

IAMPS 2015: Military Psychology - A Century Of Experience

Portuguese Army/Applied Psychology Army Center in
Lisbon, Portugal May 18 to 22, 2015.

Psychological Problems and Stress Faced
by Soldiers in Asymmetric Warfare
Operations

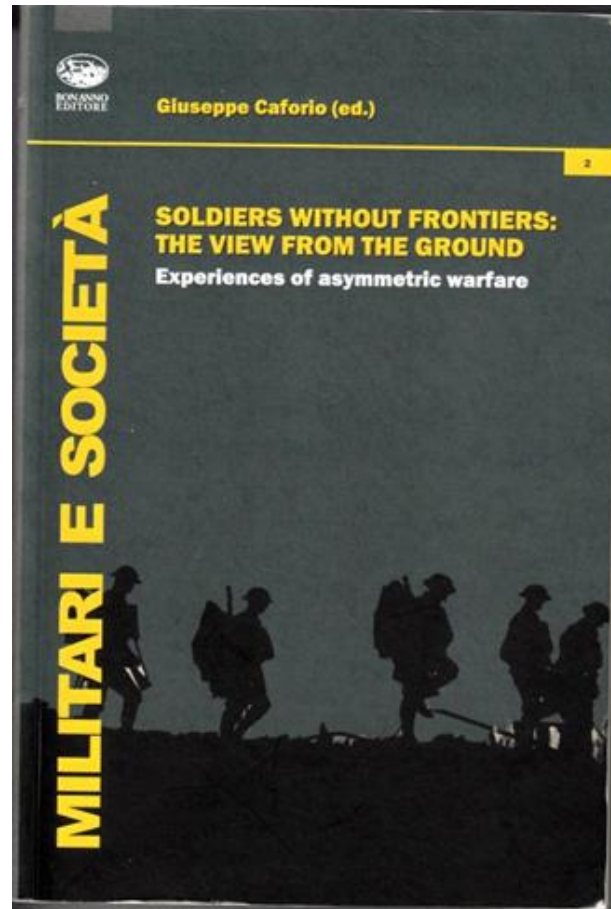
by

Giuseppe Caforio

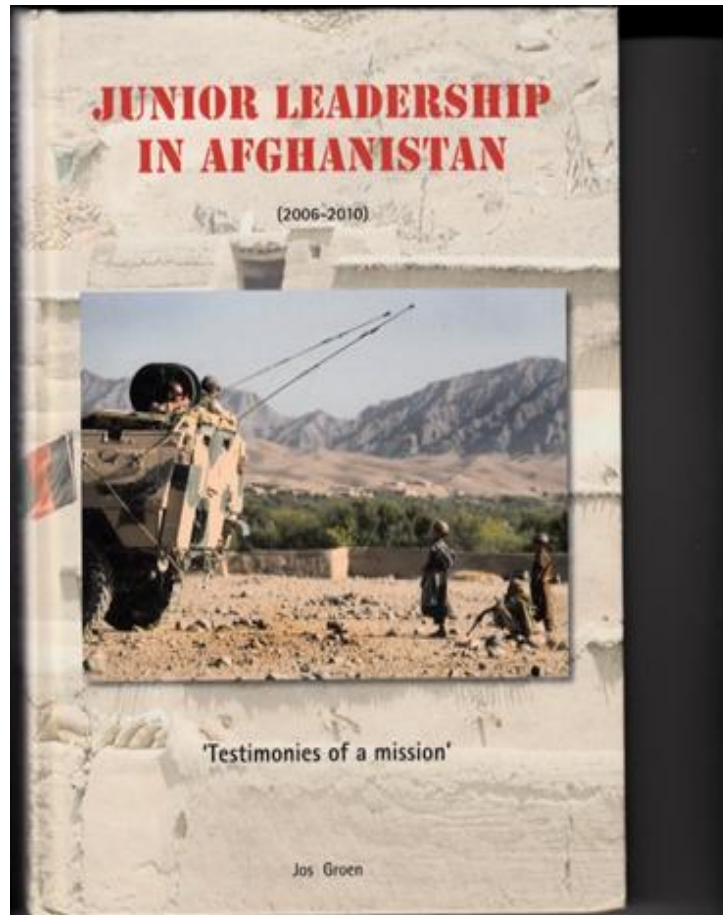
Slide 2

Asymmetric warfare is a form of war in which a weak party, as opposed to a strong party, use non-conventional instrument of struggle in order to bridge the gap between the two sides

