



Analysis of the military's perception of PTSD

- Italy -

PTSD



Co-funded by
the European Union

PROJECT: "RESILIENCE AND INCLUSION FOR THE MILITARY"
2022-1-R001-KA220-VET-000085808

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Erasmus+ Programme – Strategic Partnership
Project “Resilience and inclusion for the military”
2022-1-Ro01-Ka220-Wet-000085808

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I.V. International - Foggia, Italy

Organization for Promotion of European Issues - Paphos, Cyprus

BUMIR - Bucharest, Romania

Material produced with the financial support of the European Union. The content of this material is the sole responsibility of the authors, and the National Agency and the European Commission are not responsible for how the content of this information will be used.

Introduction

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a serious mental health problem that can affect people who have experienced a traumatic event. Military members are at risk of developing PTSD because they are exposed to traumatic events during their service. It is in this context that we have constructed this questionnaire to assess the military's perception of PTSD and to identify their needs and concerns in this regard. The analysis of the questionnaire can provide valuable information on how the military perceives and addresses the issue of PTSD and can help improve interventions and treatments for them.



Results of the Analysis of the Military's Perception of PTSD - Italy

Question 1. Do you know information about post-traumatic stress in the military?

Answer options: YES/ NO

The following responses were recorded

52% of the participants chose the YES answer option; 48% of the participants chose the NO answer option.

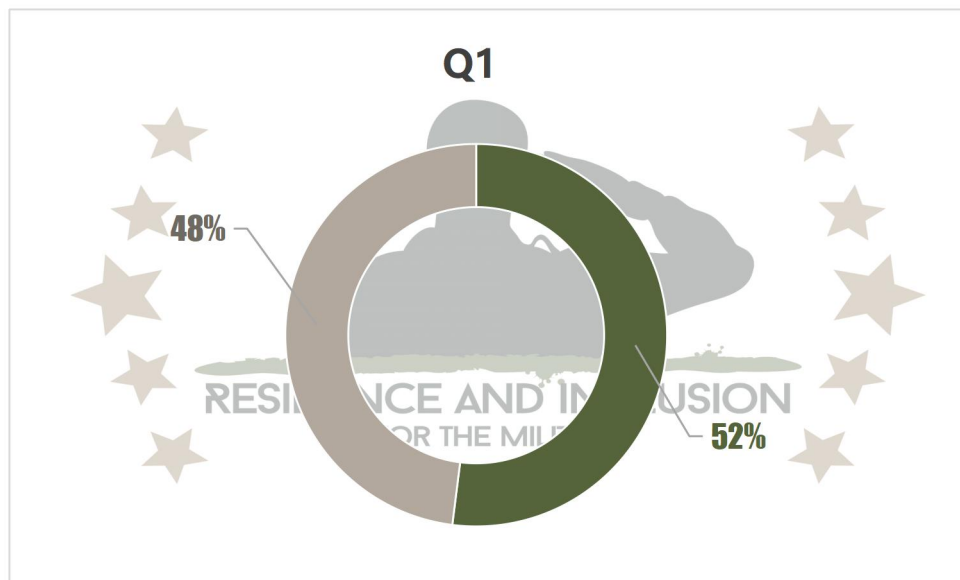


Figure 1. Knowledge about post-traumatic stress disorder

Interpret

In the study conducted in Italy, participants were asked if they knew any information about post-traumatic stress in the military. They had two answer options: YES and NO.

The results of the survey are as follows:

52% of the participants chose the YES answer option, which indicates that more than half of the participants have knowledge about post-traumatic stress in the military.

48% of participants chose the NO response option, suggesting that almost half of the participants have no specific information or knowledge about post-traumatic stress in the military context.

These results show that there is a varying degree of knowledge of post-traumatic stress in the military among the Italian participants. Although more than half of the participants have knowledge in this area, a significant proportion (48%) do not know information about post-traumatic stress in the military. This underlines the need to continue information and education efforts to increase the level of awareness and understanding of this issue among the Italian military.

