

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MILITARY PROFESSION

Ion DINESCU*, Diana ILISOI*, Daniela NAGY*

*, „Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy of Braşov, Romania

***Abstract:** The macro and micro-social transformations produce significant mutations within the value scale and respectively in relation with individuals' attitudes. Such attitudinal changes are implicitly obvious with military high school students. The paper presents the evolution of the military profession.*

***Key words:** military, profession, organization.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The military organization, as a sub-system of the global-social system, takes over and reflects the transformations of this system. It is influenced by the values of traditions and customs of the cultural area where it functions, but it is also influenced by the mutations taking place at the global level. Within such a context, we witness a re-configuration of the military culture, a re-directing of its thinking, as a reflex of the profound changes occurring in the area of socio-politics and, implicitly, in the culture area, nowadays [1].

Starting from these realities, a new axiological model comes to stage, being specific to the military profession, which, by the professionalization of its military personnel, manages to convert itself into beliefs and attitudes.

The homogenization mechanisms of internal values, specific to a profession and its doers, become clearer irrespective of their affiliation to a specific environment.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE MILITARY PROFESSION

Adherence to these values and a minimum compliance with the thinking and action models, promoted by the military culture, are indispensable conditions for the adjustment to a holistic organization, such as the military organization. Therefore, the access to this

profession is twice conditioned: on the one side, it depends on the degree in which individuals fulfill their expectations, wishes and values by means of this profession and, on the other side, the condition is imposed by the advantages (moral, or social) that the profession offers.

Individuals capable of conforming to the internal values of the profession, or manifesting attitudes promoted by the military institution and compatible with the specific normative system, are favored, from the very selection, by their basic instruction at the military high-schools and academies, and later on, by promotion criteria for the military personnel. When this correlation is inexistent, there might be a feeling of maladjustment to the profession and a phenomenon of professional re-orientation occurs.

Despite the conservatism of the military culture, there is a focus shift from the traditional military values (heroism, discipline etc.), which used to define a professional military individual, toward the assimilation of leading and strategy skills.

The American sociologist Charles Moskos has analyzed the military system passage from the institutional model, based on specific values, toward the occupational model, fact that led to the narrowing of the difference between civilian and military. Consequently, in the context of a competitive market economy and of an utilitarian culture (in which the material values are predominant), the army

is constrained to adopt attractive recruitment policies on the labor market, and to resort to the extrinsic motivation, specific to the industrial organization, in order to recruit its personnel. Thus, the army becomes a “profession” just like any others.

By initiating the concept of ‘post-modern army’, the American sociologist emphasizes that the relationship army-society has changed and it has been caused by the perception of new types of threats under the globalization phenomenon, and by new characteristics of the warfare.

Nevertheless, the author insists upon the necessity of preserving the singularity of the military profession and of the institutional characteristics of the army, based on the military culture and its characteristic values.

In conclusion, the professional mobility of the contemporary world does not restrict itself only to changing its professional status (by passing from a profession to another).

It implies the amendment in the content and characteristics of a profession, (including the military profession), changes in its professional hierarchy, related to the weight and role of professions, their social prestige and the relationships among professions [2]. Under these circumstances, there is demand for a careful study of the attitudes manifested by the military high-school students toward the military profession, their motivational support in selecting a school or/ and a military career.

3. A STUDY REGARDING THE CHOICES OF A MILITARY PROFESSION

This research focuses upon the identification of motivational factors that constitute the main reasons for selecting the military school and/or profession, the elements of attraction of the military profession and the level of knowledge related to it, from the perspective of the military high-school students [3].

The data represent a valuable indicator of the quality of the educational activities, of the human and professional models existing in the military high schools, and implicitly, of the

military profession chances of imposing itself on the labor market.

The sample population of this study consists of the twelfth graders of the military high-schools, in Romania, namely, 312 respondents, aged between 17 and 20, out of whom 135 are male students (43.30%) and 170 are female students (54.50%). 184 of these students come from urban areas (58.90%). Their families’ level of education varies from elementary school to university, while the predominant sector consists of high-school graduates (162 mothers and 127 fathers). See Figure 1.

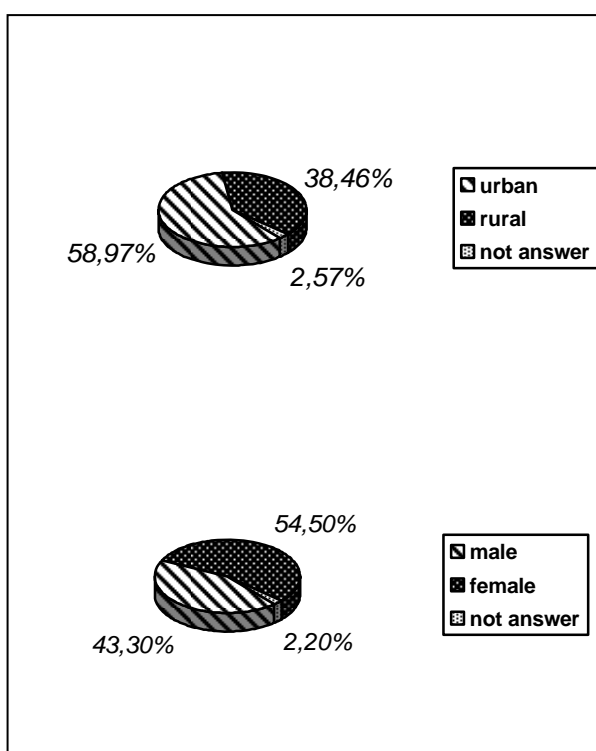


Fig. 1 The structure of the investigated sample (acc. to gender/social background)

A survey based on questionnaires was used to collect data, the questionnaire consisted of 12 items, out of which 10 items contained closed answers and 2 of the items required open-ended answers, which, even though difficult to quantify, were designed to allow personal interpretation on behalf of the respondents. The questions aimed at the subjects’ perception of the educational offer provided by the military high-school and the military profession, thus, giving the subjects

the possibility to express their professional option and motivate their choices.

