

MOTIVATION OF HIGHSCHOOL GRADUATES FOR MILITARY SERVICE ENROLMENT

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents a study on the motivation of high school graduates who want to join military service. The goal of this study is to emphasize the importance of the youth’s decision to join military service and to identify the motivating factors found at the basis of this decision. I tried to find correlations between the intensity of the desire to pursue military service and a few necessities (assessed with the SMP questionnaire), to identify some personality traits (assessed using the CPD questionnaire) of young people who want to join military service, if these differ from those who do not.

The army is one of the state fundamental institutions, in terms of managing legislative relationships between members of the society in the domain of national defence. Study motivation allows finding explanations for facts and why a person realizes a specific action. Usually, any behavioural act is motivated and the individual’s personality defines his personal style and influences his interaction with the environment.

This paper attempts to answer questions such as: Do high school graduates want to join military service? How strong is this desire? Which are the personality traits that differentiate those who desire to enrol from those who don’t?

KEYWORDS: motivation, personality, alumni, military training, behaviour

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Motivation-definition and functions

No behavioural act is able to appear and manifest on its own itself without excitement, without guidance and energetic sustainment (Golu, 2000).

Due to the fact that humans adapt to the environmental, they need information from the external environment for processing. Humans’ response to this information, his adaptation doesn’t represent a simple effect, but a complex cognitive product of the person, depending on the features, characteristics and goals of the person.

Humans act according to their needs, but especially according to their reasons. The term of motivation includes “all internal conduct drivers, whether innate or acquired, conscious or unconscious, simple

physiological necessities or abstract ideals” (Rosca, 1943).

1.2. Psychological particularities of the military environment

The army represents a social institutions within which specific activities different from those from civilian institutions are realized. Within this institution one could different activities, each of them demanding the subject (military) to act in several areas: his thoughts, his action and adaptation skills (Andreescu, 1999).

Moreover, according to national legislation, military are assigned a certain status, which generates certain rights and obligations, supplementary restrictions in comparison to civilians. Thus, the relations of the military’s behaviour inside the institution are strictly specified (when and how he salutes, he addresses others, how he dresses) in regulations, orders or instructions, freedoms are restricted (military cannot be politically involved, cannot participate in certain activities, or leave his garrison or his country under certain conditions) (Burbulea, 1994).

A key issue that occurs in the transition from the civil environment, the family or the school environments to the military one is the youngster’s adaptation and integration in the military group. The adaptation process is implemented whenever a situation entails new items, non-familial or simply unknown ones. In this case the following can be distinguished:

- assimilating adjustment, when new data are integrated in previously established behavioural patterns;
- adaptation, when new data transfer behavioural patterns or schemas to make them compatible with the exigencies of the situation (Burbulea, 1994).

Integration implies, besides adaptation, taking possession of a role and status within a human community, bringing parties together into a coherent whole.

Integration is defined as participation inside the belonging group, as a matter of an active, conscious and solitary contribution to the achieving of common goals. Integration is the process by which the young are involved in group activity, with all his physical and mental capacity (Tudoran, 1996).

The intensity of the adjustment process is an objective result of the manner in which the military institution conceives recruit's activity during his initiation: isolation from his civilian life, of his former group partners, the strict control of a large number of links, the initiative governed by the hierarchical position (Andreescu, 1999).

The military group integration process must be conceived as a social action, the essence of which is represented not by the subject's mechanical and passive comply with environmental demands, but the creation of all the objective and subjective conditions for the integration to refer, first of all to his employment. All activities are ordered, nothing is realized on the subject's own initiative. Affective relationships are suddenly interrupted or the youngster's information is strictly controlled, having a significant influence on his behaviour.

Military education is a component part of the general adult education. In other words, the military has an explicit educational function.

Assimilation and accommodation are constitutive and inseparable conditions of adaptation, together with necessary, so that on an education plan this could aim, as a unified concept, to the creation of proper conditions for both processes to take place.

After presenting to his unit, the youngster is placed in a subunit, he dresses his military uniform, he complies with a rigorous program, and he is forced to respect the rules of conduct and language, which introduce a note of austerity in his life. Most of his previous relationships are interrupted. All his past events influenced his life at a certain point. These built his intellectual and moral beliefs, his convictions and his feelings. The absence of his family, friends, school, a separation from his girlfriend, all these influence him on an affective plan (Burbulea, 1972). Every institution has certain objectives for the adoption of various organizational structures; it proposes behaviour patterns, various systems of rewards and punishments.