Question 2. If you answered YES, specify what you know about post-traumatic stress disorder in the military.

He had the following answer options: open answers.

The following answers were recorded: 44% of the participants gave explanations and 56% of the participants did not answer this question.

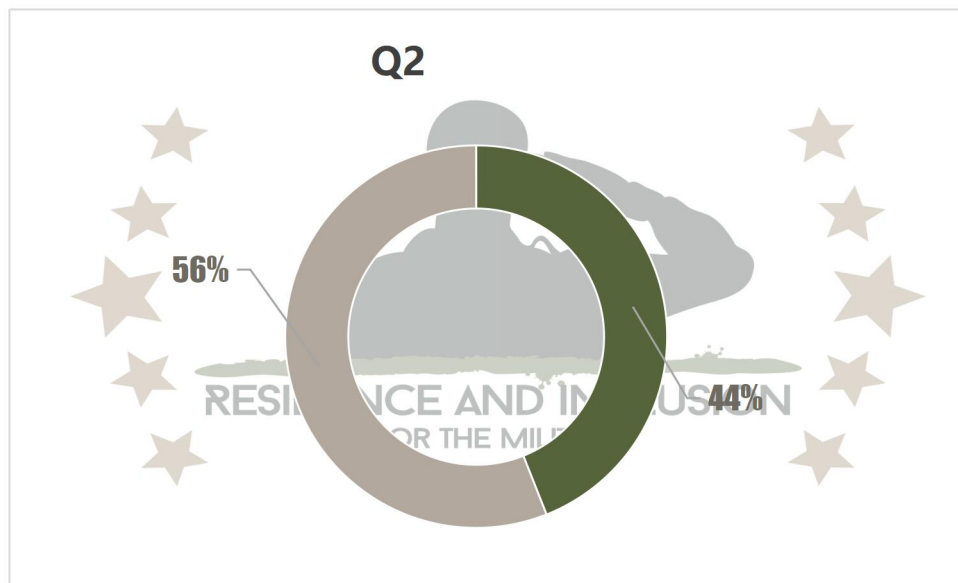


Figure 2. What participants know about post-traumatic stress

Interpret

To the question "If you answered YES, specify what you know about post-traumatic stress in the military", participants were given the opportunity to answer freely,

providing information and knowledge they have about post-traumatic stress in the military context.

The results show the following distribution of responses:

44% of active military personnel, veterans and military personnel with disabilities provided explanations and information about post-traumatic stress in military personnel. This indicates that some of those who initially answered "YES" have specific knowledge on the subject and were willing to share the information.

56% of participants did not answer this question, which could suggest that while they have general knowledge about post-traumatic stress in the military, they did not have enough information to provide additional details or explanations.

These results show that while there is a level of knowledge of post-traumatic stress among the Italian military, the depth and details of this knowledge are varied. A more focused and comprehensive approach may be needed to improve the understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder and how to manage it among the military.

Here are some answers:

- *Post-traumatic stress disorder in military personnel often occurs as a result of exposure to traumatic events during military service, such as armed battles, loss of comrades, or serious accidents. It can cause symptoms such as flashes, nightmares, avoidance of situations reminiscent of trauma, and hypervigilance.*
- *Post-traumatic stress disorder in the military can affect not only the individual's mental health, but also personal relationships and professional performance. It is essential to provide adequate support and access to treatment to help affected servicemen cope with symptoms and improve their quality of life.*
- *Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an effective form of treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder in the military. This type of therapy helps people identify and change negative thoughts and behaviors associated with trauma.*
- *Post-traumatic stress disorder can also be found in military personnel who have witnessed traumatic events, even if they were not directly involved in them. Symptoms can appear immediately after the event or with a delay, even several years after the trauma occurred.*

- Reducing the stigma associated with post-traumatic stress disorder and mental health issues among military personnel is crucial to encourage affected military members to seek help.
- Creating an open culture where military members feel safe discussing their mental health issues can help prevent and manage post-traumatic stress disorder among the armed forces.

Question 3. Do you know the symptoms of post-traumatic stress?

