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# DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF THE NCO CORPS: EXPERIENCE IN PILOTING A HYBRID TRAINING SYSTEM

***Annotation****.* The article discusses the modern approach to the training of sergeants, based on the integration of traditional and digital training methods, practice-oriented development of skills and the formation of key competencies, including leadership, organizational and psychological. The proposed system was tested in the National Guard of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the participation of 811 sergeants. The effectiveness was assessed through online classes, final testing and an anonymous survey. The results showed a high level of satisfaction with training and the success of mastering the material, and also made it possible to determine the directions for further improvement of the training system.

***Keywords****:* non-commissioned personnel, military training, leadership competencies, digital training, hybrid training, professional competencies, National Guard

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# СЕРЖАНТ ҚҰРАМЫНЫҢ КӘСІБИ ҚҰЗЫРЕТТЕРІН ДАМЫТУ: ГИБРИДТІ ОҚЫТУ ЖҮЙЕСІН АПРОБАЦИЯЛАУ ТӘЖІРИБЕСІ

***Андатпа****.* Мақалада оқытудың дәстүрлі және цифрлық әдістерін ықпалдастыруға, дағдыларды тәжірибеге бағдарланған дамытуға және көшбасшылық, ұйымдастырушылық және психологиялық құзыреттерді қоса алғанда, негізгі құзыреттерді қалыптастыруға негізделген сержанттар құрамын даярлаудың қазіргі заманғы тәсілі қаралды. Қазақстан Республикасының Ұлттық ұланында 811 сержанттың қатысуымен ұсынылған жүйені сынақтан өткізу жүргізілді. Тиімділікті бағалау онлайн-сабақтар, қорытынды тестілеу және жасырын сауалнама арқылы жүзеге асырылды. Нәтижелер оқытуға қанағаттанудың жоғары деңгейін және материалды игерудің табыстылығын көрсетті, сондай-ақ даярлау жүйесін одан әрі жетілдірудің бағыттарын айқындауға мүмкіндік берді.

***Түйінді сөздер****:* сержанттар құрамы, әскери даярлық, көшбасшылық құзыреттер, сандық оқыту, гибридтік оқыту, кәсіби құзыреттер, Ұлттық ұлан

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# РАЗВИТИЕ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНЫХ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЙ СЕРЖАНТСКОГО СОСТАВА: ОПЫТ АПРОБАЦИИ ГИБРИДНОЙ СИСТЕМЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ

***Аннотация***. В статье рассмотрен современный подход к подготовке сержантского состава, основанный на интеграции традиционных и цифровых методов обучения, практико-ориентированном развитии навыков и формировании ключевых компетенций, включая лидерские, организационные и психологические. Проведена апробация предложенной системы в Национальной гвардии Республики Казахстан с участием 811 сержантов. Оценка эффективности осуществлялась посредством онлайн-занятий, итогового тестирования и анонимного опроса. Результаты показали высокий уровень удовлетворённости обучением и успешность усвоения материала, а также позволили определить направления дальнейшего совершенствования системы подготовки.

***Ключевые слова***: сержантский состав, военная подготовка, лидерские компетенции, цифровое обучение, гибридное обучение, профессиональные компетенции, Национальная гвардия

**Introduction.** The modern stage of development of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan is characterized by a systematic modernization of military education aimed at increasing combat readiness, professionalism and efficiency of unit management. A special place in this system is occupied by the sergeant staff, which performs key functions in organizing the service, maintaining discipline and implementing educational work with personnel.

In the face of the complexity of the tasks facing the Armed Forces, the role of sergeants increases significantly. They are a direct link in the management of units, ensuring the performance of service and combat missions and maintaining high combat readiness. At the same time, the service load of sergeants, especially in units of military units of the National Guard, is constantly increasing, which requires the search for new approaches to their training.

An additional factor is a change in the quality of the draft contingent. The new generation of military personnel entering military units is characterized by a different level of information perception, high digital literacy and a changed value system. This requires the adaptation of pedagogical approaches and the introduction of modern educational technologies.

Particular attention to the training of military personnel is paid at the state level, including control by the highest state authorities, which emphasizes the strategic importance of this area.

President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev allows stating the institutionalization of the educational function of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan as one of the key elements of the national security system.

