

SCIENTIFIC AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF PSYCHODIAGNOSTICS OF STRESS CONDITIONS IN YOUNG MANAGERS: SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Lola Inagamova¹

Received:
June 30, 2025

Revised:
July 31, 2025

Accepted:
August 25, 2025

DOI:
10.56289/ijcsrp.200

ABSTRACT

This article explores scientific and empirical approaches to psychodiagnostics of stress among young managers. It analyses key theories and models of stress, as well as the factors influencing the development of stress resilience. Based on a socio-psychological study, the paper presents empirical data on the causes, emotional experiences, and consequences of chronic stress among young managers in Uzbekistan, together with their coping mechanisms. The findings highlight the importance of developing stress resilience for effective management and suggest directions for practical implementation and future research.

Keywords: *stress, psychodiagnostics, stress resistance, young managers, socio-psychological analysis, stress management.*

INTRODUCTION

The current external environment is defined by a high degree of uncertainty, variability, and complexity across both, social and economic domains. Digitalisation, rapid technological development, global competition, and volatile socioeconomic conditions present new challenges for organisations. Consequently, the importance of effective leadership has grown, while management has become increasingly demanding and associated with higher levels of psychological stress.

This environment is particularly challenging for young managers. While they must quickly adapt to dynamic changes, they also have to establish their own management style and earn authority within their teams. Their lack of extensive management experience can heighten the perception of external factors as stressors, increasing the risks of emotional burnout, poor decision-making, and a decline in overall management effectiveness.

However, like other professionals, young managers need to be resilient to stress. Stress resilience is particularly important, as it is considered a core personal trait that ensures their ability to maintain efficiency, emotional balance, and constructive behaviour under pressure and uncertainty. Cultivating this resilience does not just increase their personal productivity; it also has a direct effect on the performance of their teams and the organisation overall. A high degree of stress resilience is crucial for managers when making critical decisions, handling personnel, and resolving complex and conflict-ridden situations. This resilience enables them to perform effectively under pressure, prevent emotional and physical fatigue, maintain a clear mind and make rational decisions in challenging circumstances, rather than being ruled by emotions.

¹ PhD; Associate Professor; Head, Department of Management Art, Academy of Public Policy and Management under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, ORCID: 0009-0007-8008-7095, e-mail: lolayusupova@gmail.com.

The aim of the study is to determine the sociopsychological characteristics associated with the development of stress resilience in young managers. For the purpose of this study, the term "young managers" refers to executives under the age of 40. This group includes individuals who have graduated from a higher or secondary specialised vocational institution, have subsequently been employed in their field of study, and have held a managerial position for more than three years in the specialty indicated by their Degree.

Previous research has identified the following traits among stress-resilient young managers:

- Confidence in one's abilities and knowledge.
- Readiness to embrace risks and tackle complex issues.
- Ability to adapt rapidly to new work environments and changes.
- Ability to effectively manage time and resources.
- Ability to find positive outcomes in difficult situations and identify opportunities for growth and development.
- Dedication to continuous personal growth.
- Emotional stability and ability to self-control in high-stress situations.
- The presence of a social support network and the willingness to ask for assistance.
- Maintaining good physical and mental health.
- Capacity to communicate well and foster positive relationships with peers and direct reports. (Irehill et al., 2023; Zhou and Zheng, 2022).

The study was conducted to evaluate whether the general psychological characteristics of stress resilience, as discussed in theoretical literature, are consistent with those found among young managers in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of scientific and methodological approaches have been developed to study stress resistance in young managers, including Cognitive Resource Theory (Fiedler and Garcia, 1987) and the concept of "hardiness" (Kobasa, 1979). These frameworks emphasise that a manager's capacity to remain effective under pressure depends not only on individual psychological traits but also on the ability to mobilise cognitive and emotional resources in challenging circumstances.

Assessing stress tolerance helps to identify personal and organisational factors that shape resilience. Leaders who manage stress effectively make better decisions, communicate more clearly, and maintain mental and physical well-being (Irehill et al., 2023; Zhou and Zheng, 2022). Recent research expands these findings, showing that digitalisation, workload intensity, and leadership style significantly affect stress levels. For instance, Bregenzer and Jimenez (2021) demonstrated that risk factors in digitalised work environments heighten stress when leadership support is weak. Similarly, Alsomaidae (2023) found that workplace stress directly reduces employee engagement, with leadership style serving as a crucial mediating factor. Sainz et al. (2021) further revealed that non-authentic leadership increases perceptions of organisational dehumanisation and stress, while Dåderman et al. (2023) showed that leaders with emotional stability and empathy exhibit stronger resilience and foster lower stress across teams.

