

THE IMPACT OF BUDGET EFFICIENCY ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF SOLDIERS OF INFANTRY BATTALION 733/MASARIKU IN THE CONTEXT OF THE INDONESIA–PAPUA NEW GUINEA BORDER SECURITY TASK FORCE

Roy Astyanto, Adv Bangun P. Hutajulu

The Republic of Defense University

Email: astyantor@gmail.com, zulu97ph@gmail.com

Abstrack

Budget efficiency policies in the defense sector, particularly those reducing psychological support programs, have raised concerns regarding their impact on soldiers' mental resilience in high-risk operational environments. This study examines the psychological implications of such policies on personnel of Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku deployed in the Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed using document analysis, policy review, and recent literature. The study applied a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) framework to systematically evaluate internal and external factors influencing soldiers' psychological well-being. Data were analyzed through thematic categorization and strategic mapping to identify key patterns and relationships. The findings indicate that despite strong internal factors such as leadership, discipline, and unit cohesion, budget reductions have weakened psychological assessment, pre-deployment preparation, and mental health monitoring. The SWOT analysis places the organization in Quadrant I (growth-oriented strategy), suggesting that strengths and opportunities outweigh weaknesses and threats. Key adaptive strategies include optimizing leadership roles as mental coaches, integrating psychological development into routine activities, and leveraging peer support systems. The study highlights that psychological resilience can be maintained through cost-effective and embedded approaches, even under fiscal constraints. Leadership engagement, interpersonal communication, and organizational culture play critical roles in mitigating stress and sustaining morale.

Keywords: budget efficiency, psychological well-being, military personnel, SWOT analysis, defense strategy, resilience, Indonesia–Papua New Guinea border

Diterima: 10 Juni 2026 | Direvisi: 05 Juni 2026 | Diterbitkan: 20 Juli 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force (Satgas Pamtas RI–PNG) constitutes a military operation that simultaneously demands physical readiness, tactical proficiency, and psychological resilience from its personnel. The Papua border region is predominantly characterized by tropical rainforest terrain, steep topography, high rainfall, and extreme temperature variations ranging from humid lowlands to cold mountainous areas. Such environmental conditions significantly increase both physiological and cognitive workload during field operations (Jackson, 2020). Patrol activities, which often involve long-distance routes through difficult terrain and widely dispersed outposts, further intensify exposure to environmental stressors and operational fatigue (Leloltery, 2021).

In addition to geographical challenges, limited infrastructure in Papua further complicates logistical aspects, including supply distribution, personnel rotation, and access to healthcare services. In this context, soldiers' morale becomes a critical factor that not only influences psychological well-being but also directly influences discipline, procedural compliance, and decision-making quality in the field. Studies indicate that effective leadership, adequate training, and proper workload management significantly contribute to unit cohesion and operational effectiveness under stress (Cox, 1995; Britt et al., 2016).

Furthermore, within the socio-political context of Papua, which is relatively sensitive, soldiers' mental readiness also affects the quality of civil–military interactions. Emotional stability, communication skills, and social sensitivity are essential in building public trust and maintaining regional security stability (Johni & Barrisen, 2024). Therefore, psychological strengthening should not be viewed as a supplementary factor, but rather as a fundamental operational prerequisite.

However, the fiscal efficiency policy introduced in 2025 through Presidential Instruction Number 1 of 2025 has had significant implications for the operational readiness of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI). This policy mandates reductions in government expenditure, including within the defense sector, primarily targeting non-priority activities such as official travel, training, and supporting programs. As a result, several critical programs related to psychological support—such as psychological assessments (Rikpsi), pre-deployment psychological briefings, and ongoing mental health monitoring—have been reduced or even eliminated (Rizki, 2025).

One of the affected units is Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku, which is deployed as part of the RI–PNG Pamtas Task Force. Budget reductions have led to decreased intensity of scenario-based training, limited psychological preparation, and the absence of systematic mental health monitoring during deployment. These conditions have the potential to increase soldiers' cognitive workload, manifested in attentional fatigue, reduced vigilance, and decision-making bias (Matthews et al., 2017).

Cumulatively, high operational pressure without adequate psychological support may lead to decreased morale, weakened unit cohesion, and an increased risk of tactical errors and procedural violations. Moreover, psychological instability may negatively affect civil–military relations and increase the likelihood of safety incidents in the field.

