preparation adequately supported personnel in fulfilling their duties, including physical and psychological readiness, and operational

competence. A majority of respondents-527 personnel (65.5%)-believed that the training fully prepared them. However, 132 respondents (16.4%) felt the preparation was insufficient, and 9.6% stated that it did not meet the requirements at all-indicating that roughly 1 in 10 peacekeepers felt unprepared.

These findings demonstrate the necessity of improving pre-deployment training to ensure all personnel are fully equipped to perform their duties effectively. Furthermore, when asked whether the leadership of peacekeeping contingents provided sufficient psychological support during missions, the responses were as follows:

- 51.9% answered “yes,”
- 26.0% “no,”
- 11.3% “very little,”
- and 6.0% felt support was “excessive.”

Generally, participants evaluated various types of in-mission support provided in the host countries. The most common rating across all support categories was “average,” which ranged between 41.5% and 54.0%.

However, in terms of positive ratings (“good”), the following categories stood out:

- Weapons supply - 38.9%,
- Medical services - 30.4%,
- Food provision - 29.8%.

**Table 3.** Evaluation of In-Mission Support Services Provided in Peacekeeping Host Countries

Type of Support Service	Good (n, %)	Average (n, %)	Poor (n, %)	Don't Know (n, %)	No Response (n, %)
Clothing and gear	175 (21.7%)	412 (51.2%)	157 (19.5%)	20 (2.5%)	41 (5.1%)
Food	240 (29.8%)	401 (49.8%)	112 (13.9%)	11 (1.4%)	41 (5.1%)
Hygiene and sanitation items	103 (12.8%)	390 (48.4%)	253 (31.4%)	17 (2.1%)	42 (5.2%)
Accommodation	176 (21.9%)	435 (54.0%)	142 (17.6%)	11 (1.4%)	41 (5.1%)
Medical services	245 (30.4%)	390 (48.4%)	116 (14.4%)	11 (1.4%)	43 (5.3%)
Weapons supply	313 (38.9%)	334 (41.5%)	103 (12.8%)	10 (1.2%)	45 (5.6%)
Equipment and vehicle support	105 (13.0%)	377 (46.8%)	268 (33.3%)	14 (1.7%)	41 (5.1%)
Protective gear	138 (17.1%)	366 (45.5%)	244 (30.3%)	11 (1.4%)	46 (5.7%)
Psychological support	196 (24.3%)	400 (49.7%)	147 (18.3%)	19 (2.4%)	43 (5.3%)

It is essential for us to focus on those support services within peacekeeping operations that received a higher proportion of *poor* evaluations than *good* ones. Specifically, the “equipment and vehicle support” category received a 33.3% “poor” rating-approximately 20 percentage points higher than the “good” rating. Similarly, “hygiene and sanitation supplies” received a 31.4% “poor” rating, which is around 19 percentage points higher than the “good” rating, and “protective gear” was rated “poor” by 30.3% of respondents-approximately 13 percentage points more than those who rated it “good.” These findings point to critical gaps in mission preparedness and logistics, which negatively affect peacekeepers’ adaptation processes during deployment.

Participants were also asked how their personal lives had changed as a result of participating in peace support operations. Responses varied widely. When asked what positive changes or outcomes they experienced due to their deployment, military personnel responded as follows:

- Resolved financial problems - 45.0%
- Gained a sense of personal pride - 29.1%
- Acquired property/assets - 19.6%
- Built financial savings - 0.5%
- Received a promotion - 0.5%

**Table 4.** Positive and Negative Impacts of Participation in Peace Support Operations on Service Members' Lives

<i>Positive Impact</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Negative Impact</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Resolved financial problems	362	45.0%	Developed health issues	306	38.0%
Gained a sense of personal pride	234	29.1%	Experienced financial difficulties	9	1.1%
Acquired property/assets	158	19.6%	Transferred to another position	54	6.7%
Built financial savings	4	0.5%	Divorced from spouse	19	2.4%
Received a promotion	4	0.5%	Experienced family misunderstandings	64	8.0%
No response	43	5.3%	Demoted in position	2	0.2%
-	-	-	No negative impacts reported	351	43.6%

In addition to the findings discussed above, when participants were asked whether they had experienced any negative impacts as a result of participating in peace support operations, 56.4% indicated that they had indeed encountered some form of negative consequence.

Among these reported negative impacts:

- 38.0% (n=306) stated they had developed health-related issues,
- 6.7% (n=54) were reassigned to another position,
- 8.0% (n=64) experienced misunderstandings within their family,
- 2.4% (n=19) went through a divorce,
- 1.1% (n=9) encountered financial difficulties,
- and 0.2% (n=2) reported demotion.

These results suggest that health problems and family-related issues (including divorce and misunderstandings) are the most pressing personal consequences for military personnel following participation in peace support operations.

A critical and policy-relevant area that deserves attention concerns the factors influencing mission performance and adaptation during deployments. These include interpersonal dynamics within the military contingent, both formal and informal relationships, and the broader adaptation process to the operational environment.

