

**STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN THE TRAINING PROCESS AND ITS
RELATION TO THE REWARDS FROM SUPERIORS FOR GETTING
BETTER PERFORMANCE**

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Abstract

This article presents a research on the influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of civilian and military students in the training process and its relation with the rewards given from the superiors for getting better performance at the university. The study is conducted in a real educational environment. The subject of the study is the positive reinforcements and the end results in the training process. The object of the study are cadets in the last year of their education in the Military Science professional field, specialising in Organisation and Management of Military Units at a Tactical Level at the National Military University in Bulgaria. In the course of the theoretical research, there were studied the motivational theories of needs, socially acquired knowledge, behavioural, cognitive, psychoanalytic and biological motivational theories.

Keywords: *training process; positive reinforcements; educational environment; socially acquired knowledge; behavioural; cognitive; psychoanalytic and biological motivational theories.*

JEL Classification: I₂₁, I₂₃

Introduction

In broad terms, management can be defined as a human activity aimed at facilitating the achieving of positive results in an organization. In any form, it involves bringing people together and leading them towards achieving common goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. According to the most popular definitions of management, it is organization and coordination of the entity in accordance with certain policies to achieve clearly defined objectives and a set of power and responsibilities to make decisions about the organizational activities.

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According to Peter Drucker, management is a specific type of activity that turns a disorganized crowd into an effective and productive group. Therefore, the management can be defined as a structured way of influence on the organization behaviour to achieve predetermined goals.

The management functions begin with planning and forecasting activities as they suggest future directions for the development of the system, and continue with organizing, which represents activity associated with establishing the structure of the company. Authority and responsibility are essentially manifested in leadership, which ensures the implementation of taken decisions.

Motivation is directly related to leadership. It includes the development of effective methods and tools to promote human resources in order to achieve optimal functional outcomes in the organizational system. Control as a function of management generally covers designing, implementing and using a system for compliance or inconsistency between the pre-announced plans, standards, and actual performance and results. Regulating is the last management function, which can be defined as single or as part of the function control. It consists of the removal and eliminating of the negatives, which are found in the phase of control.

Outlining people's motivation as a key management function, along with other management functions, requires studying the factors that affect it. In this study, the focus is on positive reinforcements as factors that increase the motivation for learning and daily military activities at the National Military University, Bulgaria, as well as the motivation for work and all human activities. Many motivational theories impose the point of view that there is a relationship between positive reinforcement, efforts, and results. In this connection, we also explore this element of motivation for learning.

Scientific Methodology

This study began in 2012 as a joint work of two scientific supervisors (from the Land Forces Academy in Sibiu, Romania and the National Military University in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria) in support of their graduate student. Subsequently, in 2013, according to the decision of the rector of the National Military University in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, it was modified according to the needs of the university and acquired a bigger importance. This article presents a part of it.

The subject of this scientific study is the motivation for education and training, and the objects are cadets in several consecutive years in the Military Science professional field, specialising in Organisation and Management of Military Units at a Tactical Level at the National Military University in Bulgaria.

Students and cadets in the first year of their training are included as control groups for comparison. The study on learners' motivation goes through several phases – diagnostic, basic and final. This paper presents parts of the research conducted in the basic stage. [1, 2, 4, 5, 6]

The basic part of the study of the motivation for education and some specific military activities in the learning process is conducted in the period 2012-2016 and continues to date. It aims to cover at least four consecutive years of cadets. The general statistical collection of respondents includes about and over 85% of trainees in different academic years. The study uses a questionnaire of 24 questions. The answers can be given, depending on the asked questions, by one of the following five-point scale:

- To express satisfaction, dissatisfaction or indifference, the answers can be given in the following scale: to a very large extent; to a large extent; neither to a small, nor to a large extent; to a small extent and to a very small extent.
- To express consent, dissent or indifference, the answers can be given in the following scale: totally agree; agree; without relevance/doesn't matter; disagree and totally disagree.

Different motivational theories were examined in the course of theoretical research. An appropriate questionnaire that helps to achieve the objectives and allows testing the validity of the formulated research hypothesis and made scientific assumptions was drawn up after exploring a variety of theories of motivation. The questionnaire was prepared by Elitsa Petrova and Dumitru Iancu as a result of their multiannual researches into the motivation of individual.