The Impact Of Budget Efficiency On The Psychological Well-Being Of Soldiers Of Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku In The Context Of The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force

Therefore, a more adaptive and proportionate policy approach is required to balance fiscal efficiency with operational demands in the field. This study is expected to contribute to the formulation of policies that reconcile fiscal discipline with defense readiness, particularly in maintaining soldiers' psychological conditions as a key determinant of operational success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. National Defense Theory

National defense is fundamentally defined as a state's effort to safeguard sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security through an integrated system involving all national resources. Contemporary defense studies emphasize that defense is not solely a military function but a comprehensive system embedded within political, social, and technological dimensions (Buzan, 2015). In this context, defense reflects the existence and legitimacy of the state, as it ensures stability and continuity in an increasingly complex global security environment (Gray, 2021).

From an epistemological perspective, defense studies employ interdisciplinary approaches, combining qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods to analyze defense policies and security dynamics. Modern defense theory has evolved beyond traditional warfare to include non-traditional threats such as cyber warfare, hybrid warfare, and socio-political instability (Hoffman, 2009). Thus, national defense must be understood as a dynamic system that continuously adapts to technological advances and strategic challenges.

2. Organizational Behavior Theory

Organizational Behavior (OB) examines how individuals, groups, and organizational structures influence behavior within institutional settings. It plays a crucial role in understanding how policies affect human performance, particularly in high-risk environments such as military operations (Robbins & Judge, 2017). OB theory highlights three analytical levels: individual (motivation, stress, perception), group (leadership, cohesion, communication), and organizational (culture, structure, policy).

In military contexts, psychological well-being, job stress, and organizational support significantly influence performance outcomes. Research shows that organizational stressors, including resource constraints and operational demands, directly affect morale, decision-making, and performance effectiveness (Britt et al., 2016). Therefore, organizational policies—such as budget efficiency measures—can have significant psychological implications for personnel.

3. Budget Efficiency Theory

Budget efficiency refers to the optimal allocation of financial resources to achieve maximum outcomes with minimum costs. In public finance theory, efficiency is closely linked to the allocative function of government spending, ensuring that resources are directed towards priority sectors (Musgrave, 1989). However, modern perspectives

emphasize that fiscal efficiency must also consider social and long-term impacts, particularly in critical sectors such as defense (Stiglitz, 2000).

Empirical studies indicate that excessive budget cuts may negatively affect organizational performance, particularly when they reduce essential support systems such as training and personnel welfare programs (Andrews et al., 2019). In defense institutions, budget efficiency policies must therefore balance cost reduction with operational readiness to avoid unintended consequences.

4. Psychological Assessment and Pre-Deployment Preparation

Psychological assessment and pre-deployment training are essential components of military readiness. Psychological screening aims to evaluate mental stability, emotional resilience, and personality traits to ensure that personnel are fit for operational deployment (Adler et al., 2011). Meanwhile, pre-deployment psychological training focuses on stress management, coping strategies, and resilience building.

The transactional stress theory proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggests that individuals equipped with adequate coping mechanisms are better able to manage stress and maintain performance under pressure. Studies confirm that pre-deployment preparation significantly reduces psychological distress and enhances operational effectiveness during missions (Hourani et al., 2011).

5. Psychological Conditions in Military Operations

Military operations expose personnel to extreme physical and psychological stress. The concept of *military hardiness* suggests that resilience is determined by commitment, control, and challenge orientation (Bartone, 2006). Soldiers with high levels of psychological hardiness are better able to withstand stress and maintain performance.

Conversely, inadequate psychological support increases vulnerability to Combat Stress Reaction (CSR), which may lead to acute stress disorders, reduced cognitive performance, and long-term psychological conditions such as PTSD (Jones & Wessely, 2003). Research indicates that sustained exposure to operational stress without adequate support systems significantly affects morale, cohesion, and mission success (Hoge et al., 2004).

6. SWOT Analysis in Defense Context

SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is widely used as a strategic tool to assess internal and external factors influencing organizational effectiveness. In military settings, strengths may include discipline and leadership, while weaknesses often relate to resource limitations. Opportunities may arise from institutional reforms or inter-agency collaboration, whereas threats include operational risks and geopolitical pressures (Helms & Nixon, 2010).

SWOT analysis provides a structured framework for evaluating how budget efficiency policies affect both operational capability and personnel well-being.

7. Strategy Theory (Ends–Ways–Means)

The Ends–Ways–Means framework is a fundamental model in strategic studies, emphasizing the alignment between objectives (ends), methods (ways), and resources (means). Effective strategy requires a balanced relationship among these elements to ensure successful implementation (Yarger, 2020).

