

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Faculty of military sciences and officer training

Doctoral School of Military Sciences

**EXPLORATION OF WOMAN SOLDIERS' PROFESSION
SOCIALIZATION FROM BASIC MILITARY TRAINING TO SERVING
IN MISSION**

cpt. Agnes Györffy
clinical psychologist

Supervisor: Prof. Judit Bolgár col.

1. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM

Military profession socialization, female profession socialization and woman soldiers' profession socialization altogether put up questions that would require ultimate and long term solutions both that haven't been found fully yet. Researches have been carried out connected to the alike masculine professions and their results could be only partly applied to the military organization's circumstances. Explorations in the civilian area are living their renaissance nowadays because women are taking bigger and bigger proportion and making more and more success in the classically masculine professions, besides these applying woman soldiers in missions' operation theater is permitted in more and more countries.

Therefore it's high time to conclude a research aiming woman soldiers' role in the military organization besides this to follow up their profession socialization process from entering the organization with the military basic training through the socialization at the different types of corps based on their system of tasks to special positions and serving in missions. The emphasis to the questions of my research is given by the fact that, researches connected to the female profession socialization doesn't contain the specificity of the military organization.

Because of these in my research I aimed to explore the complex process of woman soldiers' profession socialization (with questionnaires, interviews and focus groups) and to add more information to this field.

Contradictory to the fact that a lot of study have been written about woman soldiers from the '80's on both in Hungary and the international scientific area only a few or none of them focuses on the complex profession socialization process or put the emphasis to the contracted woman soldiers.

I've found it especially important, because civilian exploration don't reflect to the specifics of the military organization and the questionnaires don't contain the questions that are important from this aspect either. Besides these researches carried out in the frames of military organization are mainly focusing on special points of the socialization process and on the actual state of woman soldiers. So the process in its complexity haven't been studied and described fully yet.

I've been searching the scientific answer to the followings:

- What are the main factors that characterize woman soldiers' complex profession socialization process?
- Based on what basic values of military profession starts his identification process by women?
- What shifts of emphasize could be detected at the different types of corps in this profession socialization process based on their system of tasks?
- What kind of extra adaptation is expected to women in special positions in the military organization?
- What kind of extra elements should be built in into the profession socialization process in order to carry out successfully a mission by a woman soldier?
- . RESEARCH AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

2. RESEARCH AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

1 Research aims

1. My aim is to map the military basic values, isolate and compare gender differences in the staff of the Hungarian Defence Forces undergoing military basic training with a specially to this situation adapted questionnaire that contains positive and negative elements either.
2. My aim is to map the different expectations based on the system of tasks at the different types of corps to woman soldiers' and their nature.
3. My aim is to explore and present the whole spectrum of expectations on woman soldiers in the profession socialization process.
4. Based on the above described aims **to describe and present the complex process of woman soldiers' profession socialization.**

I would like to realize the aims of my research with prove of the following hypothesis:

2 Hypothesis

1. I hypothesize that the military basic training is a milestone of the military profession socialization whereas the relation to the military basic values changes in the individual while undergoing the training.
2. I hypothesize, that there will be differences between the male and female participants in the relation to the basic values of the military profession.
3. I assume that differences could be detected in expectations on woman soldiers at the different types of corps in the profession socialization process.
4. I assume that female have to face more conflicts in the mission operation theater based on their situation

3 RESEARCH METHODS

I have used the following methods while doing my research:

- a.) According to the regulations of doctoral school, I started to prepare research activity with creating my own research program that I've been updating since, semester by semester during the years, after acquiring new results, regarding scientific and research methodological advice.
- b.) I've been collecting and analyzing data in the field of military basic training and profession socialization.
- c.) In the course of my research, I categorized, rated and observed related special literature and professional regulations either from Hungary and from abroad as well.
- d.) Professional education, trainings, meetings and professional conferences helped me to acquire relevant information and use it as a base of my thesis.
- e.) While collecting sources, I organized military themed doctoral dissertations focusing on the psychological field. After gathering enough information I processed these data and built them in my scientific publications.

f.) From theory logic methods I operated with analysis and synthesis, together with comparisons. I used statistical analysis from mathematical methodology. Besides these I've been using content analysis at the evaluation of the interviews.

g.) I have made specific interviews in order to create my questionnaire. I've explored the scientific problem with the method of focus groups and structured interviews have been carried out to examine the specific situations that it contains.

h.) Based on these with the help of the questionnaires I've made empiric data collecting.

i.) At the analysis of the data I've applied correctional statistics method qualitative and quantitative ways either, while for eliminating the distortional impacts of ageing I used indirect standardization, with the SPSS 13 program. I tested the statistical significance with Kolmogorov – Smirnoff and Man – Whithney tests.

j.) After the analysis of the collected information from the Hungarian and international literature based on practical experiences and documentation I have made the organization of my results and written the dissertation.