Answers: YES/NO

The following answers were recorded: 40% of the participants answered YES; 60% of the participants answered NO.

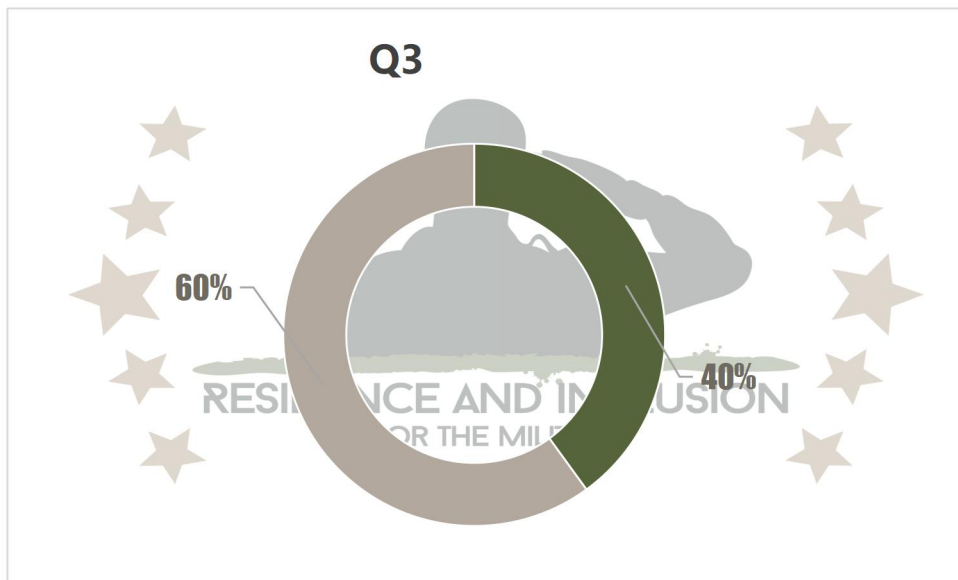


Figure 3. About the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder

Interpret

To the question "Do you know the symptoms of post-traumatic stress?", participants from Italy were given two answers: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows: 40% of the participants answered with YES, indicating that some of them have knowledge about the symptoms of post-traumatic stress. However, this represents less than half of the total participants.

60% of participants answered NO, suggesting that most participants are unfamiliar with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or do not have sufficient knowledge in this area.

These results highlight the fact that the level of awareness of the symptoms of post-traumatic stress among the Italian military is quite low, with 60% of participants not knowing these symptoms. This underscores the importance of developing and implementing education and awareness programs to improve the understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder and its symptoms among the Italian armed forces.

Question 4. If you answered YES, specify what you know about the symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

The answer options have been opened.

The following answers were recorded: 40% of participants answered this question; 60% of the participants did not answer this question.