In the context of defense policy, misalignment between limited resources and ambitious objectives can undermine operational effectiveness. Studies show that resource constraints without strategic adjustment often lead to performance degradation and increased organizational stress (Bartholomees, 2021). Therefore, this framework is essential for analyzing how budget efficiency policies influence military readiness, particularly in relation to psychological support systems.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method combined with a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analytical framework to examine the impact of budget efficiency policies on the psychological well-being of soldiers of Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku deployed in the Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force (Satgas Pamtas RI–PNG). A qualitative descriptive approach is utilized to systematically explore and interpret complex social and organizational phenomena within their natural operational context, with particular emphasis on meaning, processes, and contextual dynamics rather than numerical measurement. As noted by Creswell (2014), qualitative research enables an in-depth understanding of institutional practices, policy impacts, and human responses through the analysis of documents, observations, and relevant narratives. This approach is particularly appropriate in defense and strategic studies, where operational environments, human factors, and policy implications are deeply interconnected.

In the context of this research, the qualitative approach is used to analyze how budget efficiency policies—specifically reductions in psychological assessment, pre-deployment preparation, and mental health monitoring—affect the psychological condition of soldiers operating in high-risk and high-stress environments. The Papua border region presents extreme operational challenges, including difficult terrain, logistical constraints, and prolonged exposure to stressors, making psychological resilience a critical determinant of operational effectiveness. Therefore, this study focuses on understanding the causal relationship between organizational policy (budget efficiency) and individual psychological responses (morale, stress levels, and mental stability of soldiers).

The SWOT framework is employed as a strategic analytical tool to assess both internal and external factors influencing the psychological well-being of soldiers under budgetary constraints. According to Bryson (2018), SWOT analysis supports strategic evaluation by identifying internal capabilities and limitations while simultaneously examining external environmental conditions. In this study, strengths and weaknesses refer to internal organizational aspects such as leadership effectiveness, unit cohesion, training quality, and availability of psychological support systems. Meanwhile, opportunities and

threats are associated with external factors, including the operational environment of the Papua border, geopolitical dynamics, cross-border security risks, and the broader implications of national fiscal policy.

Data collection is conducted through document analysis, policy review, and examination of relevant academic literature published after 2020 to ensure contextual and contemporary relevance. Key documents include defense policy regulations, budget allocation reports, and institutional guidelines related to psychological support and operational readiness. The analytical process involves data reduction, thematic categorisation, and strategic mapping into a SWOT matrix to identify patterns, relationships, and critical issues affecting soldiers' psychological conditions.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, this study applies source triangulation and theoretical cross-checking, as recommended in qualitative research methodologies (Creswell, 2014). Credibility is strengthened through consistency between empirical evidence and established theories in organizational behavior, military psychology, and defense strategy. Dependability is ensured through transparent analytical procedures, while confirmability is achieved by maintaining objectivity in interpreting data.

Through this integrated qualitative and strategic approach, the study aims to produce a comprehensive and contextually grounded analysis of how budget efficiency policies influence the psychological well-being of soldiers. Ultimately, the findings are expected to contribute to the formulation of more adaptive and balanced defense policies that align fiscal efficiency with the operational and psychological readiness required for border security missions.

RESEARCH RESULT

A. Optimization Strategies of Korem 131/Santiago in Strengthening Border Security in Sangihe–Talaud

Table 4.4. Strength (IFAS)

No	Internal Strategy Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
1	The commander's leadership is strong and has direct influence.	0.09	4	0.36
2	The emotional closeness between soldiers is high	0.08	4	0.32
3	Unit solidarity and cohesiveness are maintained	0.07	4	0.28
4	The command system continues to operate effectively	0.07	4	0.28
5	Intensive interpersonal communication	0.08	4	0.32

The Impact Of Budget Efficiency On The Psychological Well-Being Of Soldiers Of
Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku In The Context Of The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea
Border Security Task Force

6	The role of small leaders (Danki/Danton) is very close to the members	0.07	4	0.28
7	Soldier discipline remains high	0.07	4	0.28
8	The organizational structure supports internal development	0.06	3	0.18
9	The unit's adaptation to limitations is quite good.	0.07	4	0.28
10	Mental training continues even though it is limited	0.05	3	0.15
Total Weight = 1,000				

Total Strength Score = 3.82

Table 4.5. Weaknesses (IFAS)

No	Internal Strategy Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Psychological examination was not carried out thoroughly	0.09	3	0.27
2	Limited psychological training (duration & quality)	0.08	3	0.24
3	Lack of professional psychology staff	0.07	3	0.21
4	Early detection of psychological disorders is not yet optimal	0.08	3	0.24
5	The mental development program is a formality	0.07	3	0.21
6	There is no standard for psychological development	0.07	3	0.21
7	Psychology program budget constraints	0.06	3	0.18
8	Stress coping material was not delivered optimally	0.07	3	0.21
9	Lack of priority of psychology policy	0.06	3	0.18
10	Reliance on non-formal approaches	0.06	3	0.18
Total Weight = 1,000				

