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A STUDY ON THE CADETS' SATISFACTION WITH CHOICE OF ACADEMIC SPECIALTY AT THE NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY, BULGARIA

Abstract: Satisfaction can be defined as a derivative of a sense of conformity between the motives, attitudes to work, the level of expectations, requirements for results and the possibility of their implementation. It's complicated experience which is a consequence of the alignment of the personality with the environmental conditions and the assessment of the overall situation and an indicator of attitude to activity. The article presents the results of study at the item – “Which is the measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality?” as a part of research on motivation for education and military activities in military formations of the example of the VasilLevski National Military University, Bulgaria. The interviewees were cadets who graduated through the following academic years – 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016.

Keywords: motivation, cadet's motivation, measure for satisfaction, choice of academic speciality

Introduction

Individuals are motivated to work for an organization if they are accepted, understood, are able to establish themselves as individuals and professionals and have possibilities to influence other individuals and events. The satisfaction of any human activity reflects the nature of feelings that people have to it, including feelings connected to their performance. It is an attitude for which it is believed that determines the behaviour of people. Satisfaction of any aspect of human activity is introduced as an indicator of quality of life, adaptation to the carried out type of activity and to the effective functioning of an individual, a group and an organization.

Satisfaction can be defined as a derivative of a sense of conformity between the motives, attitudes to work, the level of expectations, requirements for results and the possibility of their implementation. It's complicated experience which is a consequence of the alignment of the personality with the environmental conditions and the assessment of the overall situation and an indicator of attitude to activity.

Despite the large number of researches and theoretical studies investigating the sources and mechanism of expression of satisfaction, so far there is no unanimity on the issue of its content and its measurement. Most studies are based on a variety of existing theories of motivation. Quantification of satisfaction is a difficult process, so in practice we use nonparametric methods for establishing its level. The processing of the received data can be performed using a variety of computer programs to analyse data from empirical studies that allow the establishment of relations and dependencies, verification of hypotheses and predicting future trends.

Analysis of the participants in the study by specialization – distribution by gender and comparison with the general population

On the basis an approved request by the Head of National Military University it is conducting research on motivation in military formations of the example of VasilLevski National Military University in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria. Subject of the study is motivation for training and military activities of the cadets and the objects of

the study are students in professionalmilitary direction in “Organization and management of military units at the tactical level,” Land forces faculty at the National Military University of Bulgaria.

A research hypothesis states that a specific organizational culture at military universities and in particular at VasilLevski National Military University has a major impact on individual motivation of cadets for education and military activityin the process of achieving the specific objectives of educational preparation in these organizations. We believe that the academic performance of the cadets and the received satisfaction from their training during their academic preparation is dependent on both the quality and intensity of the efforts made by them and the methods of extrinsic motivation used by academic and command staff. It is possible that to establish during the investigation that certain elements of the learning process and/or military activity do not fully meet the demands, needs and expectations of the cadets when it comes to preparing for future officers.

Recruiting information regarding the survey is carried out through a combination of research methods. The main method of the study is empirical survey conducted in a real educational environment. It was prepared an appropriate questionnaire including 24 items to help achieve the stated research purposes and to allow testing the validity of the formulated research hypothesis and made scientific assumptions after exploring the variety of existing theories of motivation. The questionnaire was prepared after long research work by Elitsa Petrova and Dumitru Iancu as a consequence of their multiannual research in the field of motivation. Mathematical and statistical methods are used for processing and analysis of survey results and their graphical representation.

Limitations of the study. The current study analyses the basic array of the general population. Some cadets do not fall into the target array of general statistical population because of specifics of training of therespondents, namely carrying out required daily military duties. The studied array of general statistical population is large enough, and the pointed fact does not affect the results of the study.

This article presents the results of study at first item – “Which is the measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality?”. The interviewees were cadets who graduated through the following academic years – 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016. Total all cadets for three academic years numbered 145 people, including 124 men and 18 women. Respondents of the survey were 124people of which 109 were men and 15 are women, which are 88% of all available cadets.