So, in the publication Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, it is emphasized that «we must educate the military personnel with feelings of patriotism, humanity and kindness... the army should become a stronghold of spiritual and moral education» [1]. This attitude reflects the transition to a value-oriented model of military construction, within the framework of which the army is considered not only as a power institution, but also as the most important mechanism for the formation of civilian identity and moral guidelines for the personality of a serviceman.

In these conditions, the relevance of the formation of a hybrid educational environment of the National Guard, which combines traditional forms of military pedagogical influence with digital educational technologies, is increasing. Online learning is becoming an important tool for ensuring the continuity of the educational process and its adaptation to modern conditions of service.

**The purpose** of the study is to assess the effectiveness of a modern approach to training sergeants based on the integration of traditional and digital training methods, practice-oriented development of skills in working with personnel, the formation of leadership, organizational and psychological competencies, as well as the use of hybrid educational technologies and simulation platforms.

**To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set:**

1. Analyze the level of professional, organizational and psychological competencies of sergeants, their educational level and length of service to assess readiness for the introduction of a new approach to training.

2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed training system through online classes, final testing and analysis of participant feedback, including the identification of proposals for improving the educational process.

**Research materials and methods:** participants in the study of 811 sergeants, of which 445 respondents took part in an anonymous survey. Curriculum (20 academic hours), guidelines, algorithms for working with personnel, simulation platforms, digital educational technologies. Online platform "Google Forms" for questioning, final tests to assess the assimilation of material, methodological analysis with coordinating officers. Applied methods (online lesson, testing, anonymous survey, content analysis and statistical data processing, comparison method).

Modern approaches to military education involve the integration of pedagogical, psychological and technological components. The scientific literature emphasizes that effective training of military personnel should take into account both professional and personal characteristics of students.

The modern training of sergeants is a comprehensive system. It combines traditional and digital training methods, practice-oriented development of skills in working with personnel and the formation of leadership, organizational and psychological competencies. Additionally, hybrid educational technologies and simulation platforms are used. The effectiveness of the system is determined not only by technical training, but also by the ability of sergeants to manage personnel and make decisions in dynamic conditions of service.

In the USA (X.Han, M.Jin, L.He), the NCO Common Core Competencies system has been developed, which includes leadership, communication, training management and combat management, which provides sergeants with the ability to effectively work with personnel [2]. Russian researchers (A.E. Vlasov, E.I. Balakireva, N.P. Fadeeva) emphasize the importance of organizational management competencies of sergeants, including planning, coordination and control of personnel actions [3]. In Europe (V. Rodikov et al.), universal models of professional competencies have been developed that combine professional and leadership skills applicable to non-commissioned personnel [4]. In Turkey, studies show that the professional training of junior commanders should combine academic theory and intensive practice of personnel management, ensuring the development of organizational and communication competencies [5]. In China, the emphasis is on the formation of strategic and psychological competencies, resistance to stress, moral ethical qualities and the ability to work in multinational and intercultural conditions [6].

Analysis of domestic and foreign studies showed that effective training of sergeants should include several key components:

combining traditional and digital teaching methods;

practice-oriented development of skills in working with personnel;

formation of leadership, organizational and psychological competencies;

application of hybrid educational technologies and simulation platforms.

Modern training of sergeants is considered as a comprehensive system, including the integration of traditional and digital training methods, practice-oriented development of skills in working with personnel, the formation of leadership, organizational and psychological competencies, as well as the use of hybrid educational technologies and simulation platforms. The effectiveness of this system is determined not only by technical training, but also by the ability of sergeants to manage personnel and make decisions in dynamic conditions of service.

To check the effectiveness of the proposed approach, from February 17 to March 4, 2026, online classes were organized in the National Guard of the Republic of Kazakhstan with sergeants of military units and training units of the Academy of the National Guard of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Classes were held daily for two hours (from 10:00 to 12:00), which corresponded to the optimal service time regulations. In each military unit, a coordinating officer was appointed to provide organizational support and control of the educational process.