Total Weakness Score = 2.87

Table 4.6. Opportunity (EFAS)

No	External Strategy Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Optimizing the role of the commander as a mental coach	0.09	4	0.36
2	Strengthening informal approaches between soldiers	0.08	4	0.32
3	Basic psychology training for small business leaders	0.08	4	0.32
4	Integration of coaching into routine activities	0.07	4	0.28
5	Utilization of communication technology	0.06	3	0.18
6	Daily communication-based psychological monitoring	0.07	4	0.28
7	Development of simple coaching methods	0.07	4	0.28
8	Collaboration with external psychology institutions	0.06	3	0.18
9	Efficiency policy that remains quality oriented	0.07	4	0.28
10	Strengthening family-based organizational culture	0.08	4	0.32

Total Weight = 1,000

Total Opportunity Score = 3.67

Table 4.7. Threats (EFAS)

No	External Strategy Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Decline in soldier morale	0.09	3	0.27
2	Potential for internal conflict	0.08	3	0.24
3	Impaired decision making	0.07	3	0.21
4	The risk of mental disorders increases	0.08	3	0.24
5	Decline in operational performance	0.07	3	0.21
6	Prolonged stress due to surgical pressure	0.06	3	0.18
7	Mental fatigue (burnout)	0.07	3	0.21
8	Delay in handling psychological disorders	0.07	3	0.21
9	Long-term impacts after assignment	0.06	3	0.18
10	Unpreparedness to face field pressure	0.06	3	0.18

Total Weight = 1,000

The Impact Of Budget Efficiency On The Psychological Well-Being Of Soldiers Of
Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku In The Context Of The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea
Border Security Task Force

Total Threat Score = 3.00

QUADRANT POSITION ANALYSIS

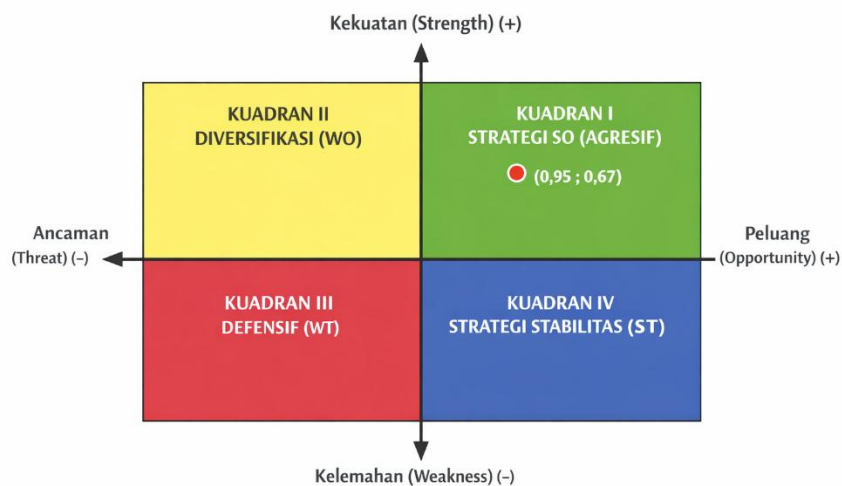
Internal Factor (IFAS): Strength (3.82) – Weakness (2.87) = **+0.95**

External Factor (EFAS): Opportunity (3.67) – Threat (3.00) = **+0.67**

SWOT coordinates = (0.95 ; 0.67)

Position is in **Quadrant I (Aggressive / Growth Oriented Strategy)**

This means the organization has great internal strength and significant external opportunities.



Gambar: Kuadran Analisis SWOT

Figure 4.1 SWOT Quadrant

Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2026

The weighting results indicate that the unit has core strengths in the form of discipline, loyalty, and solidity of soldiers that are maintained despite being faced with budget efficiency. On the other hand, there are strategic opportunities in the form of improving the quality of mental development, strengthening field leadership, and optimizing social and organizational support in facing the dynamics of the RI-PNG Border Security Task Force assignment. Thus, the internal strengths are more dominant than weaknesses, and external opportunities are greater than the threats faced. Therefore, the most appropriate policy direction is to implement the SO (*Strength-Opportunity*) Strategy, through an expansive, adaptive, and progressive approach in strengthening the

psychological resilience of soldiers to support the successful implementation of tasks in the region. Explained as follows:

1. Optimizing the Role of Commanders as Primary Mental Coaches (S1, O1)

The optimization of commanders' role as primary mental coaches represents a critical strategy in maintaining soldiers' psychological well-being under budget efficiency constraints. In military settings, leadership is not merely administrative but deeply influential in shaping morale, resilience, and behavioral stability. Commanders who maintain close interpersonal relationships with their subordinates are more capable of identifying early signs of stress, fatigue, and emotional instability. This relational leadership approach becomes increasingly important in resource-limited environments where formal psychological services are reduced.