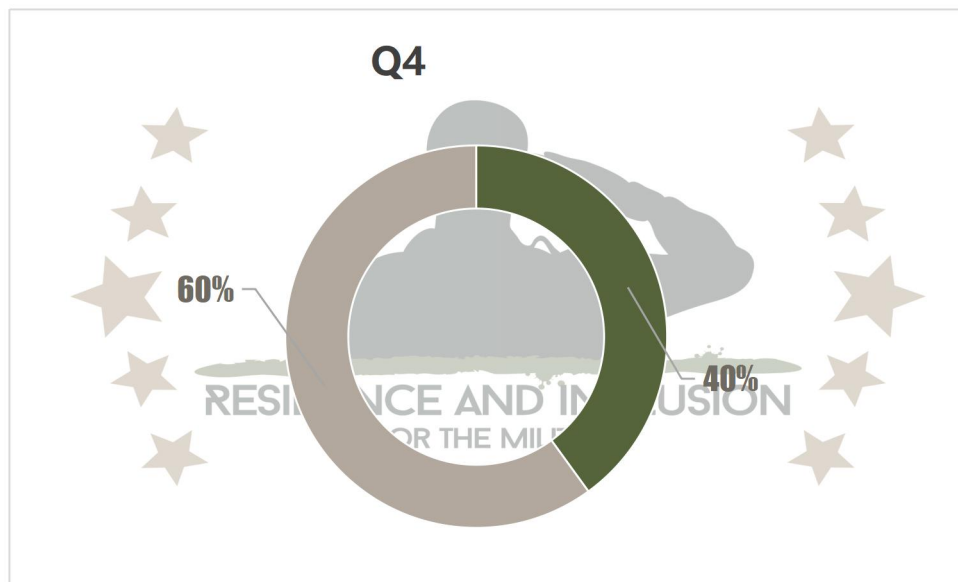


Figure 4. Symptoms of post-traumatic stress

Interpret

To the question "If you answered YES, specify what do you know about the symptoms of post-traumatic stress?", participants were given the opportunity to answer freely, sharing information and knowledge they have about the symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

The results show the following distribution of responses:

40% of participants answered this question, providing information about the symptoms of post-traumatic stress. This indicates that those who are knowledgeable

about the symptoms are willing to share the information and contribute to understanding this topic.

60% of participants did not answer this question, suggesting that although they stated that they knew the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, they did not provide additional details or information.

These results show that while some Italian servicemen know the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, there is a discrepancy between asserting knowledge and providing specific information. A more focused and comprehensive approach may be needed to improve understanding of the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and how to manage it among the military.

Here are some of the answers:

- *Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder may include flashes (reliving of trauma), nightmares and sleep disturbances, avoidance of memories or situations reminiscent of trauma, increased irritability, difficulty concentrating, and hypervigilance (exaggerated sensitivity to stimuli and a constant state of alertness).*
- *Post-traumatic stress disorder can have a significant impact on a person's life, including emotionally, socially, and professionally. Some military members who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder may experience symptoms such as anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, and difficulty maintaining healthy relationships with family and friends.*
- *The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder can vary from person to person, and can appear immediately after the traumatic event or with a delay, even several years after the trauma occurred. This makes diagnosing and treating post-traumatic stress disorder sometimes difficult, as symptoms may not be obvious initially or may manifest in different ways in different people.*

Question 5. Have you heard or seen colleagues who have or have had post-traumatic stress disorder?

Answer options: YES/NO.

The following answers were recorded: 64% of the servicemen chose the YES option and 36% of the servicemen chose the NO option

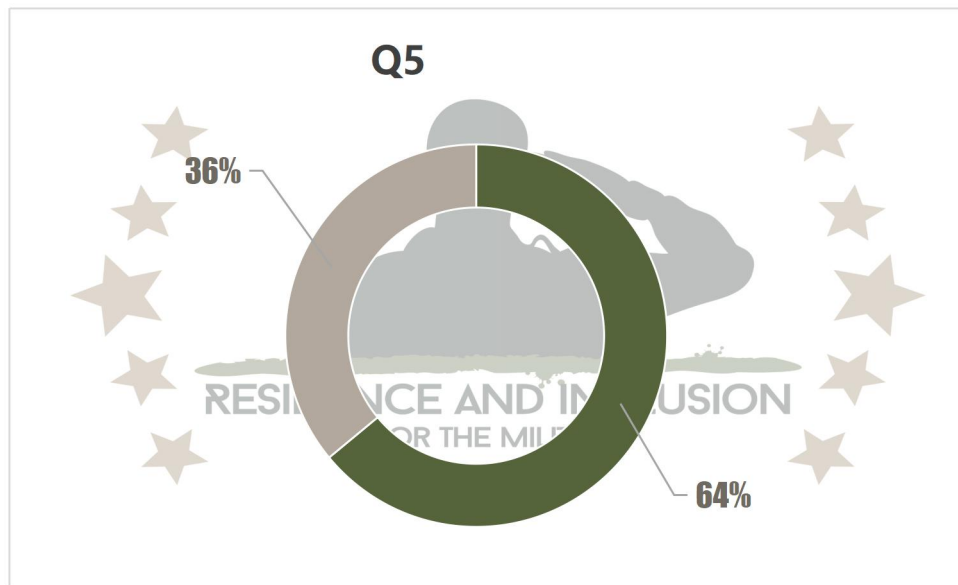


Figure 5. If they have seen colleagues who have suffered or are suffering from post-traumatic stress

Interpret

To the question "Have you heard or seen colleagues who have or have had post-traumatic stress disorder?", the participants were given two answer options: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows:

64% of the military chose the YES variant, which indicates that a significant majority of the participants were aware of or met colleagues who had experienced post-traumatic stress disorder. This shows that post-traumatic stress is a fairly common problem among the Italian military.