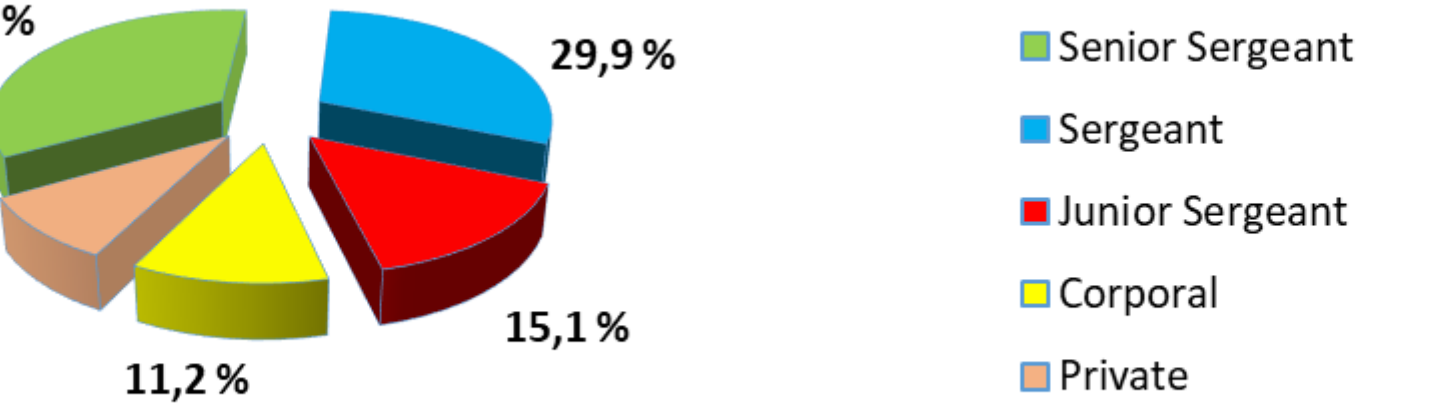
The training program included about 20 academic hours and was completely practice-oriented, with a focus on working with personnel. After the first ten hours of training, methodological discussions were held with coordinating officers and faculty, during which methodological aspects were analyzed and recommendations were made to improve training.

The training was attended by 811 sergeants who were trained on the job. To assess the quality of the organization of classes and adjust the educational program, an anonymous survey was conducted using the Google Forms platform, in which 445 respondents (55%) voluntarily participated.

**Results.** Of the 596 sergeants (73%), they successfully passed the final testing and received certificates. At the same time, all participants were presented with methodological recommendations, brief theses and algorithms of actions when working with personnel, applicable in service and combat activities.

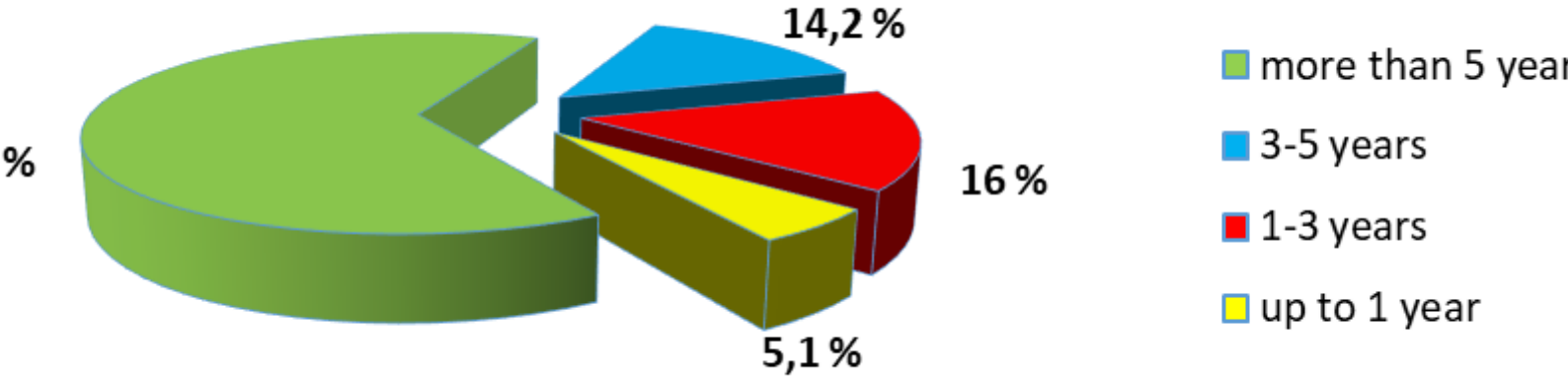
The data obtained indicate that the bulk of the sample is made up of representatives of the sergeant staff. Senior NCOs (34.6%) and non-commissioned NCOs (29.9%) accounted for the largest proportion, collectively accounting for more than half of all study participants. A significant part is also occupied by junior sergeants (15.1%). The share of ordinary personnel is 9.2%, while representatives of other military ranks are represented to a lesser extent.