Research indicates that leadership engagement significantly enhances psychological resilience and reduces stress-related symptoms among military personnel (Bartone, 2006). Leaders who demonstrate empathy, communication openness, and situational awareness can act as informal psychological buffers, helping soldiers cope with operational stress. Furthermore, transformational leadership styles have been shown to strengthen trust, cohesion, and morale, which are essential for maintaining operational effectiveness in high-risk environments (Britt et al., 2016).

In the context of Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku, commanders can function as frontline psychological stabilizers by embedding mental coaching into daily interactions, patrol briefings, and informal discussions. This approach compensates for the reduced availability of formal psychological interventions due to budget cuts. It also aligns with the concept of "leader as caregiver," where leadership responsibility extends beyond command execution to include emotional and psychological support.

Thus, strengthening commanders' interpersonal capabilities and psychological awareness is a cost-effective yet impactful strategy. It ensures that psychological monitoring and support remain embedded within the chain of command, thereby sustaining morale and operational readiness despite fiscal limitations.

2. Integrating Psychological Development into Routine Activities (S3, O4)

Integrating psychological development into routine unit activities is a sustainable approach to maintaining mental resilience without requiring additional budget allocation. In military environments, routine activities such as briefings, drills, and after-action reviews provide natural platforms for embedding psychological reinforcement. This integration ensures that psychological preparedness becomes a continuous process rather than a one-time intervention.

Studies show that routine-based psychological reinforcement improves stress adaptation and enhances cognitive performance under pressure (Adler et al., 2011). Embedding coping strategies, stress awareness, and emotional regulation into daily routines allows soldiers to internalize psychological skills more effectively. Moreover,

The Impact Of Budget Efficiency On The Psychological Well-Being Of Soldiers Of
Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku In The Context Of The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea
Border Security Task Force

consistent exposure to such practices fosters habitual resilience, reducing vulnerability to operational stress.

For Battalion 733/Masariku, integrating psychological elements into daily activities—such as pre-patrol briefings, debriefings, and team discussions—can increase awareness of mental health without additional logistical burden. This approach also promotes collective learning, where soldiers share experiences and coping strategies, strengthening group resilience.

Additionally, routine integration supports early detection of psychological issues. Leaders and peers can observe behavioral changes during regular activities, enabling timely intervention. This proactive approach is particularly important in remote operational environments where access to professional psychological services is limited.

In conclusion, integrating psychological development into routine activities is an adaptive strategy that aligns with budget efficiency while ensuring continuous mental readiness. It transforms everyday operational processes into opportunities for psychological strengthening, thereby enhancing both individual resilience and unit cohesion.

3. Leveraging Soldier Solidarity as Internal Psychological Support (S2, O2)

Solidarity among soldiers is a powerful internal resource that can be leveraged as an informal psychological support system. In military units, strong interpersonal bonds foster trust, mutual support, and collective resilience, which are essential for coping with operational stress. Under conditions of limited psychological resources, peer support becomes a critical mechanism for maintaining mental stability.

Research highlights that unit cohesion significantly reduces stress levels and enhances psychological resilience in military personnel (Griffith, 2002). Soldiers who feel supported by their peers are less likely to experience severe psychological distress and more likely to maintain operational effectiveness. Peer support systems also facilitate open communication, allowing individuals to express concerns without fear of stigma.

In the operational context of the RI–PNG Pamtas Task Force, where soldiers face isolation, environmental stress, and limited external support, solidarity becomes even more crucial. Encouraging group-based activities, mutual assistance, and informal peer counseling can strengthen emotional bonds and create a supportive environment. This approach aligns with the concept of “collective coping,” where stress is managed collectively rather than individually.

Furthermore, leveraging solidarity is a cost-efficient strategy, as it does not require additional financial resources. Instead, it utilizes existing social structures within the unit. Leaders can facilitate this by promoting teamwork, recognizing group achievements, and encouraging open communication.

