



Gender Education of Cadets in Higher Education Institutions of the Ukrainian Security Forces

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ABSTRACT

Aims Experience in many wars and armed conflicts have shown that the security forces team should be monolithic to achieve the desired result. Gender dissonance is a factor that negatively affects the ability of the officer team to fulfill its assigned tasks. The purpose of the study lies in highlighting important gender issues in the education of cadets, namely female cadets of Ukrainian security forces universities, which were identified during their expert survey.

Instrument & Methods This descriptive study was conducted in 2021 at the Central Research Institute of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This research was conducted in a survey among third- and fourth-year female cadets between 19 and 22. A total of 100 future officers participated.

Findings Positive thinking and the support of family and companions motivated them to survive in self-isolation conditions. Environmental stigma was the most undesirable obstacle felt by the Covid-19 survivors during self-isolation at home. Covid-19 survivors experiencing clinically mild symptoms tended to distrust the media because the media provides frightening information about Covid-19. The study identified the following problems in the gender education of female cadets: relatively high levels of material motivation when enrolling in a security forces university, insufficient level of psychological readiness for service in combat units, low aspirations for career advancement, and unsuitable living environment.

Conclusion The gender policy pursued by the state through the relevant governing bodies significantly lags behind the realities that spontaneously materialize, especially within the officer teams. When the need for certain changes has already become formalized among officials in the security forces, the reality is at a different level of development. The authors consider it appropriate to carry out further comprehensive scientific research work, which should reflect the social, psychological, legal, economic, and cultural aspects of the gender equality problem.

Keywords Education; Military Personnel; Military Psychology; Gender Equity

CITATION LINKS

[1] Attitudinal differences between female ... [2] Comparison of Chinese male and female ... [3] But how many push-ups can she do? The ... [4] Physical fitness level and mood state changes ... [5] The role and place of female-soldiers in ... [6] Integration of women into the armed ... [7] Development of professionally important ... [8] Adaptation of female cadets to training ... [9] Formation of personality traits of cadets ... [10] Formation of assertive behavior of cadets of ... [11] Theoretical aspects of the correlation of education ... [12] Modern realities of gender policy in the Armed ... [13] Professional stress of the national police of Ukraine ... [14] Are female soldiers satisfied with the fit ... [15] Daily coping with social identity threat ... [16] Feeding female soldiers: Consideration ... [17] Attitudes toward gender integration in policing ... [18] Spiritual and moral values and education ... [19] Value factors of readiness to change the service ... [20] Problems and prospects of sports training ... [21] Attitudes toward women in policing: An empirical ... [22] Freedoms in the khaki: gendering a 'gender-neutral' ... [23] The effect of same-gender or same-race ... [24] Combating gender inequality and shortage ... [25] Gender-related differences in mental ... [26] Information disorders: Overexposed and under informed ...

Introduction

One of the most significant differences between military teams is the conservatism in relations between officers. No matter how important or necessary, even subtle changes take a long time before officers begin to accept the changed situation as something normal. And this achievement is most likely not the result of a transformation of the collective consciousness but the natural loss of the carriers of the old views by the collective – for instance, as a result of their dismissal. Achieving gender equality in collectives, which are inherently conservative in their attitudes, cannot be achieved only by creating appropriate laws and subordinate acts [1-3]. Behind the "benign facade" of the most modern legislation will inevitably hide attitudes that have been established over the decades. Gender equality as a society now wants it to be is a common building, constructed by the work of the whole collective, the result of appropriate mutual relations and the efforts of all parties. Naturally, one of the parties is female officers, who should be ready for such a relationship, for the personal responsibility that arises from such relations. They should be the real implementers of building modern gender relations [4-7]. This raises the following question: why has so much attention been paid to the issue of gender equality specifically in the security forces, particularly within the officer community? Experience in many wars and armed conflicts has shown that a team in the security forces should be monolithic. Otherwise, there will be much wasted time, effort, and resources (including human resources) without achieving the desired result. Furthermore, the genesis of publications regarding contemporary gender issues indicates that an understanding of the urgent need to prove and clarify the concept of "gender equality in the security forces" to future officers is likely to have found no place when planning training activities in the respective higher education institutions (HEIs). There are almost no scientific studies on developing future officers' understanding of the concepts of "gender policy in the security forces", "gender equality in the security forces", etc. However, it should be noted that several studies address this issue, which has focused on future female officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and some other security forces of the Russian Federation [8-10]. In these studies, in particular, the authors state that according to their data, there is a significant difference between the views of cadets and female officers on the issue of gender equality in the security forces.