36% of military personnel chose the NO option, suggesting that they had no direct experiences or knowledge of colleagues who had problems with post-traumatic stress. These results highlight that post-traumatic stress disorder is a recognized problem among Italian military personnel, with 64% of participants reporting hearing or seeing colleagues affected by this disorder. This emphasises the need for adequate support for those affected and prevention and treatment programmes to address this problem among the Italian armed forces.

Question 6. Do you have a psychologist to talk to when you need it?

Answers: YES/NO

The following answers were recorded: 52% of the people chose the YES option and 48% chose the NO option

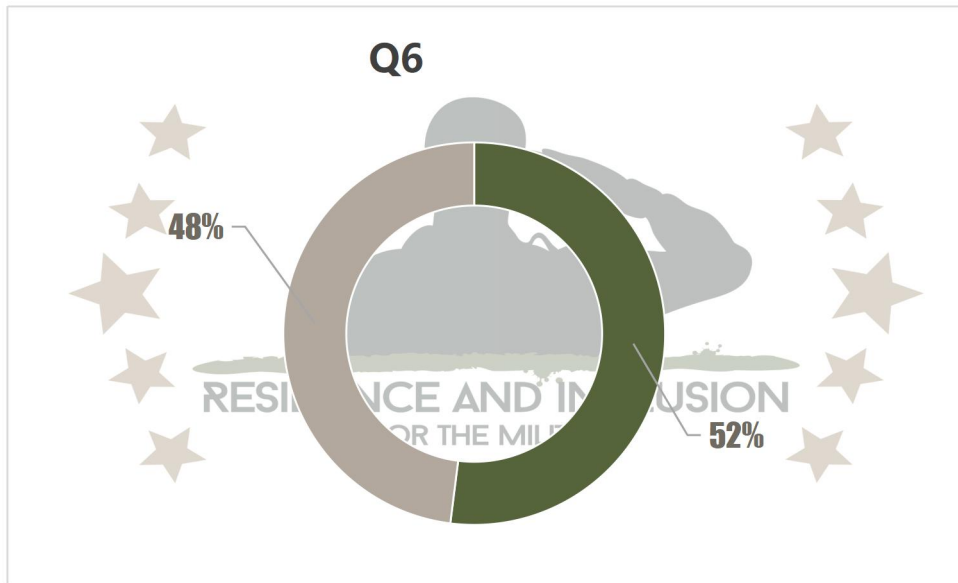


Figure 6. A psychologist to talk to

Interpret

To the question "Do you have a psychologist to talk to when you need it?", the participants were given two answers: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows: 52% of people chose the YES option, which indicates that more than half of the study participants have access to a psychologist to discuss emotional or stress-related problems in times of need. This suggests that there is a relatively good level of mental health support among the Italian military.

48% of people chose the NO option, showing that almost half of the participants do not have access to a psychologist when they need emotional support or counseling. This fact indicates a possible gap in the mental health system for the Italian military.

The results suggest that while there is a level of mental health support for the Italian military, there is still room for improvement, given that almost half of the participants do not have access to a psychologist when they need it.

Question 7. Would it be helpful to have a psychologist to talk to from time to time about post-traumatic stress?

Answer options: YES/NO.