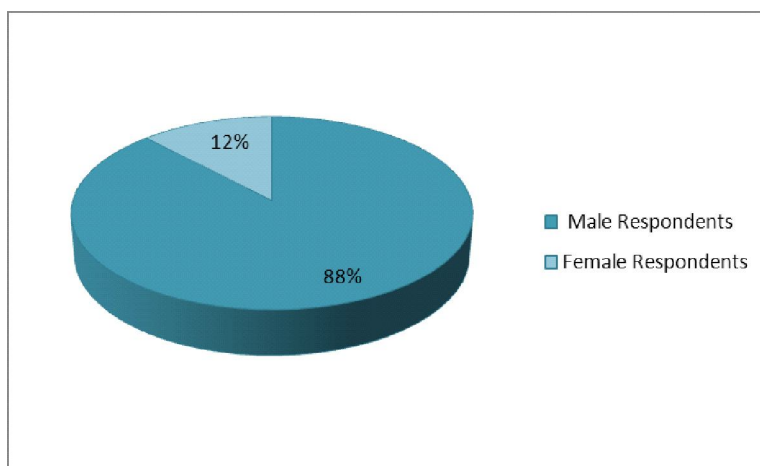


Fig. 1. Respondents of the survey-distribution by gender

In 2013/2014 academic year the population amounted to 60 people total, including 53 people who took part in the study. They formed 88% of general statistical population. This ensures representativeness of the studied array of the general statistical populationin sufficient level and allows to be done conclusions from data processing which to be applied to the whole population. Respondents are respectively 49 men and 4 women.

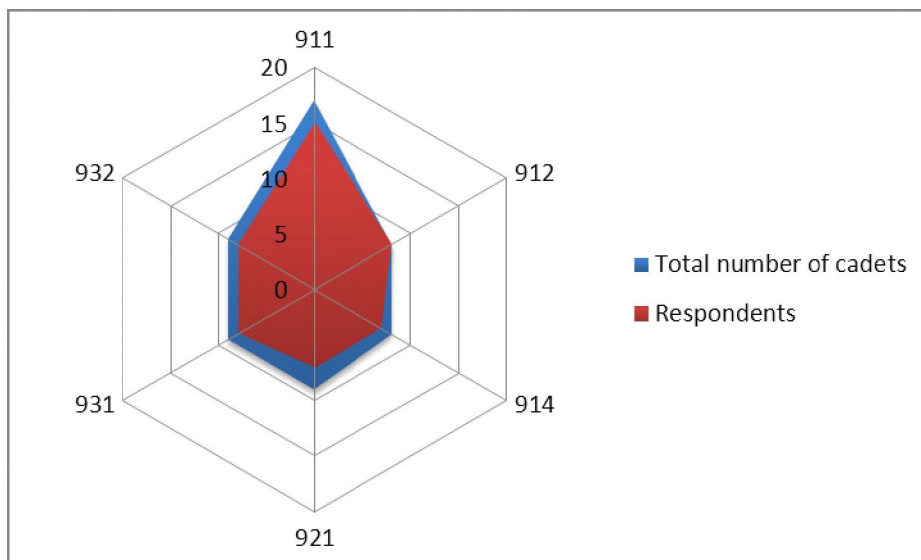


Fig. 2. Participants in the study by specialization – compared with the general population 2013/2014

In 2014/2015 academic year the population amounted to 39 people, of which 33 participated in the study. They formed 85% of the general statistical population. This ensures representativeness of the studied array of the general statistical population in sufficient level and allows to be done conclusions from data processing which to be applied to the whole population. Respondents are respectively 27 men and 6 women.