In a period of more than 15 years, from 2002 to now, they have been studied many basic motivational theories, including Content and procedural motivational theories, Needs-oriented motivational theories, Psychoanalytic theories on motivation, Biological theories on motivation, Cognitive theories on motivation, Behavioural theories of motivation, Socio-cognitive theories on motivation and others having in consideration theoretical and practical performance and experience not only but mainly of the following authors Aristotle, Heraclitus, Democritus, Plato, Socrates, Lucrezia, Spinoza, Freud, Jung, Eysenck, Adler, Erikson, Fromm, Rogers, Kondilyak, Chernishevsky, Levin, Olpart, McDowell, Berlyne, Borovskiy, Uznadze, Kelly, Hekhauzen, Atkinson, McClelland, Skinner, Thorndike, Bandura, Rotter, Murray, Maslow, Deci, Herzberg, Alderfar, Lawrence and Nohria, Leontiev, Latham and Locke, Adams, Vroom, Porter and Lawler, Drucker and many others. [3,7,8,9]

Relation: Rewards Given from Superiors – Motivation – Better Performance at the University

The paper presents the results of the research on motivation of civilian and military students in the training process and its relation to the rewards from superiors for getting better performance which are obtained from the question – “Does motivation by rewards lead to a better performance at the university?/ To what extent your motivation derives from the superiors rewards to get a better performance at the university?”. The cadets, who graduated in the academic years 2013/2014, 2014/2015, and 2015/2016, were the basic target group that was interviewed.

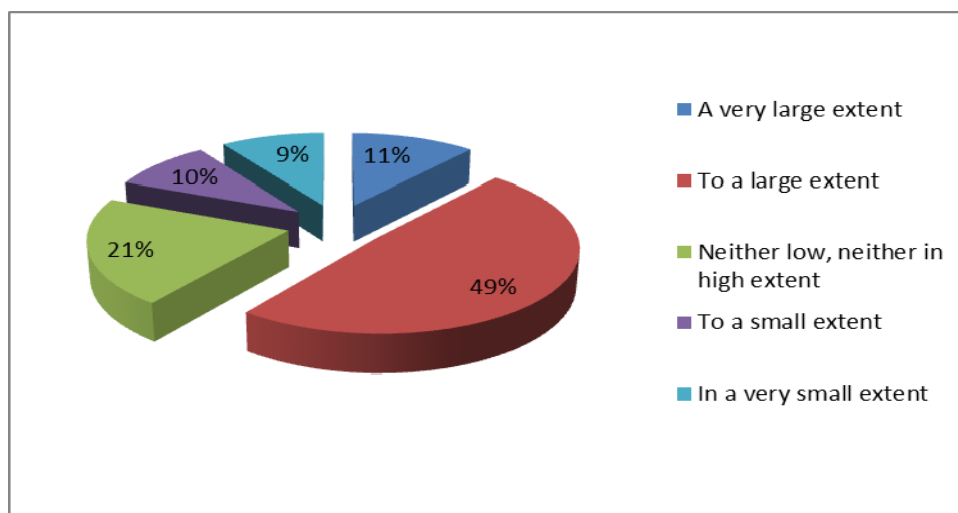


Figure no. 1. The influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets Alumni 2013/2014

Figure no. 1 shows the influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets according to the given answers from cadets, who have graduated in the 2013/2014 academic year. It shows the following distribution – 11% of the respondents think that the influence of positive reinforcements on their motivation is at a very large extent, and 49% of the respondents agree to a large extent. Indifference is expressed by 21% of the respondents, 10% of the respondents agree to a small extent and 9% of the respondents agree to a very small extent.