Diagram 1 - Analysis of distribution by military rank.



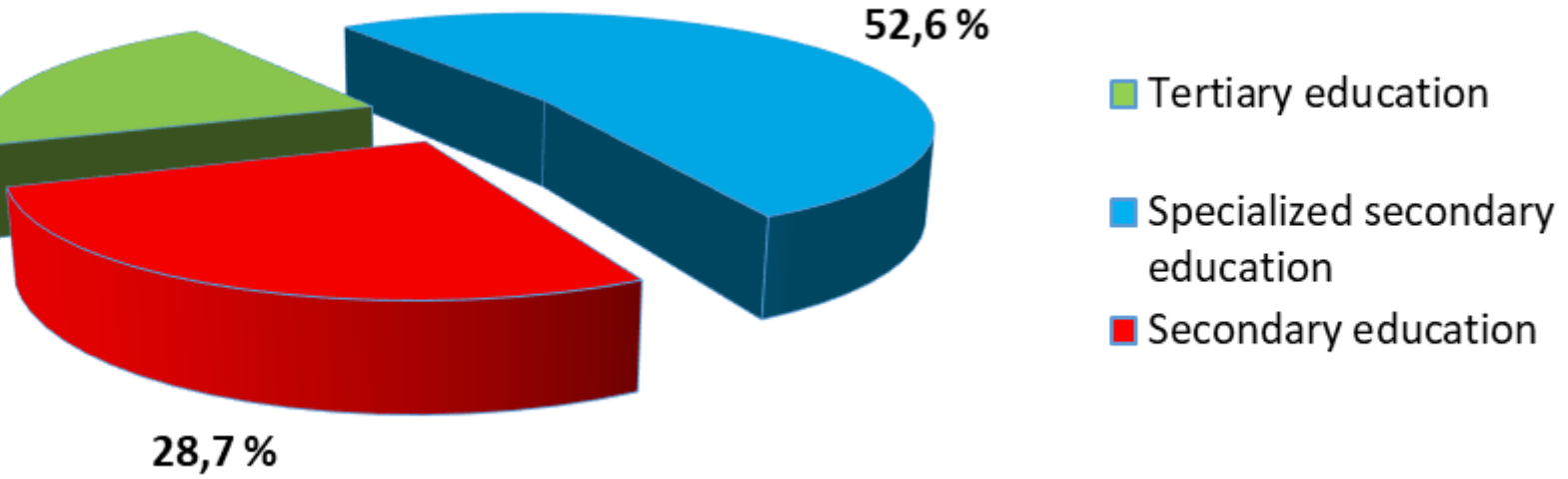

The analysis showed that the majority of respondents have significant experience in military service. The largest share of respondents falls on military personnel with more than 5 years of experience (64.7%). Respondents with 3-5 years of experience make up 14.2%, while the share of military personnel with 1-3 years of experience is about 16%. The number of respondents with service experience up to one year is minimal.

Diagram 2 - Analysis of service experience.




Analysis of the educational level of the study participants showed that the majority of respondents have a fairly high level of education. More than half of the respondents have higher education (52.6%), which indicates a high level of professional training of military personnel. A significant part are respondents with secondary vocational education 28.7%, while the share of military personnel with secondary education is 20.7%.