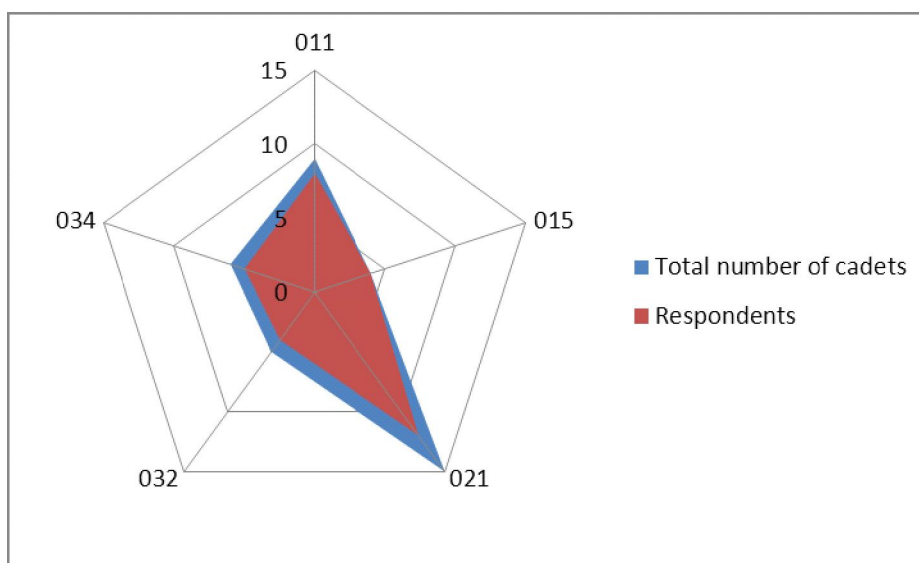


Fig. 3. Participants in the study by specialization – compared with the general population 2014/2015

In 2015/2016 academic year the population amounted to 46 people, of which 38 participated in the study. They formed 83% of the general statistical population. This ensures representativeness of the studied array of the general statistical population in sufficient level and allows to be done conclusions from data processing which to be applied to the whole population. Respondents are respectively 33 men and 5 women.

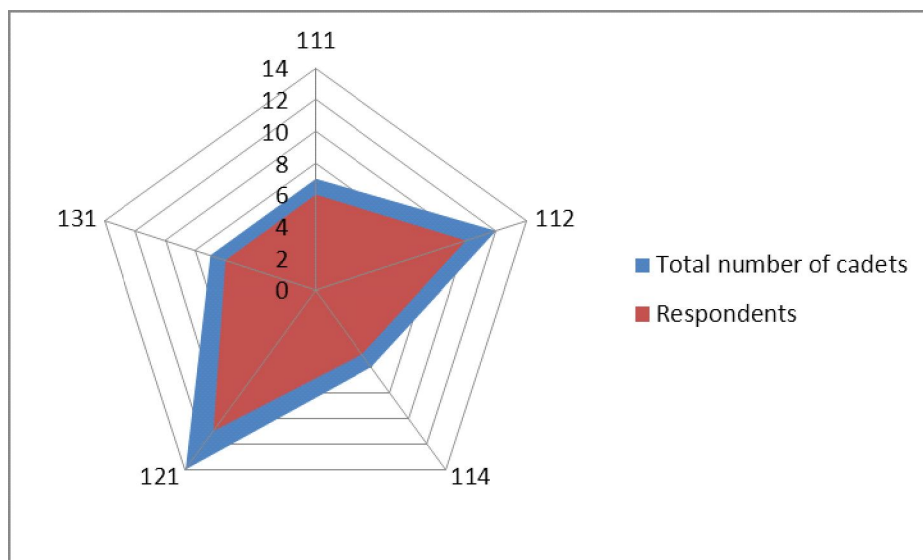


Fig. 4. Participants in the study by specialization – compared with the general population 2015/2016

Which is the measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality?

Figure 5 shows answers to the first item – “Which is the measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality?”. It is obvious that 42% of respondents are satisfied with the choice of academic speciality to a great extent, and 43% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty largely, which indicates a significant percentage of satisfaction – 85% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty. Indifference it is found in 13% of the given answers from respondents. 2% from the respondents are satisfied with the specialty to a small extent. The answer – in a very small extent is not selected. The analysis of data from 2013/2014 academic year shows that satisfaction is significant and dissatisfaction is a minimum.