Therefore, strengthening soldier solidarity as an internal psychological support system is a strategic approach that enhances resilience, reduces stress, and maintains morale under budget constraints.

4. Developing Interpersonal Communication for Psychological Monitoring (S2, O3)

The development of interpersonal communication as a medium for monitoring soldiers' psychological conditions is a crucial adaptive strategy, particularly in environments where formal psychological services are limited. Effective interpersonal communication enables leaders and peers to detect subtle behavioral and emotional changes that may indicate stress, fatigue, or declining morale. In military operations, where psychological strain is often cumulative and not immediately visible, communication becomes a key diagnostic tool.

Research demonstrates that open communication climates within military units significantly improve psychological well-being and reduce the likelihood of mental health issues (Adler et al., 2011). When soldiers feel safe to express concerns, they are more likely to seek support and less likely to suppress stress, which could otherwise escalate into more serious conditions. Moreover, communication fosters trust, which is essential for early intervention.

In the context of Yonif 733/Masariku, interpersonal communication can be embedded in daily routines such as informal discussions, patrol briefings, and after-action reviews. Leaders at all levels, particularly small-unit leaders, must be trained to recognize verbal and non-verbal cues associated with psychological distress. This includes changes in tone, withdrawal from group interactions, or decreased responsiveness.

Additionally, communication-based monitoring is cost-effective and sustainable. It does not rely on external resources but instead strengthens internal human interactions. By institutionalizing communication as part of command culture, units can create a psychologically supportive environment that enhances resilience and operational effectiveness.

5. Optimizing the Command System for Psychological Stability Control (S4, O1)

The command system in military organizations plays a central role in maintaining not only operational discipline but also psychological stability. Optimizing the command system as a mechanism for psychological control involves integrating mental health awareness into command functions, ensuring that psychological readiness is monitored alongside operational readiness.

Studies suggest that structured leadership systems with clear communication channels and accountability mechanisms contribute significantly to reducing stress and uncertainty among soldiers (Britt et al., 2016). A well-functioning command system provides clarity of roles, consistent guidance, and emotional reassurance, all of which are essential in high-pressure environments.

Within the RI-PNG Pamtas Task Force, the command system can be utilized to establish regular psychological check-ins, enforce rest cycles, and ensure that workload distribution is balanced. Commanders can incorporate psychological indicators into routine reporting systems, allowing for systematic monitoring without additional financial burden.

Furthermore, the hierarchical nature of military organizations enables cascading psychological support, where directives from higher command levels are translated into practical actions at the unit level. This ensures consistency and reinforces the importance of psychological well-being as part of operational doctrine.

In conclusion, optimizing the command system as a tool for psychological stability control is a strategic approach that leverages existing organizational structures to maintain mental resilience and operational effectiveness.

6. Enhancing Small-Unit Leaders' Capacity for Early Detection (S1, O3)

Small-unit leaders play a pivotal role in maintaining soldiers' psychological well-being due to their proximity to daily operations. Enhancing their capacity for early detection of psychological issues is essential in preventing minor stress from escalating into serious mental health problems.

Research indicates that early detection and intervention significantly reduces the severity of psychological disorders among military personnel (Hoge et al., 2004). Leaders who are trained to recognize early warning signs—such as irritability, fatigue, or reduced performance—can initiate timely support measures, thereby preserving unit effectiveness.

In Yonif 733/Masariku, empowering squad leaders and platoon commanders with basic psychological awareness training can serve as a force multiplier. These leaders can act as first responders in identifying and addressing mental health concerns, bridging the gap created by reduced access to professional psychological services.

Training programs can include modules on stress recognition, basic counseling techniques, and referral mechanisms. Importantly, such training can be integrated into existing leadership development programs, ensuring minimal additional costs.

Thus, strengthening the capacity of small-unit leaders for early detection is a proactive and sustainable strategy that enhances resilience and prevents operational disruptions caused by psychological distress.

7. Utilizing Communication Technology for Real-Time Monitoring (S4, O5)

The utilization of communication technology for real-time psychological monitoring represents an innovative approach to addressing resource limitations. Advances in digital communication tools enable remote monitoring, rapid information exchange, and timely intervention, even in geographically isolated areas.

Study highlights the effectiveness of digital tools in supporting mental health monitoring and intervention in military contexts (Bush et al., 2011). Simple technologies such as messaging platforms or mobile-based reporting systems can facilitate regular check-ins and provide channels for confidential communication.

For soldiers deployed in remote border areas, technology can bridge the gap between personnel and support systems. Commanders can use digital platforms to monitor morale, gather feedback, and disseminate psychological support materials. Additionally, technology enables data collection for identifying trends and potential risk factors.