In response to the question: “*What negative factors influenced your ability to perform duties and adapt while deployed in the host country?*”, participants identified the following challenges:

The following negative factors were identified by military personnel as significantly affecting their ability to perform duties and adapt during deployment in host countries:

**Table 5.** Negative Factors Affecting Task Performance and Adaptation During Peacekeeping Deployment

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1. Living conditions (housing, workplace environment)	320	42.6%
2. Communication from superior officers	302	40.2%
3. Environmental/geographical conditions of the host area	252	33.6%
4. Inadequate psychological support	229	30.5%
5. Relationship with direct supervisor	210	28.0%
6. Leadership and management skills	171	22.8%
7. Family-related stress or influence	146	19.4%
8. Scheduling and time management issues	124	16.5%
9. Cooperation at the team/platoon/squad level	99	13.2%
10. Personal relationships	70	9.3%
11. Personal skills/self-efficacy	50	6.7%

These results indicate that structural and interpersonal conditions-such as living environments, leadership communication, and psychological support-are major determinants of peacekeepers' capacity to adapt and carry out their missions effectively.

As part of the study, military personnel who had participated in peace support operations reported that living conditions, including accommodations and the working environment, were the primary negative factor affecting task performance and adaptation during deployment. This was identified by 42.6% of respondents.



Following this, interpersonal relations with commanding officers were identified as the second most influential negative factor, cited by 40.2% of participants. Other key negative influences included:

- Environmental and geographical factors - 33.6%
- Inadequate psychological support - 30.5%
- Relationship with immediate supervisors - 28.0%

Additional influencing variables reported included:

- Leadership and management skills - 22.8%
- Family-related stressors - 19.4%
- Time and scheduling issues - 16.5%
- Team-level cooperation (platoon/squad) - 13.2%
- Personal interpersonal issues - 9.3%

Of particular concern during peacekeeping missions is the emergence of informal or non-regulation relationships within military contingents, particularly between subordinates and their immediate or senior commanders. This issue was assessed through the question: *“How frequently do non-regulation attitudes or behaviors occur within the military unit during deployment in peacekeeping missions?”*

The most common response was “moderately frequent,” selected by 38.6% of participants, indicating the issue is neither rare nor overwhelming but sufficiently prevalent to warrant attention. Regarding the source of such behaviors:

- 26.5% pointed to fellow individual service members,
- 16.0% identified immediate or assistant commanders,
- 13.0% cited branch/unit commanders,
- and 12.3-12.5% pointed to battalion leadership and staff officers.

To assess the physical and psychological changes experienced by peacekeepers post-deployment, participants responded to a series of health-related and mental well-being indicators. The most prominent concern was cognitive impairment or memory deterioration, reported by 70.1% of respondents—a critical issue warranting serious attention.

Other reported effects included:

- Overall decline in health - 46.2%
- Liver-related health issues - 29.8%
- Sleep disorders (insomnia) - 20.6%
- Psychological instability, increased irritability - 17.6%
- Heightened anger or aggression - 16.1%

These findings point to the urgent need for preventive and rehabilitative policy interventions. While some of these effects may be temporary, others may persist in the long term, indicating the need for both immediate psychological support during missions and post-deployment rehabilitation programs.

**Table 6.** Physical and Psychological Changes Among Military Personnel Participating in Peacekeeping Operations

<i>Nº</i>	<i>Reported Changes</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1	Becomes forgetful	530	70.1%
2	Overall health deteriorates	349	46.2%
3	Liver health declines	225	29.8%
4	Experiences insomnia	156	20.6%
5	Physical fitness improves	146	19.3%
6	Physical fitness deteriorates; experiences fatigue	142	18.8%
7	Becomes psychologically unstable or overly sensitive	133	17.6%
8	Becomes irritable	122	16.1%
9	Other	108	14.3%

The findings reveal that the most prevalent impact is cognitive deterioration—70.1% of respondents reported becoming forgetful, indicating significant concern regarding memory and mental clarity. Furthermore, 46.2% of personnel stated that their overall health worsened, while 29.8% specifically mentioned decline in liver function. Other reported symptoms include:

- Insomnia - 20.6%

- Psychological instability or heightened sensitivity - 17.6%
- Irritability or anger - 16.1%

These effects underscore the urgent need for structured recovery and rehabilitation policies, including both preventive and post-deployment interventions. It is important to note that while some of these conditions may be temporary, others may persist in the long term, depending on individual resilience and support systems.

Respondents were also asked how long it typically took them to return to physical and psychological normalcy after completing their deployment. The results show:

- 37.3% returned to normal condition in about one month,
- 21.2% required at least two weeks of rest,
- 18.4% reported that recovery duration varied depending on deployment location and conditions,
- 16.9% said it took up to six months to fully recover.

These findings highlight the varied duration of recovery needs and reinforce the importance of customized post-mission care and reintegration support.