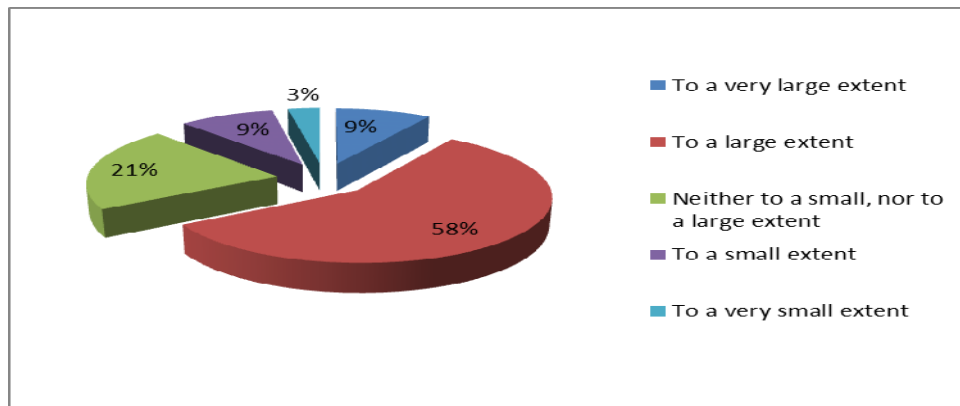


Figure no. 2. The influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets Alumni 2014/2015

Figure no. 2 shows the influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets according to the given answers from cadets, who have graduated in the 2014/2015 academic year. It shows the following distribution – 9% of the respondents think that the influence of positive reinforcements on their motivation is at a very large extent, and 58% of the respondents agree to a large extent. Indifference is expressed by 21% of the respondents, 9% of the respondents agree to a small extent and 3% of the respondents agree to a very small extent.

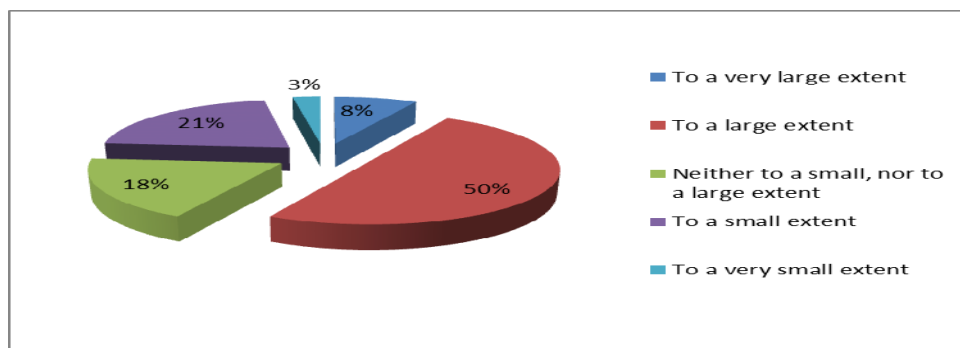


Figure no. 3. The influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets Alumni 2015/2016

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Figure no. 3 shows the influence of positive reinforcements on the motivation of cadets according to the given answers from cadets, who have graduated in the 2015/2016 academic year. It shows the following distribution – 8% of the respondents think that the influence of positive reinforcements on their motivation is at a very large extent, and 50% of the respondents agree to a large extent. Indifference is expressed by 18% of the respondents, 21% of the respondents agree to a small extent and 3% of the respondents agree to a very small extent.

Data analysis shows that, albeit with different variables, the trend is consistent with the claim at a rate greater than 50%. This could be visually and in more details expressed in the figures below.

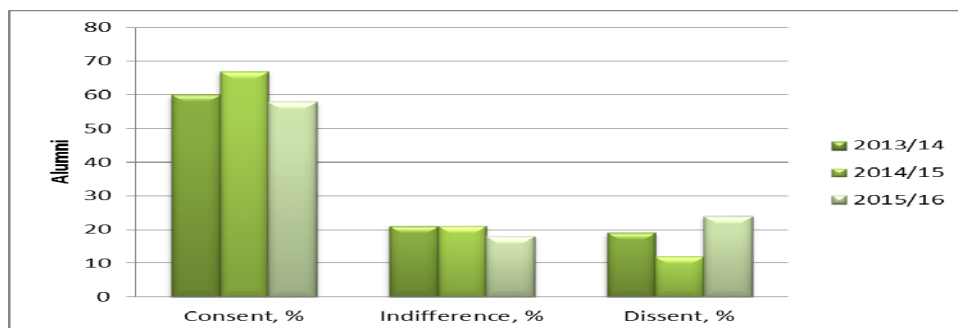


Figure no. 4. Levels of consent within the rewards – motivation – better performance relation /all studied groups of Alumni cadets/

