A new view on social adaptation of the military, discharged from military service

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Abstract

The research in this report are directed to the defensibility of the idea of seeking a new approach to social adaptation of the military, exempted from military service, received in stock and their families through the introduction of socio-pedagogical component in the process of retraining and career in civilian life. Accordingly, the highlights are the target and instrumental aspects management process of social adaptation and on this basis the rationalization of management decisions to enhance competitiveness of soldiers crossed into stock and maximum realization of their creative scientific and practical potential.

Keywords: Social work; social management; social adaptation the military.

1. Introduction

Human factor, characterized by its positive and negative effects is crucial to the modern globalized world. Perceived as individual personality, the team and the relationships between people in this team based on self-awareness, and the predominantly social nature of its activity, necessitates knowledge of the general and specific factors of its social activity. We are talking about the general and specific functional culture, motivational factors (as general factors), the method of taking management decisions, the method of management communication and the
management responsibility (as specific factors). On the method of achieving synergy of these factors depends the degree of socialization and social activity of the human factor, the competencies and skills obtained, whose relevance in the socio-economic processes should be targeted according to the principle "the right person in the right place". And if to a certain degree in some organizations this targeting is determined by the structures and specialists in human resources management, a particular category in the course of social adaptation requires the implementation of methodological approaches, ranges of methods and technologies, summarized experience of practical work, typical of most humanities, but also specific experience that separates a relatively young but fast-growing section of science and practice such as social work.

The concept of social work in its essence is multifold. Nowadays there are several approaches to understanding it, and the most important one of them are: a field of science about the objective laws managing the use of internal and external resources of individuals, families or communities in difficult situations of social functioning; a specific type of professional activity, manifested in provision of governmental and non-governmental assistance to people in order to ensure cultural, social and material standard of life, providing personalized assistance to people, families or groups of people; providing assistance within the immediate interaction with individuals and families to resolve problems in their mental life, interpersonal relations, socio-economic problems; assistance to people in difficult life situations, encouraging them to become socially self-sufficient, socially developed and socially active members of the community; types of activities of people and organizations in assistance to various strata of population. Following the logic of our statement, our research is focused on a specific field of social work, such as social adaptation of the military at the end of their career and their preparation for proper realization in the public-private sector of economy [Concept of Human Resources Management at the MoD, BA and the Structures Directly Subordinate to the Minister of Defence, Sofia, 2006; Doctrine on Human Resources Management in the Armed Forces] as a criterion for motivation and raising the activity of the human factor in the security and defence sector. Moreover, unlike previous researches, refracted through the prism of the military institution social policy, with this article we aim to offer to social and scientific knowledge a new look at social adaptation of the military leaving the system of the armed forces of the Bulgarian Army in compliance with the scientific rationalization of social work.

2. Discussion

The starting point of our research is the specificity of social work with the military discharged from military service. The need for transparency and equal treatment of users of social services and respect for the dignity of the military, presupposes the importance of the social work with them. This is supported also by the fact that hundreds of specialists from the army have been transferred to the public sector and are able to make a significant contribution to the reconstruction of Bulgarian society and add value but this is not the case in real life. There is often an impression that their experience and knowledge is unnecessary. People who have committed themselves to military service at young age, as a rule, adapt to the conditions of civilian life with difficulty. Despite having a special military skills and knowledge they actually form a new „risk group", especially when they fall to the attention of the criminal world. There are various analyses and reports of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Defence on this issue that are very indicative. In confirmation of this, a third of them are offered „a job" in the security departments of various private organizations, banks and / or specialized licensed private security units.

Practice shows that some of the reserve officers experience serious difficulties with the selection of civil profession. Although they are highly qualified, many of them cannot find a job for months, discontinue their works experience or lose their qualification. Finding the reasons for this is based on the analysis of materials from sociological and psychological research that allow defining the specifics of internal and personal adaptation. Accordingly, there are different age groups of military staff, leaving the armed forces and the Bulgarian Army, whose social adaptation is manifested differently.

The importance of social work should be taken into consideration, when identifying the main issues of socialization and adaptation of the military leaving military service and transitioning to the conditions of civilian life, resulting from their economic, age, psychological and social characteristics, and their current social status. This determines the necessity of further development of existing and establishing new types of social work with them.
Moreover, the social security system of the military has historically been developed as a part of the national policy. As such it should be further developed in active interaction with all government structures and fields in the country. In this context the best practices could be taken into account and the most appropriate among them should be adapted in compliance with the conditions in the country.

The experience of developed European countries (such as the UK, France, Germany, etc.) shows that the preparation of discharged military staff for civilian life should begin before their dismissal from the Armed Forces, as the process is coordinated by Ministries of Defence, of course, with financial support from the state. Moreover, around the world there are established models for social security of military staff, which can be divided into institutional, partly institutional and non-institutional models. The institutional model is typical for countries with developed legal systems, industrial or post industrial economies, democratic governments, with established legal guarantees for the protection of the honour and dignity of the military is typical institutional model. Partly institutional model is typical for countries where social security institutions are just being established, and the system of guarantees, compensations and benefits for the military sometimes has accidental and fragmentary nature. Countries where the military are independent political force, are in power (or have unlimited influence on it) and take an actual part in the adoption of political decisions, and if necessary use firearms use the non-institutional model.

A distinctive feature of the legal regulations on social protection of the military in foreign armies, is the establishment and effective functioning of special structures within the government bodies having immediate jurisdiction on the specified issues. And since a great number of the military discharged from military service in Bulgaria have a good education and sufficiently high social status, after being in the reserve, they are left alone with their problems. Often they are left absolutely defenceless in the modern world of commodity-money relations; in order to attract a veteran to entrepreneurship, it is necessary not only to create additional jobs, but also to establish adequate structures, involved in effective social adaptation and protection of this category of people.

Analysis of researched problems show that among the socio-economic problems that the military who have been in the reserve and the members of their families are facing the priority falls on the difficulty finding a job, lack of a home, reduction of the wealth of the family, little accessibility to remedial and recreational activities of the family. This is due to the absence of effective social policy in support of such families in Bulgaria. According to a widely shared opinion of representatives of all institutions, the main reason for the problem is economic.

Studies have led to the conclusion that the establishment of social adaptation system for the military, discharged from military service, at a contemporary level refers to the most important branches of a state’s social policy. Nowadays the need for further development of social work and various social technologies, the need for understanding the modern experience of rendering social services to the population becomes even more relevant. This means to focus the efforts in order to establish a network of social service agencies and a truly effective and necessary social security system. Professionalism and morality should be regarded as mandatory qualities of an expert of the specialised social services. Also the coordination between the actions of various social security, education, health, employment, etc. government institutions, should be enhanced to meet the needs of the general population.

3. Conclusions

In order to achieve this, it is necessary to overcome major obstacles to increasing the effectiveness of social work with the military from reserve. These are: confusion in the legislation on social security within the armed forces and the mechanisms for its application; incomplete and fragmented legal framework relating to issues of socio-economic security of the military, inadequate from contemporary point of view working conditions and pension security of military personnel, absence of action programs for social adaptation of the military who are to be transferred to reserve; delayed resolution of their housing problems; imperfection of the medical care system for the military discharged from service and for members of their families; poor legal framework of the social services system; limited financial resources available to the government authorities at national and regional level, deficit of funds available to local authorities, the lack of coordination of the activities of ministries and agencies in the field of social
services; shortage of staff with professional training in social work; low social status and inadequate wages of social services employees.

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