**Result**

This study included 17 operational managers, paramedics, and rescuers from the Iranian Red Crescent Society. Of the participants, 82.35% were male. The mean age of the participants was 35.57 ± 8.29 years, and the mean length of service was 12.58 ± 4.67 years (Table 1).

Following data analysis, selected codes emerged from the interviews, initially yielding 935 codes. After eliminating duplicates, 158 codes remained, which were categorized into 8 main categories and 33 subcategories including self-care, self-management, self-efficacy, coping, social support, organizational factors, the nature of the incident, and burnout (see Table 2 and Figure 1 for details).

***3.1. Self-care***

This category encompasses critical physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Participants highlighted the significance of physical attributes in rescuers. Adequate physical preparedness or enhancement of physical condition for readiness in challenging circumstances was identified as a pivotal factor in facilitating effective aid operations:

“I exercise regularly because I believe my physical fitness aids me in various tasks, such as operating certain equipment during missions, especially in demanding conditions” (P1).

Furthermore, psychological well-being emerged as another critical theme. Stress and anxiety arising from exposure to disasters, along with occupational burnout from frequent encounters with stressful incidents, were identified as prevalent psychological disturbances:

“Excessive stress and anxiety during critical situations, which consequently lowers their tolerance and resilience levels, leading to frequent occupational difficulties” (P9).

The analysis also revealed the importance of religious and spiritual beliefs, which seemed to serve as crucial factors in promoting calmness and improving resilience:

“I pay close attention to religious principles and guidelines in my work during missions, which enables me to operate with greater calmness and tolerance in high-stress environments” (P16).

***3.2. Self-management***

Within this category, time management, problem-solving, and emotional, cognitive, and behavioral self-regulation were identified. Self-management, a crucial attribute in aid workers' resilience, refers to the ability to regulate one's behaviors, thoughts, and emotions productively and beneficially for professional success:

“A rescuer who can effectively manage their time and make critical decisions quickly in crises exhibits a high level of calmness and adaptability” (P4).

Moreover, self-regulation implies an individual's capacity to control and manage their emotions, behaviors, and thoughts. The ability to regulate emotions in stressful situations is considered a vital characteristic in rescuers (emotional self-regulation):

“During a rescue operation, I encountered a man who was deeply grieving the loss of his child, and I tried to control the situation while empathizing with him by managing my own emotions” (P10).

Furthermore, cognitive self-regulation assists individuals in responding effectively to challenges and obstacles. The ability to control and manage thoughts and solve problems using various methods is an example of this:

“When facing critical situations, I focus more on my thoughts, and I believe this is one of the best ways to avoid other stressors” (P15).

***3.3. Self-efficacy***

This category encompassed personal beliefs, successful experiences, and psychological responses. A belief in one's ability to perform job duties and overcome challenges, coupled with the utilization of past successful experiences to boost self-confidence, were prominent themes:

“I have faith in my abilities even in the most critical situations, which allows me to carry out rescue operations with greater confidence,’ remarked one participant” (P2).

“Previous experiences have significantly aided me in responding more appropriately in demanding and stressful circumstances,’ stated another participant” (P7).

***3.4. Coping***

This category included problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance coping. Problem-focused coping, defined as efforts to address and change stressful situations, was identified by participants as a characteristic of resilience among disaster responders:

“In a major incident where we faced a shortage of resources, we sought assistance from other organizations to find a solution for meeting rescue needs, which was crucial for managing difficult and complex circumstances” (P9).

Furthermore, attempts to reduce negative emotions and manage emotional reactions were identified as emotion-focused coping:

“After a traumatic incident, I often talk to friends or colleagues or even use relaxation techniques like meditation to manage my emotions” (P3).

In contrast, certain other reactions, such as avoiding discussing experiences, smoking, or engaging in unrelated activities, were identified as avoidance coping:

“Sometimes, after intense and distressing incidents, rescuers turn to smoking to calm themselves,’ noted one participant” (P16).