The following answers were recorded: 100% of people chose the YES option;

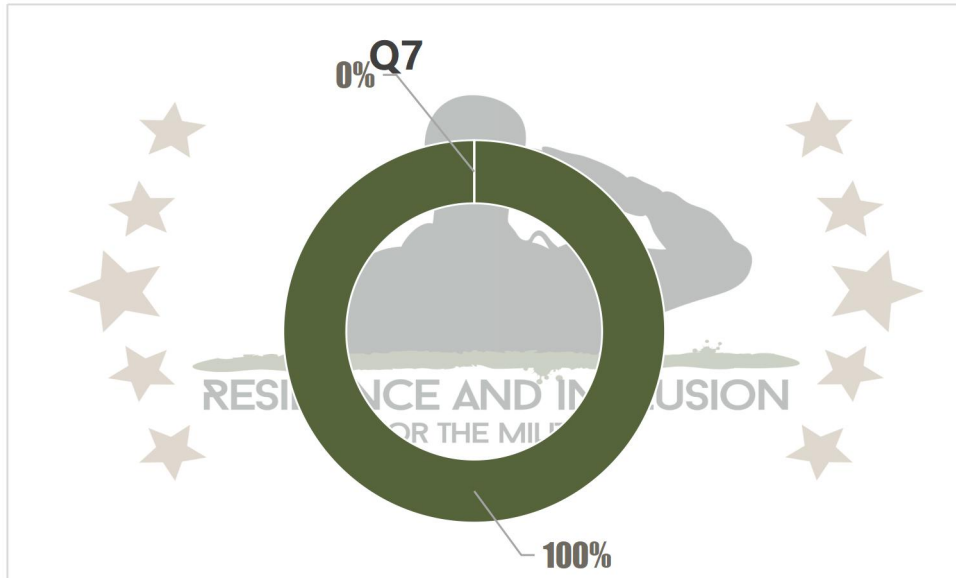


Figure 7. The usefulness of a psychologist to talk to

Interpret

To the question "Would it be useful to have a psychologist to talk to from time to time about post-traumatic stress?", the participants were given two answer options: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows:

100% of people chose the YES option, which indicates a unanimous consensus among study participants on the usefulness and importance of having a psychologist available to discuss issues related to post-traumatic stress. This response suggests a clear recognition of the need for mental health support and the impact that post-traumatic stress can have on the lives of servicemen.

The results highlight the importance of having an accessible psychologist for the Italian military, especially to address problems related to post-traumatic stress. Given the unanimously positive response, it would be recommended to consider implementing measures to ensure access to psychological support for all servicemen, to prevent and treat the effects of post-traumatic stress.

Question 8. Would it be useful to have a guide manual, in which you have information about post-traumatic stress?

Answer options: YES/NO.

The following answers were recorded: 100% of people chose the YES option.