The military institution is, by excellence, an institution with a high degree of formalization, all activities being precisely circumscribed, rigorously established, in order to fulfil the aims, purposes, which may not be consistent with those of the people who compose the organization. The system of norms, values and of specific regulations to the military

institution, make the military service to be conducted under the required conditions, which require great adaptation resources from the youngster, when the process of his personality maturation is not finalized. Sometimes, the characteristics of a transition society can act towards the obstruction of the personality maturity process, on the basis of psychic vulnerabilities and conditioned by a multitude of other factors (Mark Loyd, 1989). so at the proper age for enrolment many young people present themselves as being emotionally and psychologically immature (Pitariu, Sîntion, 2003).

1.3. Personality in terms of motivational factors

Despite its huge importance in the construction of personality, motivation has been insufficiently studied in this domain. The motivation concept is vague and ambiguous, the assigned meanings being very different. The most appropriate approach of motivation refers to behavioural terms. This means starting from the manner in which humans act in different environments. Behaviour becomes a way to operate objects, a relational function; in other words a subject acts on a given situation to modify its direction towards an expected state or a desired outcome.

The basic motivational aspect of this behaviour resides in that the effect registered is not given from the start and it isn't remain indifferent to the subject: some effects (results) are empowering (positive) and desired, others are actually disruptive thus avoided. Thus behavioural characteristic demands subjects to be preferentially oriented in relation to certain situations and objects (Golu, 1993).

Maslow believes that the main dynamics personality factors are the motivational factors. Then motivational domain disposes of the wholeness and of the emergence of the personality system to which it belongs. The differentiation of motivational structures has a stage character, the system functionality thus imposing a level, hierarchical structuring of needs. From this point of view, interpersonal differences have a psycho-physiological intrinsic foundation (Macsinca, 2000). When explaining the mechanisms and factors of personality development, the changes and transformations suffered during the evolution process, Maslow describes an image of an updated personality. This idea represented the subject of widespread criticism, the main reproaches being linked to the needs pyramidal structure, to the strict relations between them, to the manner in which needs and meta-motivation are described and explained.

Personality functions as a filter for specific needs: those belonging to a general orientation are retained, while opposing ones are rejected. Depending on these needs personality types can be identified. *The need for achievement* characterizes individuals with a strong orientation toward a goal, an objective linked to the endeavour of achieving tasks.

All humans possess this need, but feel it with different intensities. Young people with high achievement needs exhibit a strong desire for success and show no interest for situations where luck determines success. *The need for affiliation* plays a complex but vital in people's behaviour. Social contact, in various forms, is essential for a normal physical development of a young personality. We all need relationships with others. People with a high need for affiliation think about: friends and friendships. They like to help them, to teach and develop others. *The need for power* translates into a desire to exercise control or influence others. There are two kinds of power: positive and negative. The negative use of power is associated to personal power, with no positive consequences on the group. Those with a low need for power tend to avoid being supervisors. Individuals are unique and group rules differ from one organization to another. What may motivate a group, can have the opposite effect on another, motivational factors may vary depending on the individual (www.presamil.ro).

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The study was started from the premises that motivation may be one of the determining factors for teenagers' military service enrolment. The differences between how each individual sees the army according to one's personality is one of the reasons for this research. The aim was to find some explanations for the different ways in which high school graduates consider and understand military service.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses used as starting points for this research are: 1. There are significant differences between the personality profiles of young people who want to pursue military service (highlighted by the CPD questionnaire) and of those who don't; 2. the motivation for military service is not directly related to the need for performance, the need of belonging, the need for autonomy and the need for rational domination.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1. The sample of subjects

In order to obtain relevant results for this research, the subjects chosen were boys, graduating the 12th grade, who will be forced to pursue military service, if the army will be compulsory. The research was conducted in May-June 2003 using a sample of 38 subjects from the Shakespeare and Tudor Tanasescu high schools in Timisoara and Traian Vuia High School from Resita, from different study profiles: the study of humanistic, scientific, industrial and economic disciplines. The age of subjects was of 18 and 19. They were divided into two categories: those who want to serve in the army (arm) (N = 13) and those who don't (noarm) (N = 12).