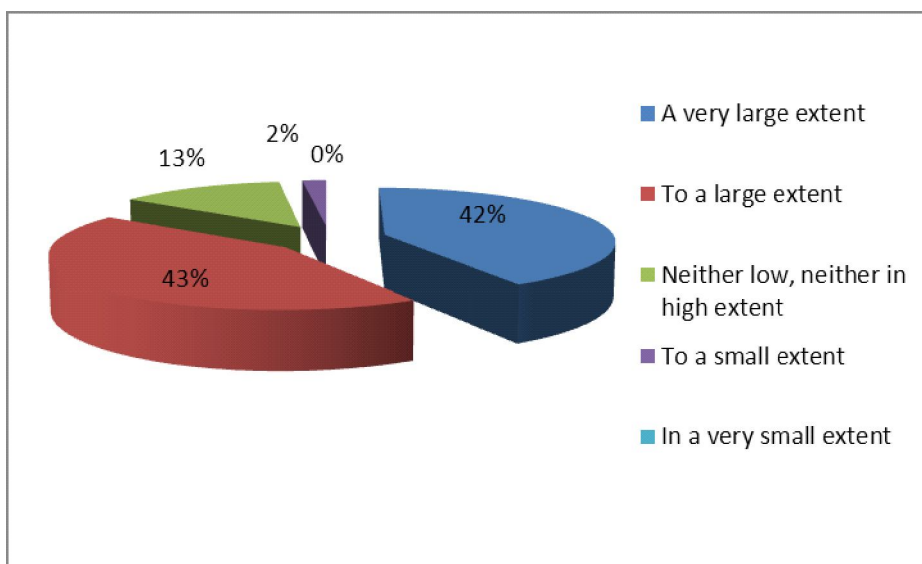


Fig .5.The measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality – Alumni 2013/2014

Figure 6 shows the following distribution – 21% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty to a great extent, and 52% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty largely, which indicates a significant percentage of satisfaction – 73% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty. Indifference is found in 21% of the respondents. 3% are satisfied with the specialty to a small extent. The answer – in a very small extent is not selected.

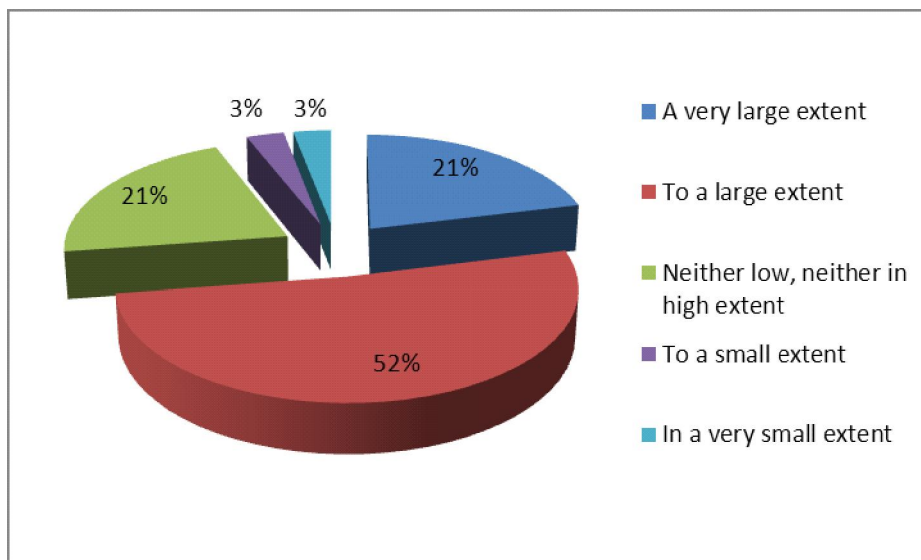


Fig. 6. The measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality – Alumni 2014/2015

Figure 7 shows that 13% of respondents are satisfied with the specialty greatly, and 55% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty largely, indicating albeit reduced compared to previous academic years a significant percentage of satisfaction – 68% of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty. Indifference is found in 24% of the respondents’ answers. 8 % of respondents are satisfied with the chosen specialty in lesser extent. The answer to a very small degree has not been selected.