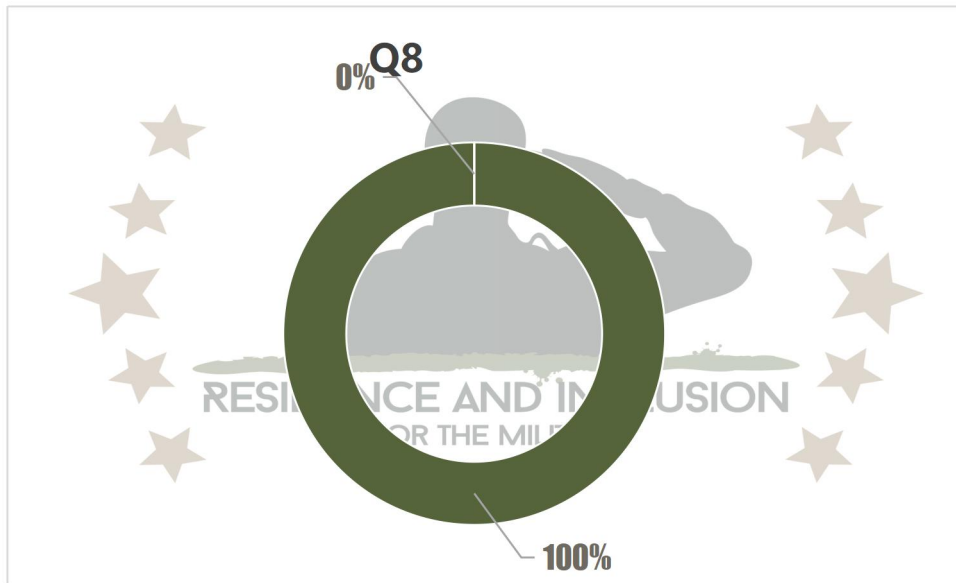


Figure 8. The usefulness of a guide manual on post-traumatic stress

Interpret

To the question "Would it be useful to have a guide manual, in which you have information about post-traumatic stress?", the participants were given two options: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows:

100% of people chose the DA option, which shows a unanimous consensus among the study participants on the usefulness and need for a guide manual containing information about post-traumatic stress. The response suggests that participants recognize the importance of access to information and resources to help them understand, prevent, and manage post-traumatic stress.

The results underline the need to provide the Italian military with useful resources and information on post-traumatic stress. Given the unanimously positive response, it would be recommended to consider developing and distributing a guide manual on post-traumatic stress to support and inform the military in this regard.

Question 9. Would it be helpful to have an app that informs you what PTSD means, what the symptoms are, how it manifests itself, how it can be managed, and other information about PTSD?

Answer options: YES/NO.

The following answers were recorded: 100% of people chose the YES option.

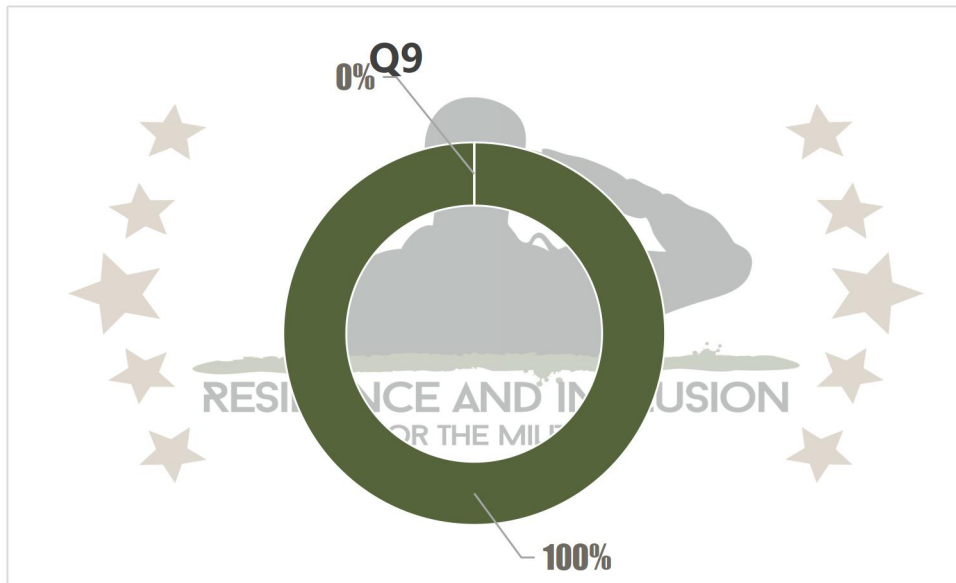


Figure 9. Usefulness of the app

Interpret

To the question "Would it be useful to have an app that informs you what post-traumatic stress is, what the symptoms are, how it manifests itself, how can it be managed, and other information about post-traumatic stress?", participants were given two answers: YES and NO. The results recorded are as follows:

100% of people chose the YES option, indicating a unanimous consensus among the study participants about the usefulness and need for an app that provides information about post-traumatic stress. This response suggests that participants recognize the importance of accessing digital resources to help them understand, prevent, and manage post-traumatic stress.

The results highlight the interest of the Italian military in an app that would provide them with information and support in managing post-traumatic stress. In view of the unanimously positive response, it would be recommended to consider the development and implementation of such an application to support and inform the military in this regard.

Question 10. What else do you think would be useful to know about post-traumatic stress in the military?

He had open-ended answers.