Slide 3



Slide 4



Slide 5

Slide 5 – The sample

Country/ rank	Officers	NCOs	Privates	Total
Bulgaria	35	17	7	59
Denmark	18	6	13	37
Italy	35	28	20	83
Netherlands	18			18
Philippines	16	15	9	40
Slovenia	15	9	28	52
South Africa	31	27	36	94
South Korea	22	23	5	50
Spain	30	15	47	93
Turkey	34			34
Total by rank	254	140	165	560

Slide 6 – natural environment



Slide 7- A testimony

Dutch Lieut. Geert: I first flew to Minhad, where I participated in the acclimatization programme. The climate was inconceivable here: it was uncannily warm and enormously humid at the same time

Slide 8- Human environment



Slide 9

TURA03: Smell and vision of misery and chaos surrounded me when the doors of the plane are opened. I thought that this 6 months were going to be hard for me.

Slide 10

SIC44: After his airplane landed, he noticed hard injured German soldiers who were transported by the helicopters to the hospital.

Slide 11

Dutch Lieut. Gerwin: It was Monday 31 March. In the surroundings of Mirabad a Fenneck of the ISTAR platoon had hit an IED, causing three seriously wounded. One of them would eventually lose both legs.

Slide 12- The trap of IEDs



Slide 13- PTSD



Slide 14 - Losses suffered



Slide 15

Dutch Lieut. Peter: The action was mentally very taxing. A number of men had looked almost straight into the eyes of the opponent they killed. At the same time, one of their buddies was badly injured.

Slide 16

SIC47: He saw how one suicide bomber with the motorbike attacked ANA soldiers who were coming home. He still remembers the date of this attack, which happened 400 m away. He was full of adrenalin, very upset. This was for the first time, he filled the weapon.