The evaluation of stress resistance offers multiple benefits. It allows early identification of health risks, supports the development of coping strategies, enhances leadership potential, and contributes to healthier organisational climates. Existing diagnostic methods include

simulated stress tests that record physiological reactions — such as heart rate, respiration, and hormonal changes (Krachko et al., 2019) — and self-assessment questionnaires designed to analyse behavioural responses to stress (Komlev and Chernyaeva, 2021). Classical personality assessments, including the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) (Ben-Porath and Tellegen, 2020), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), and the “Forecast” method (Rybnikov, 1990), remain useful tools for identifying individual differences in stress adaptability. Nevertheless, Komlev and Chernyaeva (2021) recommend that diagnostic methods minimise subjectivity and maintain independence from both the assessor and the respondent.

In Uzbekistan, although several promising approaches to stress diagnostics and resilience training exist, their practical application remains limited. The absence of testing centres, a regulatory framework for psychodiagnostics, and cultural stereotypes about psychological assessment hinder consistent implementation. Strengthening evidence-based leadership development and fostering an organisational culture that values psychological well-being could significantly improve stress resilience among young managers.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A socio-psychological questionnaire (SPQ) was developed to examine the stress resistance among young managers. The questionnaire included scenarios illustrating attitudes toward different manifestations of stress. Analysing the responses made it possible to identify:

- a) the main causes of stress among personnel;
- b) emotional experiences associated with stress;
- c) potential consequences of stress; and
- d) socio-psychological perceptions of ways to overcome stress.

The SPQ was divided into four blocks of questions based on substantiated factors and practical observations. The first section focused on the causes of stress, while the second examined managers’ emotional experiences related to it. The third explored opinions regarding potential consequences, and the final section addressed strategies that young managers employ to overcome stress.

The survey participants included employees of the Institute for Personnel Training, attendees of the “Leaders of the Future” programme at the Academy of Public Administration, and members of the civil service reserve. In total, 263 respondents participated between January and June 2023.

RESULTS

The indicators in Table 1, obtained from the question “What situations usually cause stress for you” helped identify its main triggers among young managers. As shown in Table 1, the survey results indicate that “insufficient sleep” is the primary stressor for young managers, cited by 36.2% of respondents. Other significant factors include “excessive fatigue” (25.1%) and “low mood” (24.8%), demonstrating a clear link between stress and general well-being. These findings suggest that sleep disturbances, headaches, and negative emotional states intensify overall tension.

Table 1. Indicators of the influence of stress factors on the behaviour of young managers (n=263)

No.	Reasons of stress		No.	Reasons of stress	
1.	Insufficient sleep	36.2%	9.	Low salary	8.4%
2.	Headaches	12.0%	10.	Lack of motivation	8.9%
3.	Low mood	24.8%	11.	Busyness/overload of tasks	19.5%
4.	Negative attitude of colleagues	11.1%	12.	Lack of time	9.5%
5.	Excessive fatigue	25.1%	13.	High anxiety levels	7.8%
6.	Lack of domestic harmony	10.3%	14.	Excessive analytical data	4.2%
7.	High number of meetings	15.6%	15.	Irregular mealtimes	4.2%
8.	Management rudeness	10.6%	16.	Intense inner restlessness	4.5%

The data reveals that both professional and personal conditions contribute to stress. 11.1% of young managers mentioned a "negative attitude of colleagues" as a contributing factor. This suggests that a lack of mutual understanding and conflict situations in the workplace contribute to stress. Furthermore, 15.6% of respondents noted that "high number of meetings" plays a leading role in their stress levels, while 10.6% pointed to "management rudeness" and 8.4% cited "low salary". These results indicate that unnecessary meetings, a lack of communicative culture from superiors, authoritarian management styles, and insufficient material incentives lead to increased emotional stress.

Additional factors included "low motivation" (8.9%), "work overload" (19.5%), and "time pressure" (9.5%). These findings imply that a lack of enthusiasm and an excessive number of additional, non-core tasks, along with time pressure, are sources of stress. Additionally, high anxiety levels (7.8%), headaches (12.0%), and inner restlessness (4.5%) were also identified as causes of emotional stress. Other contributors include an excessive amount of analytical data (4.2%) and irregular mealtimes (4.2%).

These results, in turn, lead to the conclusion that *"a high feeling of anxiety that arises in a person in various unpleasant situations, a large amount of information that must be analysed in the process of work, cases of not having time to have lunch in order to complete tasks on time, self-doubt in completing tasks with high quality, excessive anxiety are the cause of emotional stress in young managers"*.