4 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISSERTATION

In my introduction I present the scientific problem connected to my research and with doing this I'm reasoning why I have chosen this topic. This chapter also includes my aims of research, the hypothesis and the applied research methods. In the next chapter I analyze and present the characteristics of military profession socialization according to the Hungarian and international scientific literature and the system of values this process based on, because my research built on that. My results are written in five chapters: In this the first chapter contains the exploration of the basic military values in the Hungarian Armed Forces where the results form a stabile base for an empiric research with questionnaire. In the second chapter I present the results of my exploration with the situation adapted questionnaire at the military basic training where I compare the result at the beginning of the training with result at the end in order to show the changes caused by the training. The third chapter is focusing especially to the profession socialization characteristics of woman soldiers with emphasizing the differences from male soldiers, I also write about their chances of military carrier and about their situation in special positions. The forth chapter shows the results of focus group exploration of woman soldiers at the different types of corps focusing on the different

expectation in socialization on woman soldiers based on their task system. The fifth chapter's topic is serving in mission that is a special field of woman soldiers' profession socialization. In this I examine its negative effects on them with using structured interviews, besides this dealing with the special gender differences in stress handling based on the hormonal functioning because effective stress-handling is essential in a position like this. In the 8th chapter I concise the results of my dissertation I show the different factors' role in the process of profession socialization and with drawing the conclusion conceding the new scientific results and their possible application in the defence area, I also write further professional recommendations. The tables and graphics are in the text, the used scientific literature, the detailed list of publications, the professional autobiography and the appendix are closing the dissertation.

5. CONCLUSION

With opening the military profession for the women a lot of questions have risen also connected to their profession socialization. One of them is the basic military training's compatibility with the classic gender socialization of females. **Most of the military training systems both home and abroad are not taking gender differences into consideration that makes it harder to take part together for males and females either.** The adaptation is especially hard for women because unrealistic expectations can rise to them too low and too high expectations either. Because of this it would be essential **to build a gender adapted system of expectations in military profession socialization and keep it working.** The basic military values that according to international scientific research are universal could have different meaning for males and females. For woman the identification process starts from the community side, from the "to belong somewhere" aspect, **therefore it could be important to build a good community that can be a protective factor for male soldiers too in coping.** Besides these the **identification can be facilitated when positive personal examples are within easy reach,** which makes a good reason for showing the newly entering woman soldiers the good examples of other woman soldiers who effectively adapted themselves to the military organization and its expectations.

For woman soldiers it's highly important **to make a clear and reorganized relation to aggression, to authority and to performance** in order to adapt themselves successfully to military profession. The two genders have a very different base for that and because it's built

on biological functioning and determined by the gender –role socialization it's hard partly, impossible to overwrite it. Therefore in this adaptation process the overwriting involves partly putting away feminine functioning. It's also important to make it more conscientious for the newly entering that this is a characteristic of the process, in order to keep insight the short and long-term consequences of their decision. In case of women there's a high drive to adapt themselves to the military organization **so they force their feminine functioning in the background because that seem to be blocking military functioning**. This can be seen also in the relation to the basic military values. Their **anxiety to lose control** becomes much more stronger than male soldiers.

Besides this **the importance of emotional connection** is shown by the importance of the value: **safety given by the profession** and on the negative side **the losing faith in profession**. **Wearing the uniform** will have a higher value for them because they had to make more efforts for it.

The profession socialization process is having its next phase at the corps. There will be shifts in emphasize in the behavioral expectations of military profession socialization determined by the different task systems of the different types of corps that can aggravate the cooperation between the corps also. In this situation it could be even more important to ensure a **good personal example** for adaptation that **can facilitate the process**.

The negative side of this can be seen also, that the members of the military community generalize from a single or few examples. In this process where the expectations of profession socialization and gender role socialization can attack on the level of usual daily behavior, a simple greeting can lead to blocks in communication by males and females either.