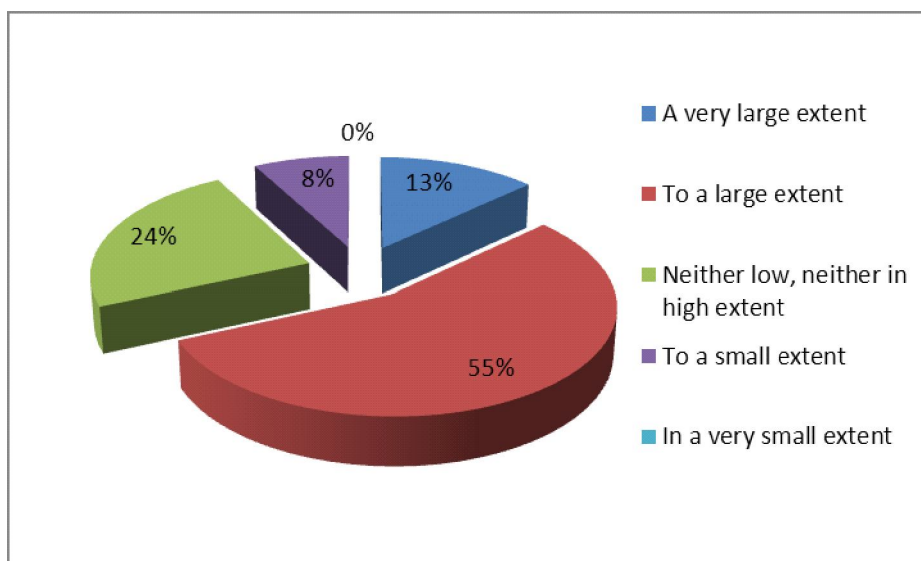


Fig. 7. The measure for satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality – Alumni 2015/2016

The data for three academic years show high levels of satisfaction and lower levels of dissatisfaction. In order to clarify the motivation and satisfaction with the educational process the current study explore in details the following areas:

1. Satisfaction with the choice of academic speciality;
2. Studying specific subjects and topics and their relations with professional development of trainees as future military leaders;

3. Strictness of academic program at the university and its relations with academic achievement of students;
4. Activities that could lead to easing of curriculum and simultaneously to increase the academic achievement of cadets;
5. Personal participation of trainees during the academic hours;
6. Factors that affect the personal participation of trainees during seminars on their activity in the learning process;
7. Connection between the learning process and the future realization of the cadets as good commanders;
8. Factors that prevent trainees to be best in their education and realize their potential and capabilities in full level; etc.

The dimensions of satisfaction with the learning process can be grouped as follows: satisfaction with studied academic subjects and curriculum; satisfaction with personal performance of trainees and significance of made personal efforts; satisfaction with the methods for motivation used by academic and command staff; satisfaction with the military organizational culture and its influence on individual performance; satisfaction with the evolution of cadets as military leaders and so their subsequent realization.

In terms of relevance and importance of this study, answers of the questions make it possible to be carried out future analysis and to be held expert evaluation in the following areas: cadets' performance in the learning process, used methods to motivate learners, total satisfaction from education in a particular institution, organizational culture, problems in academic work, opportunities for increasing motivation and academic achievement of students.

Conclusion

It is believed that people who are satisfied with their job carry it on better, do not change it for a long time, and are more attached to the organization for which they work. Over time, most scientists have tried hard to demonstrate a positive correlation between job satisfaction and performance. And although the hypothesis that “satisfied worker is the best worker” looks attractive, it is not fully confirmed. Modern management considered the impacts on job satisfaction on behaviour in two directions. On the one hand, it is established its particular impact on the success of the performance, productivity and activity of the individual, as well as on overall life satisfaction. On the other hand, dissatisfaction is displayed as predictor for negative behaviours. It is assumed that the presence of satisfaction with the labour is improving and therefore most of the attempts to change the organization are aimed at achieving higher satisfaction. It is revealed the two-way relations between performance and satisfaction. Not only satisfaction leads to higher efficiency, but the good performance creates a sense of satisfaction from achievements and results in increasing of job satisfaction.