4.2. Instruments used

The following research instruments were used: 1. the Personality Questionnaire for Motivation Structure (SMP); 2. Personality Questionnaire CPD 3. Inventory of pathological tendencies SP 13-85: Scale of motivation. Subjects were also asked: - To answer the question: "How much do you want to serve in the army?", Indicating a rate between 1 and 100 – to measure the intensity of the desire to enrol (IDA); - To write three reasons for wanting to serve in the army or three reasons the opposite reason.

4.3 Study procedure

The study method chosen was applied to each classroom. Each pupil was handed both the CPD protocol test and an answer sheet, along the instructions needed. For the SMP questionnaire the procedure was the same, the instructions being different. Finally subjects received a sheet with 10 questions extracted from the motivation scale of pathological tendencies Inventory SP 13-85, where they were asked to answer honestly with "Yes" or "No". On the same sheet subjects had to answer the question: "How much do you want to serve in the army?" with answers scaled from 1 (meaning very little) to 100 (means a lot). adding three reasons, for wanting to join the army and three reasons for not wanting it.

5. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

After filling in the reason for wanting to join the army or not, a hierarchy of these reasons was established according to depending their frequency in a descending order. This hierarchy is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Frequency of reasons for joining the army

No	Reasons for joining the army	Answer frequency
1	Discipline, responsibility, respect	16
2	New experiences, new things	11
3	“Becoming a man”, becoming mature	9
4	Obligation towards one’s country, patriotism	6
5	New friends, relationships, accountancies	6
6	A job easily obtained	5
7	Learning how to fight, to defend	4
8	Obtaining affirmation, a statute	3
9	Physical exercises, physically fit	2
10	Other reasons	2

Table 2 Frequency of reasons for not joining the army

No.	Reasons for not joining the army	Answer frequency
1	Being away from one’s family, from friends	12
2	Subordination, control	8
3	Strict schedule, strict regulations, dress code	7
4	Miserable existence conditions	6
5	Difficulty to adapt, to integrate	5
6	Loss of time	4
7	Lack of intimacy	3
8	Other reasons	3

Thus it can be observed that the desire to join the army is closely connected to dominance, belonging, autonomy and performance. This assumption was formulated as a hypothesis and was later verified by using the SMP scales.

The subjects’ answers, summarized in the two tables, lead to an extrinsic motivation (young people are forced or are required to do certain things or actions) and an affective motivation (young people want to feel good in the company of others, to obtain recognition).

The number of each scale question is presented on the horizontal line from the figure below, on the vertical the percentage of the subjects’ positive and negative responses (N = 38). Thus Figure 1 presents the results of the SP13-85 pathological tendencies motivation inventory. Teenagers consider that the army will not develop their personal qualities and skills, thus the military service won’t bring them satisfaction, even if they will be able to face all environmental obstacles.

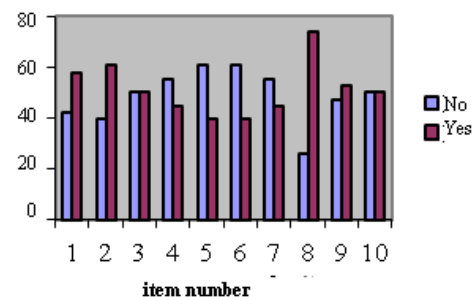


Fig. 1 Responses percentage to each item of the motivation scale

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS INTERPRETATION

A. The results obtained after comparing the CPD scales scores of young people who want to serve in the army (G arm) and of those who don’t (G noarm) using the t test for independent samples are presented in Table 3

All differences between averages obtained for the two groups, except the scale of communality (Cm) are meaningless to a materiality threshold of $p = 0.05$. Those wishing to join the military offer usual, custom answers, by assessing the extent of the conventional and unconventional degree,

youngsters consider the army a duty, which must be realized, which makes them “men”
The t percentage was calculated for the Garm and Gnoarm groups, in order to realize the teenagers’ psychological profiles, shown graphically in Figure 2.