In this situation that is hard to handle for men and women too, even with strict and evident rules can occur: misunderstanding, positive and negative discrimination, extremities and unrealistic expectations focusing only on male functioning. This could be especially true for situations where there's some kind of attraction.

A **mission can catalyze this** where there's a long-term furl, a threat that facilitate instinctual functioning and the staff arrives from different types of corps with different socialization processes. This can be even strengthen by the proportion of male – female members that can shift thinking into more stereotype ways.

In case of women extremely feminine, extremely masculine behavior also can occur just like social withdrawing that excludes the social surroundings. The behavior shown by individuals in serving mission will be usually re-evaluated after when it's over both on the corps and the individual level. Because of this it's extremely hard for woman soldiers to adapt themselves to the mission circumstances and to readapt and integrate the experiences to the normal daily functioning when arriving home. So it's essential to pay extra attention to this in the preparation and in the reintegration phase either.

Also a special situation -besides the functioning in closed small communities- the functioning in potentially traumatizing circumstances working in extreme stress. In situations like this male and female functioning shows big differences determined by their hormonal background. These differences partly can be washed away by training but will never vanish. Therefore it's important to make them more conscientious for males and females either in order to cooperate more effectively.

When taking a special position this exaggerated and conflictual expectation system can be seen more obviously and continuously at the work and carrier of woman soldiers. This experiences and tension driven from them can't be shared that means an extreme burden for them mentally. Fostering mental health and follow up the psychological status is extremely important in their case.

Concisely woman soldiers can face conflicts and ambiguous expectations that are even can overwrite their gender -role socialization when entering the military organization contradictory to the civilian positions and companies that are more recipient with feminine functioning. In their profession socialization process they have to solve and handle them on individual and community level too in order to function in a way that can enrich themselves and the community either.

6. NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS

1. I have summarized and gave a complex review firstly woman soldiers' system and structure of profession socialization -compared with the former ones- in a new way based on the task system and my own empiric research in Hungarian Defence Forces -with using some international review either - and presenting its real functioning that forms a good and objective base for further recommendations, action point to enhance its effectiveness.

2. I have determined with questionnaire and explored with empiric research the **attitude to the basic military values and its changes in the process of basic military training**, besides this **I have isolated and compared the male and female patterns**.

3. I have examined and compared first in the Hungarian Defence Forces the emphatic elements of woman soldiers' profession socialization on the level of different types of corps (considering their specificity) among the expectation system on woman soldiers. **My results have shown the shifts of emphasis determined by the task system**.

4. I have approved with psychometric methods the higher proportion of conflicts – compared with their male colleagues- among woman soldiers serving in missions where the gender connected different conflict handling and expectation system could be found in the background. I have approved that there's an exact difference in the proportion of subjective experienced conflicts and task expectations that the examined individuals concerned to be connected to their gender.

7. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of research could be applied for enhance the effectiveness of woman soldiers' profession socialization at the basic military training, at the socialization process at the corps and at the preparation for serving in missions either and in the reintegration process as well.

They can form a stabile base for the promotion and evaluation system functioning among to the gender connected specific competencies.

They can be a root for the forming the gender connected standards of psychological and physical eligibility and screening system.

The complex equal opportunities programs connected to woman soldiers, that are influencing the soldiers functioning in a positive way in the organization, -as we could see – have a wider effect than the military training or profession socialization competencies. Because of this I highly recommend to study this dissertation for leader at any levels who are taking part in legalization actions connected to human policies and in their daily work.

I recommend a review for leader at any levels of the military organization at the field of military training and human services, so for everyone who has an effect with his daily decisions on the state of woman soldiers.

Some elements of the dissertation could be elements of courses on profession socialization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Concisely we could say that the research directions determined in this dissertation when differentiated further could form an appropriate continuation for a process – exploration. In this it would be highly important to develop and execute a complex woman soldier program.

From professional aspect it would be reasonable to carry out a longitudinal examination where could be a follow up on the individual level from the entering the organization through the socialization at the corps and at serving in missions, in this case we could see the personal changes that could be built in the career model.

It would be important to broaden and deepen the formerly explored information about different male – functioning in stress situations. Besides these an examination (that could contain hetero-anamnestic data as well) on woman soldiers' family roles and their changes connected to the military career