Renewal of officer teams usually means the emergence of many young officers who are the bearers of a more modern, different from the usual, sometimes even unconventional, views about life and service. Not always, but their life-service

paradigm is often perceived ambiguously by the rest of the team, usually negatively (which again results from the conservatism that reigns in the officer's moral and psychological climate). Consequently, a contradiction between the "generations", which does not reflect in the best way, above all, on the ability of the officer team to function effectively. Moreover, this situation can sometimes lead to disruptive attitudes among some officer team members. In recent years, one of these "irritants" has been the emergence of many female officers in the security forces. The impact of this category of officers on the teams they serve is varied, with many examples, both positive and negative. But the analysis of the negative examples clarifies that one of the main reasons for their occurrence is the appropriate education (or lack of such) of future officers in the relevant higher education institutions. The purpose of the study lies in covering some important gender issues in the education of cadets, namely female cadets of Ukrainian security forces universities, identified during their expert survey.

Instrument and Methods

This descriptive study was conducted in 2021 at the Central Research Institute of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The study was a survey among third- and fourth-year female cadets. A total of 100 future officers have participated. The age range of the survey participants was between 19 and 22 years old.

Female cadets were asked to answer many questions to determine what was the most important to future female officers in the service and to identify their expectations. To determine the attitudes prevailing among the respondents, the apparatus of expert judgment was used; in particular, the values of Kendall's coefficient of concordance were calculated. There are several algorithms for calculating the concordance coefficient. Still, in this case, given some features of the survey, for calculating the values of this coefficient, the expression proposed in the study was chosen [11]:

$$W = \frac{12S(\Delta^2)}{m^2(n^3 - n) - (2m - p) \sum_{j=1}^m T_j^2}, \quad (1)$$

Where

$$S(\Delta^2) = \sum_{i=1}^n \Delta_i^2; \quad (2)$$

$$\Delta_i = S(r_i) - \overline{S(r_i)} = S(r_i) - \frac{1}{2}m(n+1) \quad (3)$$

The deviation of the sum of ranks of the i - the object from the arithmetic average sum of ranks of all objects; p - the number of experts whose ranking results have equal ranks; T_j - the index of related

ranks in the result of a ranking of j - the expert; m - the number of experts; n - the number of objects.

Findings

Today's female officers come from all walks of life and backgrounds in Ukrainian society. As for serving in the Ukrainian security forces as a continuation of family traditions, only 16% of cadets surveyed mentioned this. The motives of others were different from those stated. In the course of the study, some problems concerning the gender education of female cadets were identified. These problems can represent strict obstacles to achieving gender equality within officer teams.

The first problem was the relatively large part of the material motivation when applying to higher education institutions of the security forces. Naturally, a considerable proportion of those attracted to the material side of officer service - the regular payment of wages, the provision of material, medical, and some other types of security, which in civilian life cost a lot. This may seem a tempting facet of officer service. Moreover, the service pay has become quite attractive in recent years. For comparison: the average salary in June 2020 was about 11.5 thousand UAH. At the same time, the salary of a lieutenant who has just graduated from a university and has taken up his duties was almost 20% higher. For a young person, this is, firstly, a good "start" and, secondly, a considerable difference compared to the salaries of their peers.

Given that no graduate of a civilian university can expect to earn that kind of money in his first year of work, it would seem that competition in security forces universities should be exorbitant, but this was far from the truth. The survey showed that the proportion of cadets for whom the material interest when entering such HEIs was dominant was 21%. This proportion should, for sure, be even smaller.

The second problem was insufficient psychological preparedness for service in combat units. Until recently, two rather common misconceptions prevailed in society. The first was that young female officers did not wish to take up combat positions but rather those belonging to operational and logistical support: communicators, medics, psychologists, political scientists, translators, financiers, lawyers, etc. The second point of view is that the situation has gradually begun to change under current conditions. To a certain extent, women desire to realize their fullest potential in the Ukrainian security forces under their specialization and education. But due to age restrictions, women have far fewer opportunities to be contracted to serve and build their careers. The survey revealed that a significant number of future female officers do not want to serve in combat units and divisions, but at the same time, there was a lack of desire to get a "brusque job". 67% want to serve in the so-called feminized

positions, and consequently, 33% want to serve in "serious" positions involving field conditions.

The third problem was low aspirations for career advancement. Another peculiarity of future female officers should be noted: they have almost no career aspirations. In their questionnaires, only 12% of respondents indicated a desire to make a career in the security forces. Such a low quantitative level of career-orientated respondents prompted several additional questions, which were clarified in further interviews. As a result, it turned out that female cadets and young female officers have a different perspective than male officers on the content of the concept of "career". For more than 80% of those surveyed, a successful career was not necessarily a generalship or a relevant position. The rank of a senior officer in a certain government position was enough for a sense of a successful career.

Further interviews also revealed that implicit discrimination and self-motivation were the most significant obstacles to a team career. More than 90% of those surveyed sincerely believe that family and children should occupy an important place in the life of a female officer. The answers given about careers should be interpreted as follows. Most cadets and young officers do not want to command combat units and divisions; they were not attracted to command positions with opportunities for high ranks. There were certainly exceptions to this rule, but they were minor.