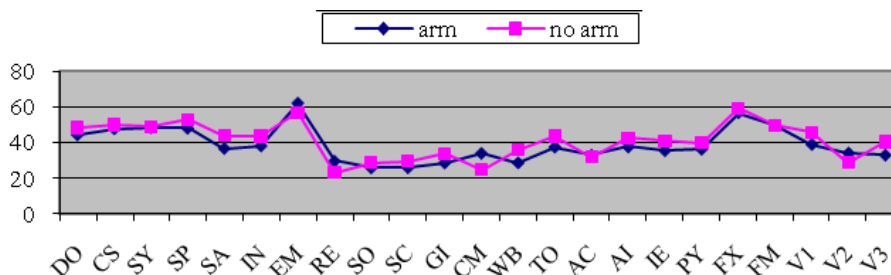


Fig. 2 The CPD resulting psychological profile for the Garm and Gnoarm groups

The scales from the psychological profile with very low for averages scores for both groups were the only ones interpreted: Responsibility (Re). socializing (So). self control (Sc). good impression (Gi). health (To) and acceptance of social norms (V2). Subjects seem to be: unruly, nonconformist, rebellious, impulsive, and nervous, with tendencies towards individualism, easily offended and irritated and not complying with social norms.

B. After correlating the scores obtained with the help of the motivation scale of the pathological tendencies inventory SP 13-85 with the intensity of the desire to enrol (IDA). with the need for performance, the need of belonging, the need for autonomy and the need for rational domination, the correlation coefficients presented in Table 4 resulted.

As shown in Table 4, all correlation coefficients are insignificant at $p > 0.05$, excluding the linear correlation coefficient between the SP 13-85 motivation scale and the intensity of the desire to enrol (IDA) which is highly significant at $p = 0.01$ (as motivation is increased, the intensity of the desire to enrol is also increased).

The data shown in Table 4 present a direct, highly significant correlation between the motivation scale and IDA. It can be assumed that these results are due to the fact that young people who want to join the army are motivated by the opportunity to get some advantages: their families will appreciate them for their results, they will learn new things, and they will be recognized by their superiors. On the other hand, however, the authority exercised by the army may undermine the individual's authority. Thus, the need

for autonomy, performance and for rational domination will implicitly be reduced.

The motivation to join the army does not correlate with the following needs: performance, belonging, autonomy and rational dominance. Subjects with high scores on the performance scale are people who want to achieve something, to win competitions, but who consider that in the army they won't be able to prove their values and their competition capabilities.

Subjects with high scores on the need for belonging scale are people attracted by the society, the environment, who are closely connected to relatives and families, who belong to a group, but who consider they won't feel good in the army, they won't be comfortable with changing their belonging group with the military one.

Subjects with high scores on the need for autonomy scale, are independent and nonconformist persons, but who consider that as military they won't be able to develop the need for independence, of self-will and action, the military environment being an institution with strict rules.

Subjects with high scores on the need for rational domination scale are people who try to dominate others through various means, but who consider that in the army they won't be able to develop the need to dominate others, to lead and guide, them being subordinates and forced to obey rules.

The intensity of the desire to enrol in the army or not, as a comparison between the two groups is presented in Figures 3 and 4.

Table 3. Averages c comparison for the CPD questionnaire scales between groups Garm and G noarm

CPD Scale	G arm (N=13)		G noarm (N=12)		t	p
	m	σ	m	σ		
Do	13,231	5,403	13,000	3,516	0,125	0,901
Cs	12,846	3,955	11,750	2,454	0,824	0,418
Sy	12,615	3,572	11,083	3,655	1,060	0,300
Sp	12,154	4,356	12,500	4,167	0,203	0,841
Sa	10,602	5,633	12,083	4,738	0,665	0,513
In	10,692	4,131	11,250	3,841	0,349	0,730
Em	12,385	2,399	10,500	3,205	1,673	0,108
Re	14,846	3,826	12,000	4,023	1,813	0,083
So	20,000	5,276	20,083	6,431	0,036	0,972
Sc	11,000	5,759	11,917	6,802	0,365	0,719
Gi	9,692	4,956	11,417	5,680	0,810	0,426
Cm	17,769	2,803	14,750	3,519	2,382	0,026
Wb	11,462	4,841	13,250	7,689	0,702	0,490
To	8,462	3,503	9,500	4,421	0,654	0,520
Ac	12,923	2,985	11,417	3,630	1,137	0,267
Ai	14,538	3,929	15,000	3,045	0,326	0,747
Ie	14,385	3,404	15,333	5,123	0,550	0,588
Py	13,231	4,400	13,083	3,579	0,091	0,928
Fx	5,692	2,097	5,500	3,317	0,175	0,863
Fm	8,000	3,266	7,083	2,746	0,756	0,457