The obtained data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, and the following findings resulted:

a) The expectancy level of the military students was confirmed by the educational offer of the military high-schools for 64.09% of the investigated respondents. These students claimed that their expectations related to the military environment were fulfilled, thus offering them a high level of satisfaction (See Figure 2).

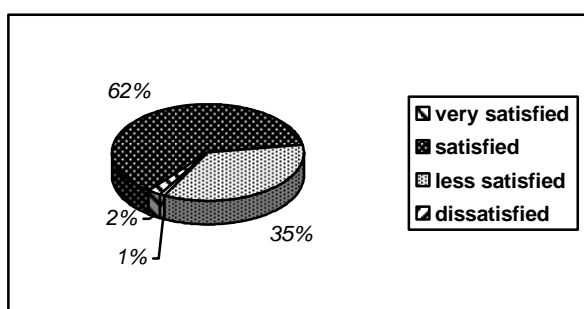


Fig. 2 The level of expectancy confirmed by military students in the 12th grade

b) The confirmation of the expectancy offered by the military high-schools to graduates was strengthened by the importance given to their future personal and professional development. See Figure 3.

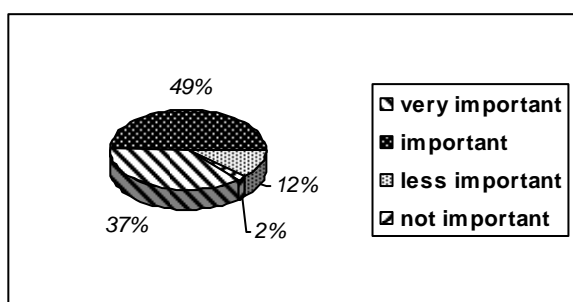


Fig. 3 The importance of graduating from a military high-school in relation to personal development (12th grade)

c) Within the educational environment offered by the military high-schools, the decisive factors in personal formation and development were distributed as follows (see Figure 4). Mention should be made that a special contributor to the young people's

formation was the family (28%), while the officers' group came on a second position and accordingly it would represent a reference group to this study.

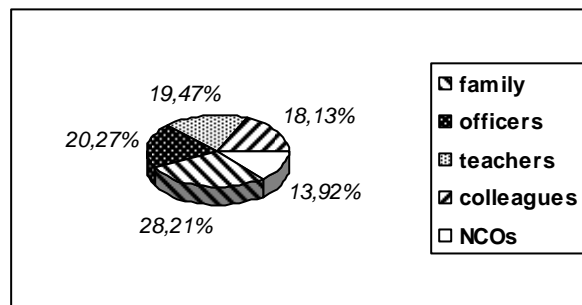


Fig. 4 The distribution of educational factors in military high-school (12th grade)

d) The orientation toward the military career was achieved through specific activities in the military high-schools for 67.95% of the questioned respondents. See Figure 5.

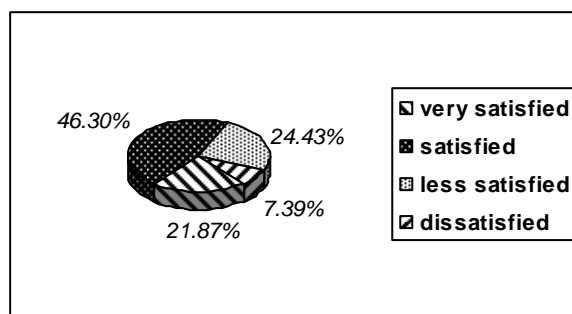


Fig. 5 Perception of military-career guidance as accomplished through specific military activities in the military high-school

e) The quality of the educational environment was also confirmed by the positive appreciations stated in the description of the military system (see Figure 6).

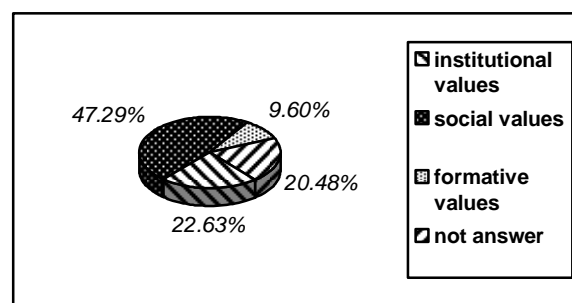


Fig. 6 The distribution of positive perceptions regarding the military organization

4. CONCLUSIONS

The instructive-educational activity performed in the military high-schools meets a double requirement: on the one side, it follows the quality standards imposed by a modern education, on the other side; it focuses on the students' guidance and motivation toward the military career.

Therefore, the highly instructed military high-school graduate, irrespective of his/her professional option, will be able to satisfy both

the exigency of a professional army and the civilian society's challenges.

REFERENCES

1. Hoffman, O., s.a., *Professions in front of the Future*, Romanian Academy Publishing House, Bucuresti, 1990;
2. Ilut, P. *Axiological Structures from the Psycho-Social Perspective*, EDP, Bucuresti, 1995;
3. Jaspers, K. *Philosophy Tests*, Editura Politehnica Publishing House, Bucuresti, 1986.