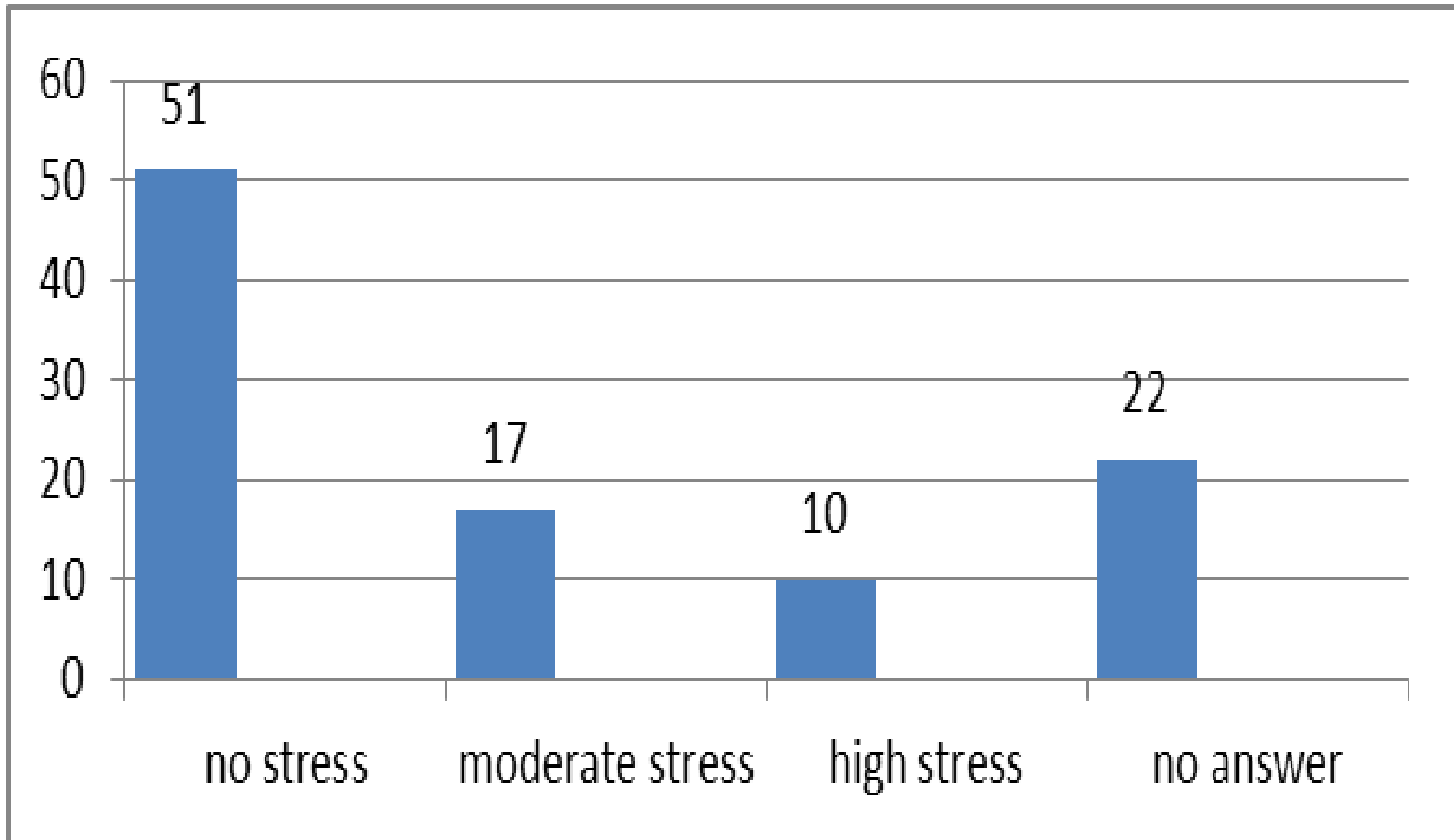
Slide 17

DKA04: You go in a high gear during the operations, and it can be difficult to calm down afterwards.

Slide 18- The small group



Slide 19- Emotional stress during and resulting from operations



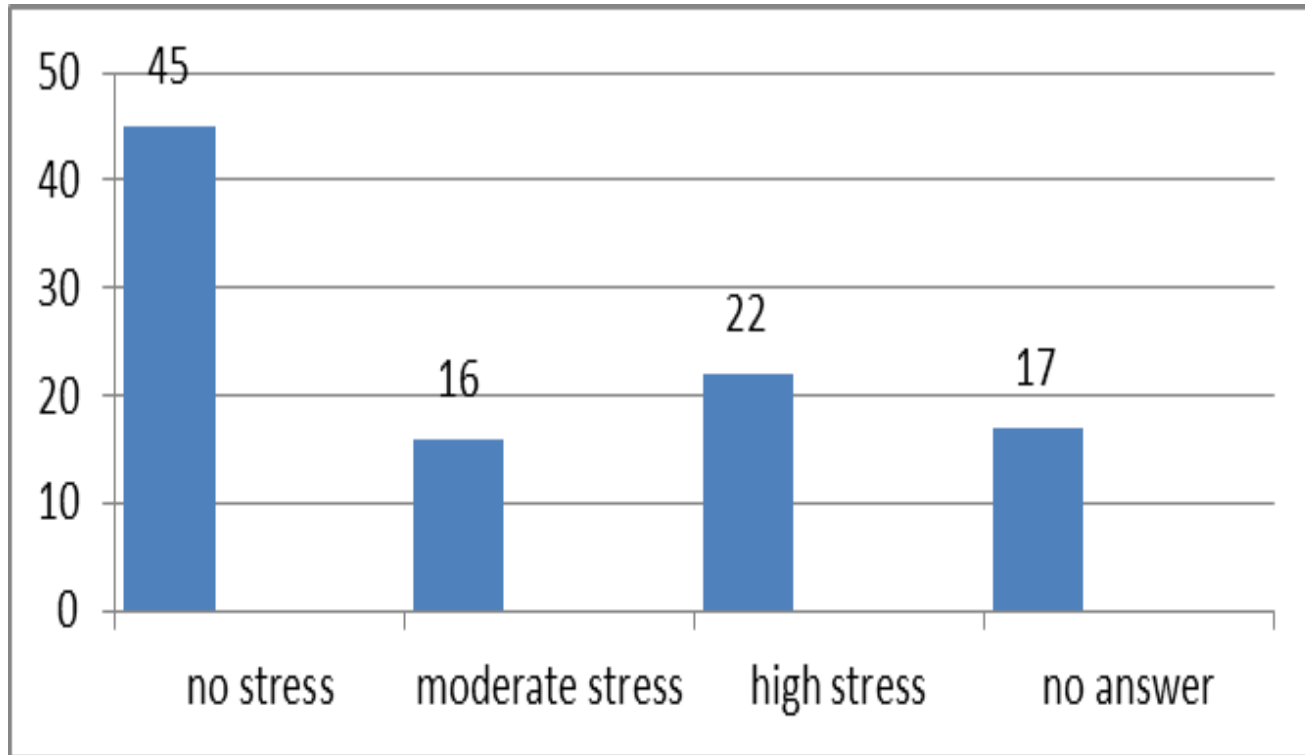
Slide 20

ITC58: Yes, I had problems with my wife, that culminated in a separation three years ago. I am realising that have devoted too few time to my family.