The following answers were recorded: 80% of participants answered this question; 20% did not answer.

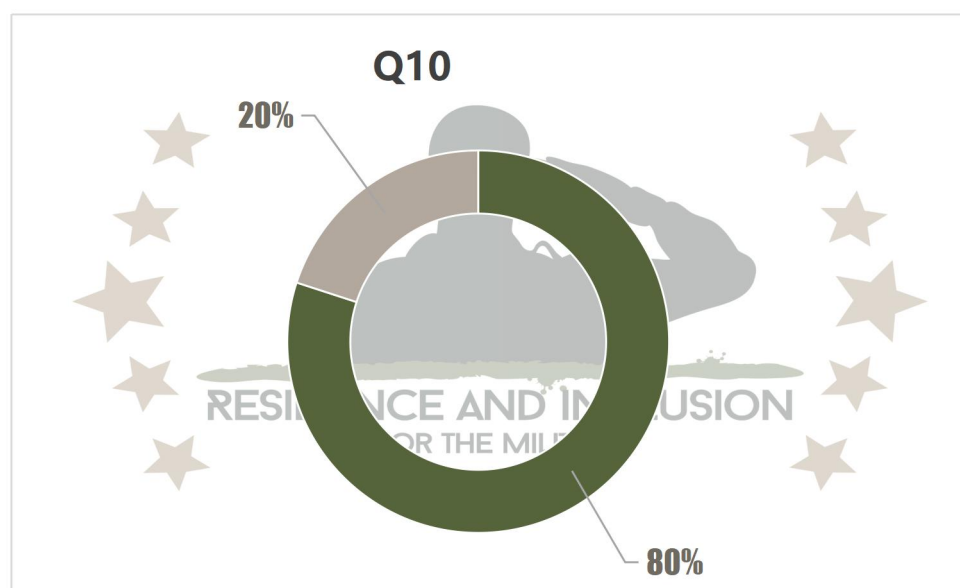


Figure 10. Additions to the information on post-traumatic stress

Interpret

To the question "What do you think would be useful to know about post-traumatic stress in the military?", the participants had the opportunity to provide open answers.

The results recorded are as follows:

80% of participants answered this question, indicating a significant interest in deepening the understanding of post-traumatic stress among the military.

20% of participants did not answer this question, suggesting that some of the participants may not have enough information or opinions to answer this specific question.

Here are some answers:

- *"It would be useful to know more about methods of preventing post-traumatic stress, such as stress management strategies and resilience techniques that we can apply during and after missions."*
- *"I would like to know more about the treatments available for post-traumatic stress disorder, including evidence-based therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy and exposure therapy, and how to access these treatments within the military health system."*
- *"It would be helpful to learn about the support resources available for military families suffering from post-traumatic stress so that we can help and better understand what our partners and children affected by post-traumatic stress are going through."*

Concluding conclusions and recommendations

Based on the results obtained in this study carried out in Italy, the following conclusions can be drawn:

A significant proportion of the military know information about post-traumatic stress and its symptoms, but there is still room for increasing information and awareness.

Many servicemen have heard or seen colleagues who have had post-traumatic stress disorder, highlighting the relevance and impact of this issue within the armed forces.

Access to mental health services, such as psychologist, is limited, with a significant proportion of participants not having such access.

Active military personnel, veterans and military personnel with disabilities expressed a strong interest in having a psychologist to talk to about post-traumatic stress, a guide manual and an application that provides information about post-traumatic stress, symptoms, manifestations and management.

Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

Developing and implementing information and education programs for military members and their families about post-traumatic stress disorder to increase awareness and understanding of this issue.

Improving access to mental health services for military personnel, including increasing the availability of psychologists and other mental health professionals.

Creating a guide manual and a mobile application that provides useful information about post-traumatic stress, symptoms, manifestations and ways to manage it.

Providing resources and support for military families experiencing post-traumatic stress so they can better understand and manage its impact on their lives.

Implementing these recommendations can help increase the level of resilience and improve the mental health of military members and their families affected by post-traumatic stress.

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