***3.5. Social support***

This category included family support, community support, peer support, and organizational support. Participants identified these factors as significant contributors to the resilience of disaster responders. Social support in its various dimensions can profoundly impact an individual's psychological and social well-being.

Family support, particularly from spouses or other family members, was identified as a crucial source of support for Red Crescent Society responders. By providing a sense of peace and focus, family support plays a significant role in enhancing resilience:

“The support I receive from my spouse, especially their understanding of my job, has always brought me peace and helped me focus more calmly on my work” (P4).

Moreover, Cooperation and support among responders in meeting each other’s practical needs, such as equipment, and providing support to one another after demanding missions, were among the identified themes:

“The support I receive from my colleagues after a mission has a significant impact on my mental well-being, especially in very difficult and stressful situations” (P11).

***3.6. Organizational factors***

Factors related to the organization responsible for emergency responders (Red Crescent Society) also influence resilience in several ways. Therefore, the role of organizational factors in the resilience of emergency responders is crucial. Subcategories identified in this category include rules and regulations, effective communication, equipment and resources, and training and empowerment.

Rules and regulations play a significant role in the resilience of emergency responders, as they can contribute to a safe and supportive work environment. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, unambiguous organizational regulations, consideration of responders' working conditions in the development of regulations, and the requirement for standard certifications for deploying responders were the most important identified issues:

“In one mission, I wanted to provide physical therapy to a victim, but this duty was not clearly defined, which can be very stressful for us” (P2).

Effective communication can enhance cooperation, reduce stress, and improve the overall performance of emergency responders. Factors such as the ability to establish or terminate communication, strengthen communication infrastructure, and the ability to maintain effective and continuous communication with the dispatch unit were among the most important issues mentioned:

“Once, during a challenging mission, I experienced a communication disruption with the dispatch center, which caused me a lot of stress and disrupted my focus” (P16).

***3.7. The nature of the incident***

Factors related to the nature of the incident can physically and psychologically stress emergency responders in various ways, impacting their resilience. Scene type, shock resulting from the scene, scene congestion, and environmental factors were identified as subcategories after data collection and analysis.

The type of incident has a significant impact on the resilience of emergency responders. Incidents of high severity and complexity, coupled with various scene challenges, can impose specific stressors and pressures on responders, affecting their resilience:

“In one mission, the scene became so complex and critical that it unconsciously had a significant negative impact on my mental state” (P4).

The shock resulting from the scene can have profound and significant effects on the resilience of emergency responders. This shock may be due to observations, experiences, and psychological pressures associated with critical conditions, such as witnessing fatalities and distressing injuries, encountering unpredictable and shocking events, and incidents involving children:

“The severity of one incident was so frightening and heartbreaking that it stayed in my mind for a long time, and I was affected by it for quite some time” (P17).

Excessive crowding and congestion can increase psychological pressure, reduce efficiency and concentration, and cause physical and emotional exhaustion, disrupting incident management and organization. Excessive scene traffic, limited access to victims due to overcrowding, and increased fatigue and burnout due to excessive chaos were identified by participants:

“In a recent traffic accident, due to the congestion and traffic at the scene, we faced many difficulties in managing the incident, which added extra stress to a rescuer and made our work conditions much harder” (P6).

***3.8. Burnout***

Emotional exhaustion **reduced personal accomplishment**, and **increased stress and anxiety** were significant subcategories within this category. Participants reported demotivation, decreased enthusiasm, and a growing sense of energy depletion due to job stress as prime examples of emotional exhaustion:

“I feel that due to the difficulties and job stress, my motivation and enthusiasm for working in this organization have gradually decreased, and I have less energy compared to before”(P10).

Furthermore, decreased feelings of personal accomplishment were manifested as feelings of failure and worthlessness in certain job activities, and sometimes as feelings of worthlessness and inability to perform certain job duties:

“Due to the high job pressures, I feel worthless as a rescuer because sometimes the working conditions are tough and stressful” (P6)