Overall, the findings show that several factors contribute to stress in young executives, with lack of sleep, fatigue, and work overload being the most prominent.

The study also aimed to examine the emotional experiences that arise from stress in the professional activities of young managers. To achieve this, participants were asked: "What do you feel when you are under stress?" The responses were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, with the findings presented in Table 2.

Based on the survey results in Table 2, when faced with a stressful situation, 21.1% of the participants reported feeling "dissatisfaction", while 8.1% felt a sense of "uselessness". Additionally, 12.2% reported feeling nothing at all. These responses indicate that stress can provoke frustration, diminish self-worth, and reduce perceived value within the team. Conversely, a notable portion of respondents either did not take stress seriously or did not experience any negative emotions.

Table 2. Emotional intensity of young managers in stressful situations, manifestation of experiences (n=263)

I control myself	43.1%
Depression	21.9%
Feeling of dissatisfaction	21.1%
I didn't think about it	12.8%
They don't feel anything	12.2%
Feeling of necessity	11.4%
Feeling of uselessness	8.1%
Indifferent to stress	7.2%
Feeling unrecognised	5.3%
Joy	2.5%

A mix of both positive and negative emotional responses were observed among the young managers. While 21.9% reported a negative experience, specifically "depression," defined by a sharp decline in mood and fading enthusiasm, others showed more adaptive or neutral reactions. A small group (7.2%) of young managers reported "indifference" to stress, suggesting they ignore stressful situations and do not perceive them as having a negative impact. In contrast, 11.4% viewed stress as a "necessity," indicating that they highly value their contributions and have a clear sense of purpose within their teams.

The survey results also revealed other noteworthy emotional reactions:

Feeling unrecognised: 5.3% of respondents reported feeling unrecognised.

Joy: A small portion (2.5%) reported feeling joy, suggesting that they may find challenges stimulating.

Self-control: The largest group, at 43.1%, stated that they "control myself", demonstrating a high level of self-management.

Lack of consideration: 12.8% of participants stated that they "didn't think about it".

Based on these findings, it is clear that in stressful situations, young managers often feel unrecognised and that their professional successes go unnoticed. However, emotional stress can also, in some cases, lead to positive emotions, such as pleasure, cheerfulness, and satisfaction. Among the respondents, there are individuals who demonstrated a high capacity for self-control and emotional management, while others have not deeply considered the impact of emotional stress on themselves.

The above findings from the socio-psychological questionnaire (SPQ) indicate that stressful situations trigger a wide range of emotional states and experiences in young managers. Feelings of dissatisfaction and depression were observed more frequently than other emotional responses. Importantly, the study also revealed that the majority of respondents possess a high degree of self-control.

To examine the perspectives of young managers on the long-term effects of stress, participants were asked, "In your opinion, what are the consequences of constant stress in your work?" The responses to this question were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, with the results presented in Table 3.

As the data in Table 3 show, young managers link chronic stress to a range of negative outcomes. Nearly half of the respondents (48.3%) identified "nervousness" as a key consequence. A significant portion (33.6%) also noted "illness," while 19.7% reported "not

being able to keep up". These findings suggest that young managers see emotional stress as a factor contributing to physiological changes, acute and chronic diseases, nervous system disorders, heightened irritability, and a decrease in work efficiency.

Table 3. Indicators of young managers' attitudes towards the feeling of the consequences of chronic stress (n=263)

No.	Consequences of stress		No.	Consequences of stress	
1.	Nervousness	48.3%	6.	Negative impact on personal life	19.2%
2.	Illness	33.6%	7.	Didn't think about it	13.1%
3.	Decreased labour productivity	28.1%	8.	Conflicts in the team	8.9%
4.	Deterioration of health	23.3%	9.	Dismissal/resignation	5.6%
5.	Not able to keep up	19.7%	10.	Loss of interest in everything	1.4%

The survey revealed other views on the consequences of stress. For instance, 13.1% of respondents stated they had not considered the consequences of stress, indicating a lack of deep reflection on its effects. Conversely, a small but notable number of young managers pointed to more severe outcomes: 5.6% believe chronic stress could lead to "dismissal/resignation", and 8.9% expect it to cause an increase in "conflicts within the team". These results highlight that while some managers may not fully grasp the impact of stress, others recognise it can lead to professional decline, disinterest in work, and strained relationships with colleagues.

