

- **16899 | OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN DECISION MAKING IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN FIREFIGHTERS TEAM LEADERS**

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The firefighters, due to the nature of their work, have a risky profession (Curilem, Almagià, Yuing, & Rodriguez, 2014), which requires quick and timely responses and responsibilities, in particular those who take on leadership roles. The decision that they take in emergency situations, have a high impact on itself, as well as in the team and in everyone involved (Reis, 2018). The present study has as main objective to explore, in the population of fire team leaders, the relationship between occupational stress and decision-making in emergency situations. Specifically, considering the emergency situations, it is intended to answer the following research questions: 1) What decisions the team leaders take in; 2) What factors influence the decision making of team leaders? and 3) the existence of occupational stress affects the quality of the decisions taken by the team leaders?

This is an embedded simple case study (Yin, 2009), qualitative, cross sectional and exploratory. The data were collected through documentary analysis, the application of logbooks and semi-structured interviews to firefighters with leadership functions. Data were submitted to a content analysis, through Nvivo software 11.

The results showed that is during the occurrence that the team leaders take more decisions, associated in particular with the assessment and with the guarantee of safety of the own team. In addition, it was noted that several factors affect their decisions before (e.g., available means), during (e.g., popular pressure, kind of occurrence and distress) and after (e.g., state of mind) the occurrence. Finally, it was found that the existence of distress affects the quality of occupational decisions taken by team leaders. The present study may be a contribution to the design of interventions to improve the quality of the team leaders decision in potentially stressful situations.

Keywords: occupational stress, decision-making, team leaders, Portuguese volunteers firefighters, emer