Importantly, this approach does not require sophisticated or expensive systems. Even basic communication tools can be adapted for psychological monitoring purposes. This makes it a practical solution within the constraints of budget efficiency policies.

Therefore, leveraging communication technology enhances responsiveness, accessibility, and effectiveness in maintaining soldiers' psychological well-being.

8. Developing a Family-Oriented Approach to Mental Development (S2, O2)

A family-oriented approach to mental development emphasizes the importance of social and emotional support systems in maintaining psychological well-being. In military contexts, where soldiers often operate in isolation, fostering a sense of family within the unit can significantly reduce stress and enhance morale.

Research shows that social support is a key determinant of resilience and mental health in high-stress environments (King et al., 2006). Soldiers who perceive strong emotional support are better equipped to cope with operational challenges and maintain psychological stability.

In Yonif 733/Masariku, this approach can be implemented by promoting a culture of care, mutual respect, and shared responsibility. Activities that strengthen interpersonal bonds—such as group discussions, informal gatherings, and team-building exercises—can reinforce the sense of belonging.

Additionally, maintaining communication with soldiers' families can provide external emotional support, further enhancing resilience. While direct family involvement may be limited to operational areas, indirect support through communication channels can still be facilitated.

Thus, a family-oriented approach creates a supportive social environment that mitigates stress and strengthens psychological resilience without requiring significant financial resources.

9. Integrating Mental Development into Operational Briefings (S3, O4)

Integrating mental development into operational briefings and evaluations ensures that psychological readiness is addressed alongside tactical preparation. Briefings provide a structured platform for reinforcing mental resilience, setting expectations, and addressing concerns.

Research indicates that pre-mission briefings that include psychological preparation improve performance and reduce stress (Adler et al., 2011). By incorporating mental readiness into briefings, leaders can normalize discussions about psychological challenges and encourage proactive coping strategies.

In practice, commanders can include short sessions on stress awareness, emotional regulation, and teamwork during briefings. After-action reviews can also be used to reflect on psychological experiences and identify areas for improvement.

The Impact Of Budget Efficiency On The Psychological Well-Being Of Soldiers Of Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku In The Context Of The Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force

This approach ensures continuity, as psychological development becomes part of routine operational processes. It also reinforces the importance of mental readiness as a component of mission success.

Therefore, integrating mental development into briefings is an efficient and effective strategy for sustaining psychological resilience within operational constraints.

10. Encouraging Field-Based Innovation in Psychological Development (S5, O1)

Encouraging field-based innovation allows units to develop context-specific solutions for psychological challenges. Soldiers and leaders who operate in the field possess practical insights that can inform adaptive strategies tailored to their environment.

Innovation in military settings has been shown to enhance adaptability and problem-solving under constraints (Andrews et al., 2019). By empowering personnel to develop and share innovative practices, organizations can continuously improve their approaches to psychological support.

In Yonif 733/Masariku, innovation can include developing informal support systems, adapting training methods, or creating simple tools for stress management. Leaders can facilitate this by encouraging feedback, recognizing innovative ideas, and providing opportunities for experimentation.

Importantly, field-based innovation is cost-effective, as it relies on internal creativity rather than external resources. It also fosters a sense of ownership and engagement among soldiers, which further enhances morale.

Thus, promoting innovation ensures that psychological development strategies remain dynamic, relevant, and effective in addressing evolving operational challenges.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that budget efficiency policies significantly influence the psychological well-being of soldiers in Infantry Battalion 733/Masariku deployed in the Indonesia–Papua New Guinea Border Security Task Force. While operational effectiveness is supported by strong leadership, cohesion, and discipline, reductions in psychological programs have increased risks related to stress, morale decline, and decision-making quality. The SWOT analysis confirms a growth-oriented strategic position, enabling adaptive responses through leadership optimization, routine-based psychological development, and peer support. Therefore, balancing fiscal efficiency with psychological readiness is essential. Sustainable policies must integrate low-cost, embedded mental support systems to maintain resilience, operational performance, and mission success.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) adopt a balanced policy framework that aligns budget efficiency with psychological readiness. Priority should be given to integrating low-cost psychological support into daily operations,

including routine briefings, peer support systems, and leadership-based mental coaching. Capacity building for small-unit leaders in early detection of psychological stress is essential. Additionally, simple digital communication tools should be utilized for continuous psychological monitoring. Policymakers should ensure that essential mental health programs are not entirely eliminated but adapted. Strengthening interagency collaboration and institutional commitment to soldier welfare will enhance resilience, sustain morale, and maintain long-term operational effectiveness.