Table no. 1. Trend line for linear prognostication levels of consent with the relation rewards – motivation - better performance /all studied groups of Alumni cadets/

Alumni	Satisfaction, %	Indifference, %	Dissatisfaction, %
2013/14	60	21	19
2014/15	67	21	12
2015/16	58	18	24

The comparison between the levels of consent within the rewards-motivation-better performance relation is shown in the fourth figure. In taking into account three

groups of cadets – cadets who have graduated in 2013/2014, cadets who have graduated in 2014/2015, and cadets who have graduated in 2015/2016. Most of those who agree with the statement are cadets that have graduated in 2014/2015, indifference is similar for all the three groups, and the strongest is the disagreement of cadets who gave graduated in 2015/2016.

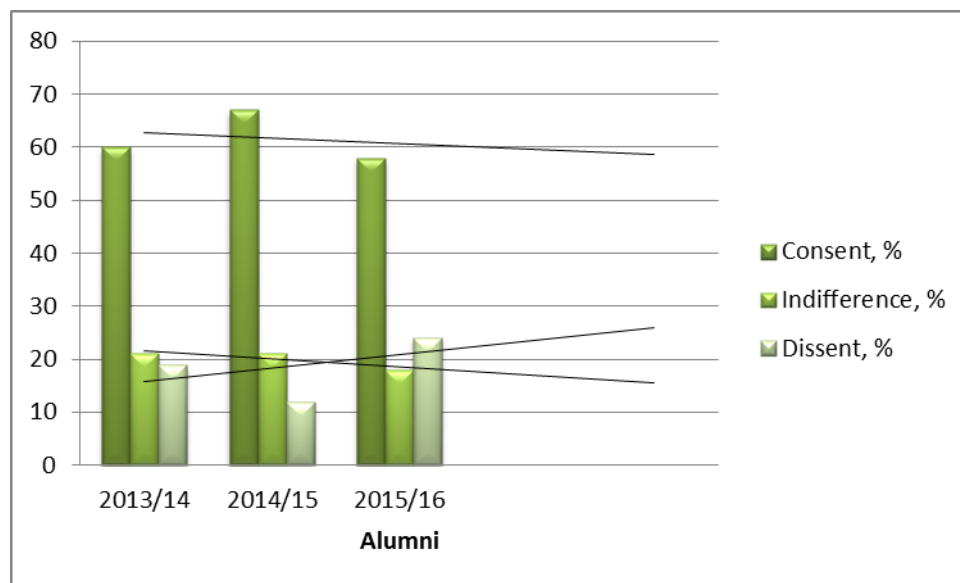


Figure no. 5. Trend line for linear prognostication levels of consent with the relation rewards – motivation – better performance /all studied groups of Alumni cadets/

The data analysis shows that there is an almost fully sustainable state of affirmation with the statement that positive reinforcements, rewards, incentives are important for raising the level of motivation for learning and daily military activities. There is a decrease in the level of indifference. The trend that emerges can be seen as positive. Disagreement with the claim shows the possibilities of answering the question of what leads to an increase in motivation. If these are not the positive reinforcements than what the learners still need? The answer to this question has a great potential for the scientific and educational institution. There can be mentioned some factors which, in our opinion, also lead to an increase in

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motivation and which should be explored, namely the satisfaction of needs above the socio-physiological, security, development, self-improvement levels and everything related to them – material basis, good labour and training conditions, new technologies, modern subjects, participation in scientific forums, mobility in other universities and many others.

Conclusion

The study shows a small part of the global study on motivation for learning and activity, which took place at the National Military University from Bulgaria. It represents only a separate part of the overall picture. Undoubtedly, the use of positive reinforcements is highly appreciated by learners. In this line of thought, directions for future changes to the individual and professional development of the learner, and the development of the organization, the organizational environment and the organizational culture should be looked in the answers of the respondents who have shown indifference or those who have expressed disagreement. It should not be forgotten that change often hides not so much and not only the key to the survival of the individual and the organization, but also opportunities for strengthening and improvement.

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