### **Conclusions**

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the process of globalization has intensified conflicts and disputes between states, both directly and indirectly, increasing the likelihood of global and regional crises. In this context, peacekeeping operations have emerged as a critical component of the international legal framework for managing existing and potential conflicts.

This study examined the current situation, professional experiences, and perspectives of Mongolian military personnel who have participated in peace support operations, focusing particularly on the positive and negative impacts of their missions and their adaptation to deployment environments. The research aimed to capture and assess the lived experiences and evaluations of service members who have directly engaged in peacekeeping duties.

The findings revealed that more than half of respondents-54.2%-believed the selection process for peacekeeping missions was conducted fairly. However, 27.6% reported that personnel were selected through personal connections, 6.6% indicated that rank or position influenced selection, and 4.0% admitted that bribery played a role in gaining deployment approval. In a separate but related question, 45.5% still affirmed fairness in the selection process, while 33.8% cited personal connections, 6.1% bribery, and 5.8% the use of official privilege-pointing to the existence of perceived and actual irregularities in both organizational approval and individual selection mechanisms.

Although the pre-deployment training for peacekeeping missions is generally rated positively, the study shows that revisions are necessary to better reflect the changing conditions and the diverse, individualized needs of participants. Regarding pre-deployment equipment and material support, the majority of personnel gave only moderate or low ratings: 48.1% rated it as average, while 36.1% rated it as poor. Similarly, when asked about the adequacy and suitability of weapons and military equipment used during missions, respondents once again leaned toward average and poor evaluations.

Despite these concerns, 65.5% of respondents (n=527) believed that the training and preparation they received before deployment adequately supported their operational readiness, including psychological and physical fitness.

Based on the study's findings, special attention should be paid to specific logistical shortfalls. For instance:

- Equipment support received a 33.3% poor rating, approximately 20 percentage points higher than the "good" rating.
- Hygiene and sanitation supplies were rated poor by 31.4% of respondents-19 percentage points above the good rating.
- Protective gear was rated poor by 30.3%, exceeding the good rating by 13 percentage points.

These discrepancies clearly indicate areas where urgent improvement is required. From a policy and operational standpoint, priority should be given to improving support services that received a higher proportion of poor evaluations than good ones, as they directly affect the adaptation, performance, and well-being of peacekeepers during international missions.

Among the military personnel who participated in peace support operations, 727 individuals, or 90.3 percent, expressed the view that participation in international military operations is appropriate.

When asked about what specific changes occurred in their personal lives following participation in peace support operations, military personnel gave varied responses.

As a result of carrying out duties in peace support operations, they responded as follows: 45% reported resolving financial issues, 29.1% stated they had achieved a personal sense of pride, 19.6% said they had acquired property, 0.5% had accumulated financial savings, and 0.5% had been promoted in rank.

However, in terms of negative consequences, 306 personnel (38.0%) reported experiencing health issues; 54 (6.7%) were transferred to other positions; 64 (8.0%) experienced misunderstandings within their families; and 19 (2.4%) indicated that they had divorced.

According to the study, the primary factor that negatively affected peacekeepers' adaptation and task execution in the host country was their living environment, including housing and workplace conditions.

Particularly, the existence of non-regulation relationships within the team during peace support operations is a critical factor to be addressed for any military unit.

Based on the responses of the personnel, 26.5% stated that individual task performers exhibited such behavior, 16.0% pointed to immediate and assistant commanders, 13.0% cited unit leaders, and 12.3-12.5% mentioned team leaders or staff officers as displaying non-regulation behaviors or attitudes.

When asked what types of disciplinary, accountability-related, or other violations most commonly occurred during peace support operations, the following responses were recorded: 53.3% identified interpersonal conflict or negative attitudes, 51.7% cited spreading false information or gossip, 38.3% attributed issues to stress and depression, and 32.9% indicated pressure from irrelevant or unnecessary duties.

According to the results of the study, participation in peace support operations negatively impacts memory or cognitive functioning.

This was stated by 70.1% of the respondents, which is a significant point of concern.

Additionally, 46.2% reported a general deterioration of their health, while 29.8% specifically mentioned deterioration of liver function.

Furthermore, 20.6% experienced insomnia; 17.6% became psychologically unstable or overly sensitive; and 16.1% reported becoming irritable or short-tempered.

It is necessary to identify the causes of these adverse effects and plan recovery policies and interventions accordingly.

Of course, some of these conditions may be temporary, while others may persist in the long term.

The study also explored how long it took for service members to return to physical and mental normalcy after participating in peacekeeping missions.

According to the results, 37.3% stated that it took about one month to return to their normal state, 16.9% said recovery lasted up to six months, 21.2% required at least two weeks of rest, and 18.4% said recovery time varied depending on the location and time factors of the mission.

Moving forward, it is essential that a certain portion of the allocated budget for peace support operations be directed toward establishing recuperative services focused on the physical, psychological, and health rehabilitation of deployed personnel.

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