Slide 21

TURA11: Yes I had problems. One of them was my son's school success worsened.

Slide 22- Stress due to separation from family



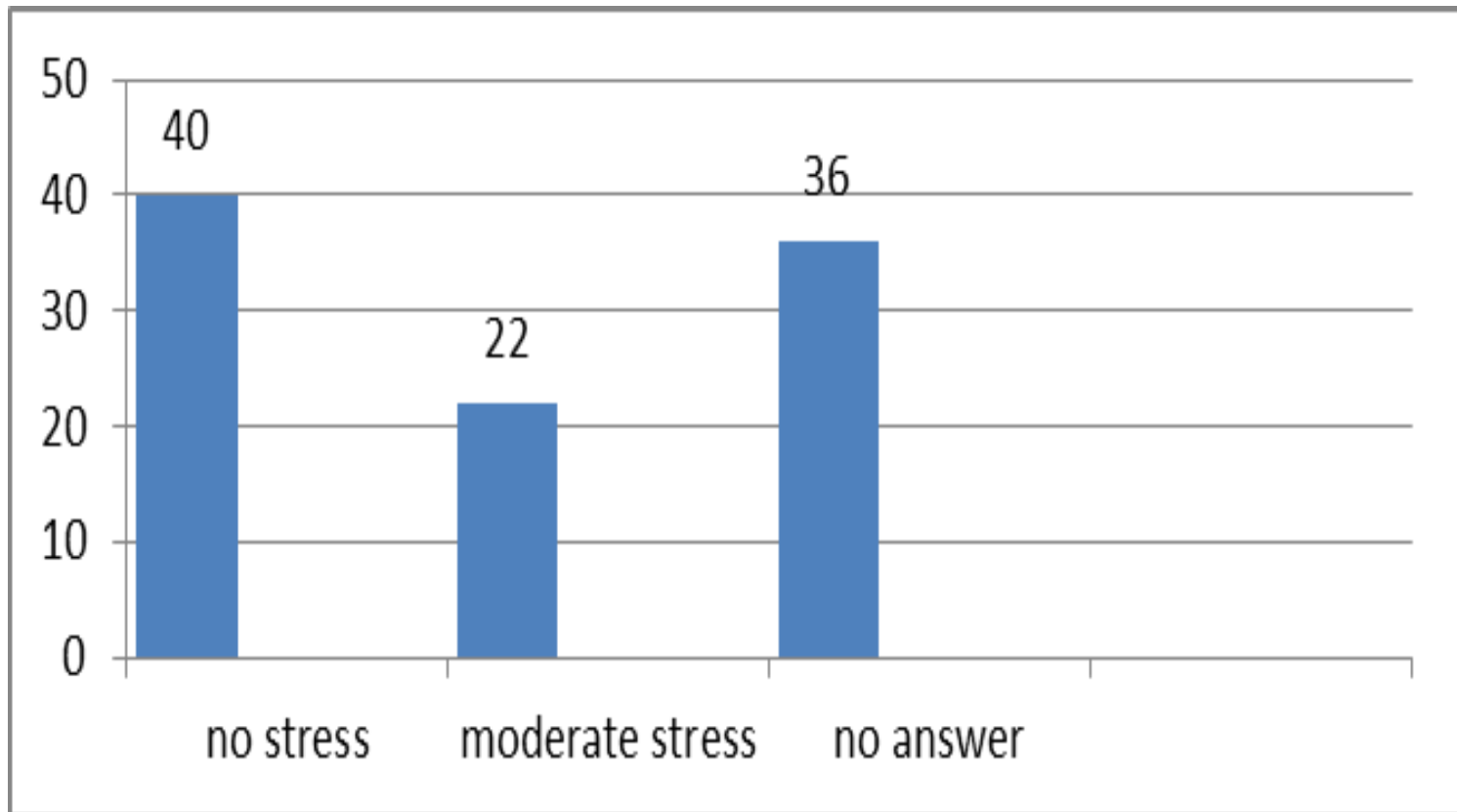
Slide 23

Dutch Lieut. Gerwin: I think that everyone going away on his first mission, returns a different person... Everybody expresses this in his own way: one person get more aggressive and the other a bit more reserved.

Slide 24

ITC33: When I come back I remained for couple of months rather impulsive: I was irritated by the luxury, by the superficiality. I have seen what it means to live and to combat for surviving, have seen dead and wounded people, it was really hard.

Slide 25- Readaptation in the homeland



Slide 26

Expressions like these— *“it is easy to go to war, but hard to get home again”* and *“you come back home with a different mentality”* or *“you return a different person”*