The survey results highlight a strong link between chronic stress and a range of negative outcomes. According to respondents, a "negative impact on personal life" (19.2%), "decreased productivity" (28.1%), and a "deterioration in health" (23.3%) are all perceived consequences of constant stress. This suggests that frequently experienced stress, stemming from difficulties in decision-making and low self-esteem, can lead to a decline in professional efficacy and a weakening of the immune system. Furthermore, a small portion of respondents (1.4%) noted a "loss of interest in everything", indicating that prolonged stress can diminish enthusiasm and motivation for any activity.

The results collectively show that young managers hold diverse views on the consequences of stress. However, they most frequently identify a direct correlation between stress and outcomes such as illness, nervousness, decreased productivity, and a general deterioration of health.

To understand how young managers cope with stress, the study explored their personal strategies. Participants were asked: "How do you get out of a situation when you are under stress?" The responses were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, with the findings presented in Table 4. According to the data, 34.2% of respondents reported resting to cope with stress, 7.2% eating, and 26.7% taking walks. These findings suggest that when experiencing emotional stress, young managers prefer corrective methods such as temporary breaks from work, consuming various foods, and walking in tranquil settings. Similarly, 58.3% of young managers consider methods like "listening to music", 8.9% "sleeping", and 20.0% "reading information on the Internet" as effective for overcoming stress. The data indicates that listening to music, getting adequate rest and sleep, and monitoring social media events are effective ways for respondents to manage stressful situations.

Table 4. Stress coping strategies of young managers (n=263)

Listening to music	58.9%
Resting	34.2%
Taking walks	26.7%
Reading information on the Internet	20%
Meet with loved ones	17.5%
Engaging in hobbies	13.3%
Sleeping	8.9%
Eating	7.2%
Performing breathing exercises	6.7%
Sharing experiences with others	4.4%
Stress does not affect me	1.1%
Consuming alcohol	0.3%

The study's results also show that 17.5% of respondents "meet with their loved ones", 0.3% "become addicted to alcohol", and 4.4% "share their experiences with others" to relieve stress. This highlights that young executives often seek support from loved ones, preferring to spend time with them or share their experiences and emotions to overcome difficult situations. Additionally, it was found that a small portion of respondents also use negative coping mechanisms, such as alcohol use and addiction, to deal with stress.

Furthermore, 13.3% of young managers noted that to reduce the negative impact of stress they "engage in a hobby", 6.7% "perform breathing exercises", and 1.1% selected the response "stress does not affect me". The results reveal that respondents use hobbies and relaxation exercises to manage stress and tension. However, some young managers who do not use these methods reported that stress is prolonged and causes anxiety.

In general, young managers use multiple strategies to cope with stress effectively. Specifically, we can see that such methods as listening to music, resting, walking, reading information online, and visiting loved ones are used more frequently than others. Overall, the opinions of young managers regarding the causes, emotional impact, and consequences of stress, as well as their attitudes toward coping mechanisms, vary. This can be attributed to factors such as their working conditions, professional expertise, length of service, and individual socio-psychological traits.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study of stress resistance, based on the above four psychological question blocks, reveals a clear need for developing stress management skills among young leaders in Uzbekistan. The absence of a standardised methodology or corporate protocol for fostering stress resistance across all levels of management indicates a low quality of psychological support for young managers. This, in turn, suggests that the training processes for future leaders in government organisations are currently disorganised and spontaneous with respect to teaching young managers how to manage and control stress at work.

The research and diagnosis of stress resistance allowed us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of young managers in handling stress within the context of Uzbekistan. It also demonstrated that a lack of standardised workload metrics and a poorly organised division of labour are key causes of stress for young managers at every level of management.

The insufficient mastery of effective stress management techniques by young managers highlights a need to improve training and awareness-building initiatives in line with modern

management practices. This situation contributes to job dissatisfaction and, in turn, can lead to negative life experiences. These factors, in our view, are reflected in heightened psychological changes related to stress and its consequences, which can lead to chronic "emotional exhaustion" in both the personal and professional lives of young managers.

Overall, we believe that the study's use of the SPQ "stress resistance" survey provides valuable practical implications. It helps young managers develop self-regulation skills and gain a better understanding of themselves and their responses to stressful situations. Young managers are among the professionals most frequently exposed to stress in various aspects of their work. High stress resilience is therefore essential for their ability to make responsible decisions, manage employees effectively, and resolve conflicts.

The study revealed that key personal stressors include lack of sleep (36.2%), headaches (12.0%), and low mood (24.8%), which together reflect the impact of persistent fatigue, sleep disturbances, and negative emotional states on psychological well-being. In addition, respondents identified workplace and personal stress factors such as a negative attitude from colleagues (11.1%), excessive fatigue (25.1%), and lack of family harmony (10.3%), all of which contribute to emotional strain and reduced professional efficiency.

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