BIBLIOGRAFI

- Adler, A.B., Bliese, P.D., McGurk, D., Hoge, C.W., & Castro, C.A. (2011). Battlemind debriefing and battlemind training as early interventions with soldiers returning from Iraq. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 79 (6), 928–940.
- Andrews, R., Boyne, G. A., & Walker, R. M. (2019). Strategy, management, and performance in public organizations. *Public Management Review*, 21 (3), 315–335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2018.1508617>
- Bartone, PT (2006). Resilience under military operational stress: Can leaders influence resilience? *Military Psychology*, 18 (S), S131–S148.
- Britt, T. W., Sinclair, R. R., & McFadden, A. C. (2016). Military life: The psychology of serving in peace and combat. Praeger. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000030-000>
- Britt, T. W., Sinclair, R. R., & McFadden, A. C. (2016). Military stress and coping strategies. *Military Psychology*, 28 (2), 65–78.
- Bryson, J. M. (2018). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement* (5th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Bush, N. E., Armstrong, C. M., & Hoyt, T. V. (2011). Smartphone apps for psychological health. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 42 (6), 505–512.
- Buzan, B. (2015). Rethinking security after the Cold War. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 50 (1), 73–87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836714545693>
- Cox, A. A. (1995). The role of cohesion in military performance. *Armed Forces & Society*, 21 (2), 205–220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X9502100203>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Gray, C.S. (2021). Strategy and defense planning. *Defense Studies*, 21 (4), 345–360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2021.1899782>
- Griffith, J. (2002). Multilevel analysis of cohesion's relationship to stress and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87 (5), 898–908.
- Gürel, E., & Tat, M. (2017). SWOT analysis: A theoretical review. *Journal of International Social Research*, 10 (51), 994–1006.
- Helms, M. M., & Nixon, J. (2010). Exploring SWOT analysis. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, 3 (3), 215–251. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17554251011064837>
- Hoffman, F.G. (2009). Hybrid warfare and challenges. *Joint Force Quarterly*, 52 (1), 34–39. <https://doi.org/10.55540/jfq.052.05>
- Hoge, C. W., Castro, C. A., & Messer, S. C. (2004). Combat duty and mental health problems. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 351 (1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa040603>
- Hourani, L.L., Council, C.L., Hubal, R.C., & Strange, L.B. (2011). Approaches to the primary prevention of posttraumatic stress disorder in the military. *Military Medicine*, 176 (7), 721–730. <https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-10-00338>
- Jackson, R.T. (2020). Environmental stress and military performance in tropical operations. *Journal of Military Medicine*, 185 (3–4), e450–e456. <https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usz449>

- Johni, J., & Barrisen, B. (2024). Civil-military relations in border security: Evidence from Papua region. *Journal of Defense Studies*, 18 (1), 45–60.
- Jones, E., & Wessely, S. (2003). Psychiatric battle casualties. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 55 (5), 401–409. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3999\(03\)00504-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3999(03)00504-5)
- King, L.A., King, D.W., Fairbank, J.A., Keane, T.M., & Adams, G.A. (2006). Resilience and recovery in military personnel. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 19 (1), 45–57.
- Leloltery, A. (2021). Operational challenges in Indonesian border security missions. *Journal of Defense & National Defense*, 11 (2), 89–102. <https://doi.org/10.33172/jpbn.v11i2.1234>
- Matthews, G., Reinerman-Jones, L. E., Barber, D. J., & Abich, J. (2017). The psychometrics of mental workload. *Human Factors*, 59 (1), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018720816663941>
- Musgrave, R. A. (1989). Public finance theory. *Public Finance Review*, 17 (1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109114218901700101>
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16 (1), 1–13.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Pickton, D. W., & Wright, S. (1998). What's SWOT in strategic analysis? *Strategic Change*, 7 (2), 101–109. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-1697\(199803/04\)7:2<101::AID-JSC332>3.0.CO;2-6](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1697(199803/04)7:2<101::AID-JSC332>3.0.CO;2-6)
- Rizki, A. (2025). The impact of budget efficiency policies on the defense sector. *Journal of Public Policy Economics*, 10 (1), 15–28.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2017). *Organizational behavior*. Pearson Education.
- Stiglitz, J. E. (2000). *Economics of the public sector*. Norton.
- Yarger, H.R. (2020). Toward a theory of strategy. *Journal of Military Studies*, 9 (1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jms-2020-0001>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

First publication right:

[Jurnal Syntax Fusion: Jurnal Nasional Indonesia](#)

This article is licensed under:

