

**INFLUENCE OF STRICTNESS OF CURRICULUM
ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CADETS**

**WPŁYW ŚCISŁOŚCI PROGRAMU KSZTAŁCENIA UCZELNI
NA WYNIKI KSZTAŁCENIA PODCHORAŻYCH**

Elitsa Petrova¹

NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY, BULGARIA

Abstract: On the basis of an approved request by the Head of National Military University it is conducting research on motivation in military formations of the example of Vasil Levski 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 professional military direction in „Organization and management of military units at the tactical level”, Land forces faculty at the National Military University of Bulgaria. The article presents the results of study at third item – „How does the strictly program in university affect your academic performance?”. The interviewees were cadets who graduated through the following academic years – 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016.

Streszczenie: Na podstawie wniosku zatwierdzonego przez szefa Narodowego Uniwersytetu Wojskowego zostały przeprowadzone badania na temat motywacji w formacjach wojskowych na przykładzie Narodowego Wojskowego Uniwersytetu im. Vasila Levskiego w Wielkim Tyrnowie w Bułgarii. Przedmiotem badania była motywacja do szkolenia i działań wojskowych kadetów, a obiektami badań byli studenci przygotowujący do zawodowej służby wojskowej na kierunku organizacja i zarządzanie jednostkami wojskowymi na poziomie taktycznym na Wydziale Wojsk Lądowych Narodowego Uniwersytetu Wojskowego Bułgarii. W artykule przedstawiono wyniki badań na temat: *Jak ścisły program uniwersytetu może wpływać na wyniki w nauce?* Badaniu zostali poddani podchorążowie, którzy kończyli uczelnię w kolejnych latach akademickich – 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016.

Keywords: motivation, military formations, National Military University, academic program, cadets performance.

Słowa kluczowe: motywacja, Narodowy Uniwersytet Wojskowy, program akademicki, osiągnięcia podchorążych.

¹ Elitsa Stoyanova Petrova is Associated Professor at National Military University “Vassil Levski”, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria. Her research interests are in the field of management, staff motivation, organizational behavior, management of security systems etc. She is author of over than 90 scientific publications, including monographs, textbooks, studio, over 60 articles and papers in specialized Bulgarian and international scientific journals.

Elitsa Stoyanova Petrova jest profesorem nadzwyczajnym na Narodowym Wojskowym Uniwersytecie „Vasil Levski”, Veliko Tarnovo, w Bułgarii. Jej zainteresowania badawcze dotyczą zarządzania, motywacji zachowań organizacyjnych, zarządzania systemami bezpieczeństwa itd. Jest autorką ponad 90 publikacji naukowych, w tym monografii, podręczników, ponad 60 artykułów i referatów w wyspecjalizowanych bułgarskich i międzynarodowych czasopismach naukowych.

Introduction

On the basis of an approved request by the Head of National Military University it is conducting research on motivation in military formations of the example of Vasil Levski 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 professional military 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 Vasil Levski National Military University has a major impact on individual motivation of cadets for education and military activity in 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.

1. A brief analysis of general population and statistical sample

The article presents the results of study at third item – “How does the strictly program in university affect your academic performance?”. The interviewees were cadets who graduated through the following academic years – 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016. Total cadets for three academic years numbered 145 people, including 124 men and 18 women. Respondents of the survey were 124 people of which 109 were men and 15 are women, which are 88% of all available cadets.

The survey covers the following military specialties:

- Mechanised Infantry and Tank Troops;
- Intelligence / Signal Intelligence and Electronic Warfare;

- Military Computer and Information Systems;
- Engineers;
- Military Logistics; Fuel, Oil and Lubricants;
- Movement and Transportation;
- Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Safety and Protection, and Ecology;
- Tank Troops – Technical and Automotive Troops.

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 sample in 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.

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 sample 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.

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 sample 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.

2. How does the strictly program in university affect your academic performance?

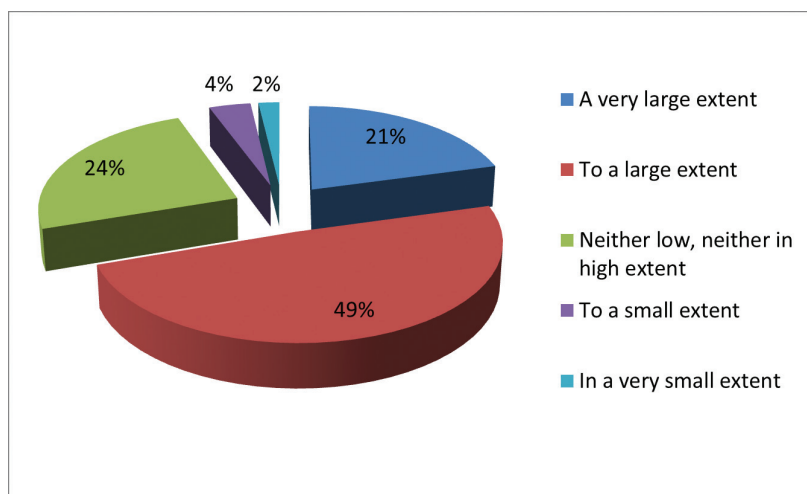


Figure 1. Influence of the strictness of the curriculum on the academic performance of cadets – Alumni 2013/2014
(Source: own research work)

The figure 1 shows the following distribution – 21% of respondents believe that the strictness of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements in a very large extent and 49% of respondents believe that the rigor of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements to a large extent. Indifference is found in 24% of respondents' answers. It is enough significant results showing indifference to the item. 4% of respondents believe that the rigor of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements in lesser extent, and 2% of respondents reported that it is in very small degree. The analysis of data from 2013/2014 academic year shows that substantially respondents consider that the rigor of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements.

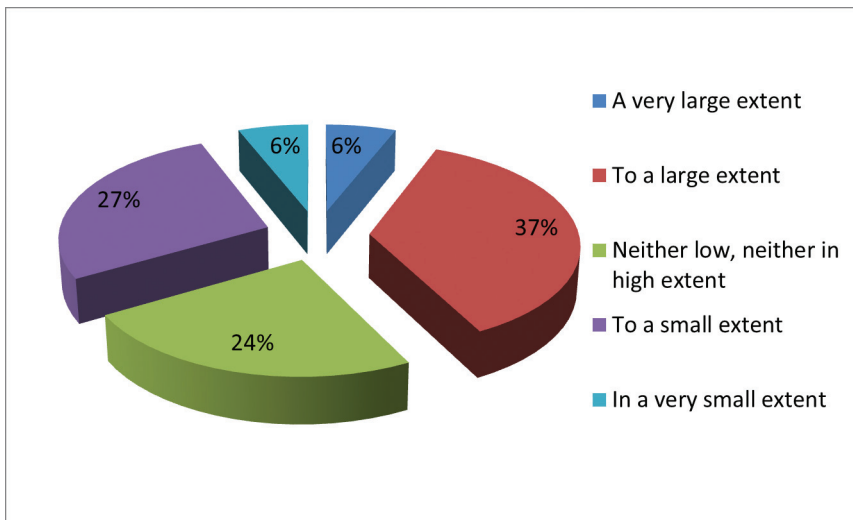


Figure 2. Influence of the strictness of the curriculum on the academic performance of cadets – Alumni 2014/2015

(Source: own research work)

The figure 2 shows the following distribution – 6% of respondents believe that the strictness of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements in a very large extent and 37% of respondents believe that the strictness of the program influence on their academic achievements to a large extent. Indifference is found in 24% respondents' answers, enough significant result. 27% of respondents believe that the rigor of the program influence on their academic achievements in lesser extent, and 6% of respondents reported that it is in very small degree. The analysis of data from 2014/2015 academic year shows that respondents largely believe that the rigor of the program at the academy / university does not affect their academic achievements.

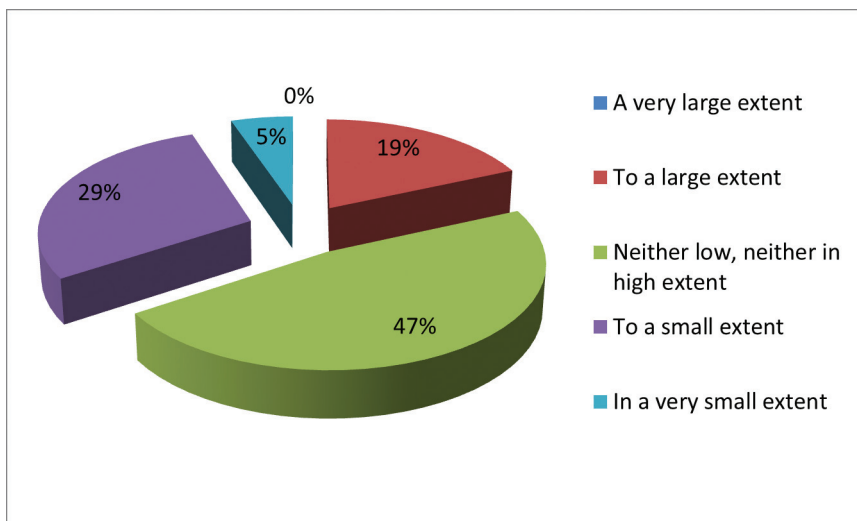


Figure 3. Influence of the strictness of the curriculum on the academic performance of cadets – Alumni 2015/2016
(Source: own research work)

The data for the 2015/2016 academic year are fundamentally different from those of previous years. While in the 2013/2014 academic year it is found agreement that the rigor of the program at the academy / university influence on their academic achievements to a very large extent or a large extent, in the 2014/2015 academic year it is identified that the rigor of the program does not affect the academic achievements of the students, the 2015/2016 academic year is characterized by a large percentage of indifference – 47% and a huge percentage of disagreement with the statement – 34%.

Table 1. Trend line for linear prognostication levels of consent that the strictly program in university affects the academic performance

Alumni	Consent, %	Indifference, %	Dissent, %
2013/14	70	24	6
2014/15	43	24	33
2015/16	19	47	34

Source: own research work

Data for the three reviewed academic years show large differences in terms of consent, indifference or dissent with the statement. It is given way to indifference and to opinion that rigor has no influence on academic achievement and performance of learners.

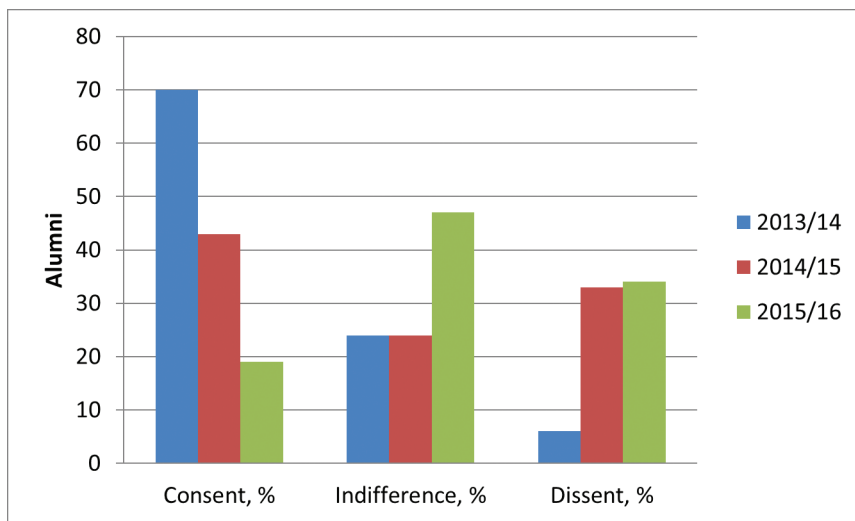


Figure 4. Levels of consent that the strictly program in university affects the academic performance
(Source: own research work)

The questions with a choice of answers are mixed with open questions in the survey. Their purpose is to provide additional information to the previous question, to reveal more fully the thinking of learners and to allow the expression of free will. In this case, respondents were asked to nominate two activities (one to add and one to remove) which, according to them could lead to easing program at the university and to increasing their academic achievements.

During 2013/2014 academic year the respondents' answers are presented as follows. It is necessary to bear in mind that in large part they coalesce around unwillingness to perform work in cadets' duty areas at the university and having a desire for more practical exercises. During the 2014/2015 academic year the respondents' answers are presented as follows. It is necessary to bear in mind that in large part they coalesce around unwillingness to work on duty areas but having a desire for more practical exercises and sports. During the 2015/2016 academic year the respondents' answers are presented as follows. It is necessary to bear in mind that in large part they coalesce around willingness to approve focus on specialized topics and subjects, more practical exercises, participation in the activities of military units and sports.

Conclusion

The results of the presented part of the study show that the rigor of the academic program is not a guarantee for better academic achievement or better performance in the training process. This view is complemented by the desire

of students to be terminated some activities. Simultaneously cadets indicates that they need more practical exercises, focusing on specialized topics and subjects, real practice in military formations and more sports activities, which are activities that they believe that will contribute to their better preparation and presentation in the learning process and to their future realization.