The fourth problem was the unsuitable living environment. It was worth noting another aspect of human life that was unusual for male officers. During the survey and interviews, there was a question about what exactly causes the most difficulties. More than 70% of the female cadets responded that domestic problems were the most annoying in the service. As the interviews revealed, this definition was understood as inadequate material provision and problematic (not always satisfactory) accessibility of specialized medical care for women. Furthermore, all the interviewees unanimously noted that the infrastructure, housing, maintenance provision, architectural and planning solutions for housing, and other needs of the Ukrainian security forces consider only the needs of men and do not contribute to solving problems about women's daily life.

The results of the survey were as follows:

What was the most powerful factor that led a young girl to join the Ukrainian security forces? At first glance, the answers were at odds with modernity's aggressive and cynical pragmatism. But the fact remains that a relative majority of the respondents stated patriotic motives that encouraged them to join the military service; 23% of cadets surveyed reported that their desire to dedicate their lives to the defense of Ukraine was dominant, leading them to join the security forces. The distribution of motivational reasons was presented in Diagram 1.

Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with service during the cadet years largely determines and shapes the beginning and development of an officer's career. The majority of female cadets interviewed (82%) responded positively to this question, while 18% expressed dissatisfaction (Diagram 2).

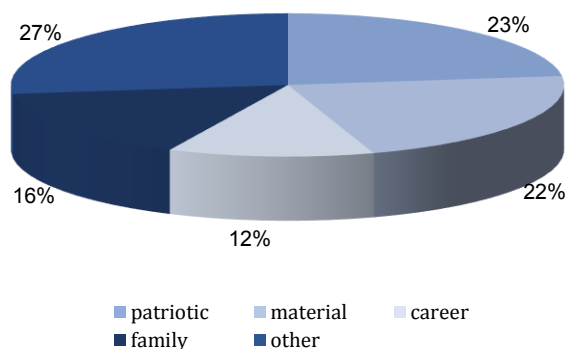


Diagram 1) Motivational reasons for joining the Ukrainian security forces

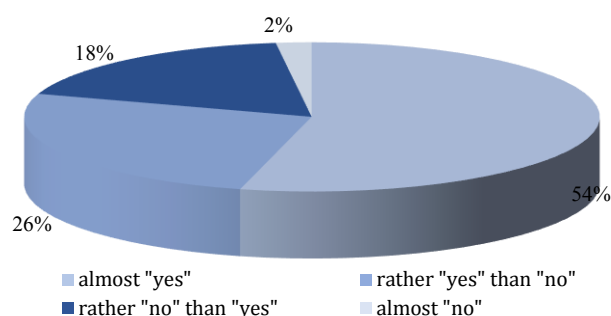


Diagram 2) Degree of satisfaction with service in the security forces

Another aspect of the question of satisfaction with staying in military service should be considered the question of the desire to re-enter the security forces universities, with their life experience gained if there were such a fantastic opportunity. A total of 83% responded positively and 17% negatively to this question. The majority of respondents do not regret the step taken and do not intend to resign early from the ranks of the Ukrainian security forces (Diagram 3). A comparison of the data from the charts in Diagrams 2 and 3 (i.e., own perceptions and assessments of staying in military service) shows a high (almost 100%) convergence in the results of the responses.

Despite certain difficulties during their service and a sometimes contradictory, sometimes incomprehensible, sometimes vague, or deformed desire to pursue an officer career (not necessarily a command one), the majority (63%) of the female cadets surveyed still consider another education – a higher military education – to be necessary.

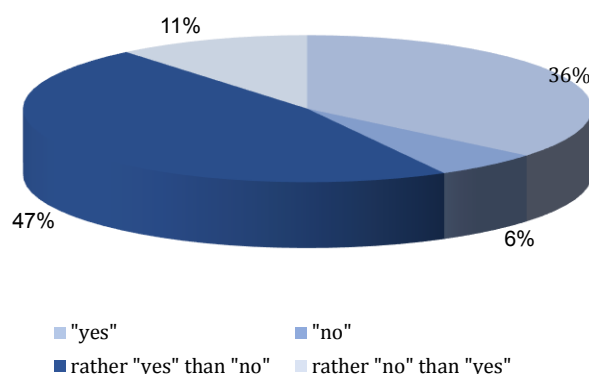


Diagram 3) Desire to re-enter the security forces' institution of higher education

In other words, future female officers want to graduate from relevant universities with basic higher education and see studying at the National Defence University of Ukraine, for instance, as part of their life. The presence of opinions of this nature indicates, according to the authors, a desire to become a strong professional in the first place, as well as a desire to provide a "platform" for a certain career development, the nature of which is naturally, in line with one's vision. The study identified some of the key factors for future female officers. In particular, the survey aimed to identify those aspects of service and everyday life in the context of serving in a university of the security forces that were of most and least concern to future officers. For this purpose, they had to identify priorities in such aspects of life and service:

- career, there was a steady possibility of gradual promotion if desired;
- stable job; guaranteed financial (material) security;
- social protection in the form of holidays (including parental leave), medical support, housing provision, etc.;
- the opportunity for personal development and self-fulfillment; the opportunity to change activities and expand the social circle;
- the opportunity to start a family, to find a husband among the colleagues in service;
- the possibility of increasing professional experience, further training (e.g., at the National Defence University of Ukraine or on courses, including those abroad, etc.).