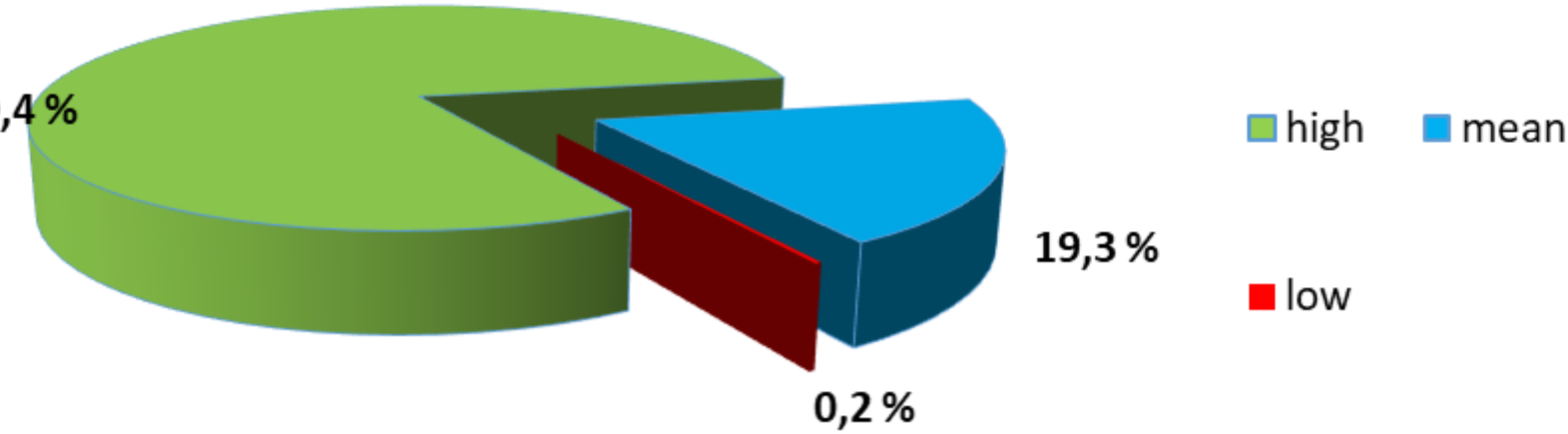
Diagram 3 - Analysis of educational level of participants.




Thus, the data obtained indicate that the study is dominated by military personnel with formed professional competencies and sustainable performance experience, which contributes to a more meaningful and reasoned perception of the questionnaire questions, which increases the reliability of the empirical data obtained.

The results of content analysis show that the most common category of responses is a positive assessment of the organization and content of training, which indicates a high degree of satisfaction of respondents with the classes conducted.

Diagram 4 - Level of respondents' satisfaction with the lessons.




At the same time, some of the survey participants made proposals aimed at further improving the training system for sergeants. The most significant among them are the need to increase the regularity of training events, as well as to strengthen the practical orientation of classes, including the analysis of real business situations and practical training.

In addition, some respondents pointed out the need to improve the material and technical base of training and the introduction of modern educational technologies, which corresponds to modern trends in the development of professional training of military personnel. The importance of increasing the use of the state language in the learning

process is also noted, which contributes to a better perception of the educational material.

In general, the results of the analysis indicate a high interest of military personnel in improving the level of professional training, as well as the need to further improve the forms and methods of organizing the educational process.

The results of the testing showed that most of the participants have a high level of professional training, significant service experience and formed competencies, which ensured the successful assimilation of the educational material. 73% of sergeants successfully passed the final testing and received certificates, and all participants were provided with guidelines, short theses and algorithms for actions when working with personnel.

Analysis of an anonymous survey revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the organization and content of classes. At the same time, the participants noted the need for further improvement of training: increasing the regularity of training events, strengthening the practical orientation of classes, analyzing real business situations, improving the material and technical base and introducing modern educational technologies.

**Discussion.** The data obtained confirm the relevance of the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills for the formation of complex professional competencies of the sergeant staff, which is consistent with international studies (USA, Russia, Europe, Turkey, China), focusing on leadership, organizational, psychological and digital skills.

Thus, the modern approach to the training of sergeants, including the integration of traditional and digital methods, practice-oriented training and the development of complex competencies, has proven its effectiveness.

The implementation of the training program allowed: to increase the level of professional training of sergeants; provide in-service training; introduce modern pedagogical technologies; improve the quality of educational work.

Prospects for further research are associated with improving digital training technologies, expanding hybrid forms of training and studying their impact on the professional development of military personnel.

**Conclusion.** Most of the participants have significant service experience and a high level of education, which contributes to the successful assimilation of the material and improves the quality of training of sergeants. To further improve the training system, it is recommended: regular classes, strengthening practical orientation, introducing modern educational technologies and expanding the use of the state language in the educational process.

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