Table 4 Linear correlation coefficients between the SP 13-85 motivation scale, IDA and SMP scales (N = 38)

Scale	Correlation with the SP 13-85 motivation scale	
	r	p
IDA	0.626	p<0,01
The need for performance	0.255	p>0,05
The need of belonging	0.258	p>0,05
The need of autonomy	0.058	p>0,05
The need of rational dominance	0.065	p>0,05

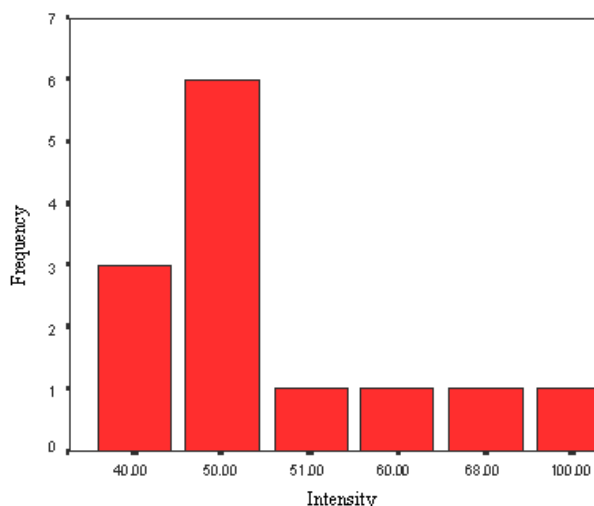


Fig. 3 Intensity of the desire to join the army.

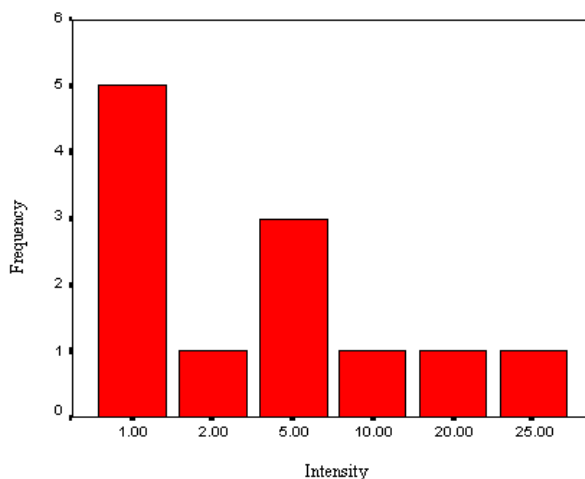


Fig. 4 Intensity of the desire for the group who doesn't want to join the army

On a scale from 1 to 100, it can be observed, that the majority of subjects who wish to serve in the army ($N = 13$) is registered with the highest frequently of 50. It can also be stated that the subjects who stated that they want to join the army, don't offer sure answers.

The fourth image presents on a scale from 1 to 100, the fact that the majority of subjects who do not want to join the army ($N = 12$) are registered for the lowest frequency of 1. The youngsters that don't want to join the army are certain about their answers and have offered very persuasive responses, with many very small rates.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The research results can be summarized as follows:

A. Hypothesis 1 is invalid. In other words there aren't any significant differences between the personality

profile underlined by the CPD questionnaire for young people who want to join the army and for those who don't. More precisely, the option to enrol is related to personality factors assessed by CPD (with the exception of the communality scale).

Subjects who gave positive answers are usually conventional people who respect social norms and offer common answers.

B. Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. In other words there is no direct correlation between the intensity of the desire to join the army and the need for performance, the need for belonging, the need for autonomy and the need for rational domination. This is due to the fact that young people do not want: to affirm themselves in the army, to belong to a different group, to be independent and to dominate others, needs that cannot be achieved while serving the army. The limitations of this research may come from the fact that a small number of subjects were used, from

two demographic locations, students of final high school grade, from three high schools, and the period during which the study was applied (spring 2003). Further research on a larger number of subjects, from different locations and not just pupils, could change modify the results obtained. Another problem for the application of this type of study would be the period during which it has been applied, because the present legislation regarding the army is now different, the military service being now voluntary and becoming an employer, since 2007, the situation is a different one and the youngsters' motivation to join the army has also modified.

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