It should be noted that the results of this part of the survey were fully consistent with the first part of the study, so the second part can be considered a successful verification of the first. Determining priorities was carried out according to a 9-point scale, where 9 was the highest score, and 1 was the lowest. The calculations using Kendall's coefficient of concordance yielded a concordance coefficient of

0.72. This value corresponds to the degree of consistency "high" on both the Margolin scale ($0.7 < W \leq 0.9$) and the Harrington scale ($0.64 < W \leq 0.8$). That is, the views given were widespread among women – future officers.

Discussion

The ability of an officer's team to fulfill its assigned tasks largely depends on its cohesion. Gender dissonance, which can reign in a particular team, is a factor that negatively affects such ability [1-3]. It should be noted that there are very few publications on gender equality within the officer community in general and in the Ukrainian security forces in particular. But all of the research results published in the open, publicly available sources are frankly journalistic: they are dominated by subjective judgments and authors' emotions, there are almost no weighty arguments, and most importantly, some of them do not contain any signs of scientific research [4-7]. Also, unfortunately, there is a misconception in society about the social origin of modern female officers of the Ukrainian security forces and law enforcement agencies. Most researchers [12-17] believe that military service is predominantly performed by women who carry on family traditions. In other words, certain cronyism is formed, which contributes to the successful completion of service by "their people" and hinders the careers of others ("not their people"). Incidentally, some studies published in the last decade [18-22] indicate, on the one hand, a decline in the importance of material values for the individual and, on the other hand, increasing importance of family values and social justice [23-25]. Therefore, the results obtained in the female cadets' survey are fully in line with the general trend.

When the survey was conducted for this study, young (under 30) officers were asked: "If two officers – a senior officer and a junior officer – meet at the entrance to a building, who should give way to whom?" Naturally, all those surveyed thought that the younger one should give way. This was followed by a clarification: "What if the junior in rank is a woman?" Almost 80% of young female officers responded that the senior officer (if he is well-mannered from their point of view) should let the junior officer go first. Incidentally, the male officers were definite in their answers to this question: according to the regulations, a junior officer must, in any case, give way to a senior one. According to the authors, the above example quite clearly characterizes the worldview of young female officers and, consequently, the state of educational work during their studies in HEIs. Mistakes in educational work with future officers lead to a situation where the adaptation of female cadets (first and the second year in particular) to the conditions of military service is either too slow or with a certain degree of

deformation. Consequently, such cadets who are not fully adapted to service in the security forces are future officers with a distorted worldview, a different system of values from most officers, and unstable relations with their colleagues – male officers, subordinates, and superiors.

The surveys were conducted to demonstrate several false general and professional paradigms in Ukrainian society that prevent an adequate, accurate, sensitive, and emergent model of gender relations in the Ukrainian security forces. Prevailing misconceptions about the actual state of gender relations within officer teams hinders young female officers' effective professional development [8, 9, 26]. Thus, the problem of creating conditions for gender equality in officer teams should be addressed at an early stage [6, 10], namely when a young girl enters university and begins to recognize herself as a future officer. It logically follows that it is at the initial stage that a verbal model of female cadets' views on their future officer service and everyday life during their officer service should be formed. Then the views and attitudes should be monitored to correct the educational influences – all of this is an important issue the study of which should contribute to the education of female officers. Mistakes in educational work with future officers lead to a situation where the adaptation of female cadets (first and the second year in particular) to the conditions of military service is either too slow or with a certain degree of deformation. Consequently, such cadets who are not fully adapted to service in the security forces are future officers with a distorted worldview, a different system of values from most officers, and unstable relations with their colleagues – male officers, subordinates, and superiors.

Conclusion

Currently, there is a unique situation in Ukraine's security forces. The gender policy pursued by the state through the relevant governing bodies significantly lags behind the realities that spontaneously materialize, especially within the officer teams. Moreover, it should be noted that when the need for certain changes has already become formalized among officials in the security forces, the reality is at a different level of development. The authors consider it appropriate to carry out further comprehensive scientific research work, which should reflect the social, psychological, legal, economic, and cultural aspects of the gender equality problem.

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Ethical Permissions: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. A

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