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Morale of Uniformed Public Services in the Context of Contemporary Challenges and Threats

Abstract: Morale is one of the most frequently recurring concepts in the media covering events from the country and the world. It is used by journalists and experts representing the scientific and military communities. The concept is also used by ordinary people commenting on the attitudes and achievements of various individuals and social entities, especially in situations of particular threats to human life and health. Since the term morale is used in different contexts and meanings, many different ways of understanding it can be noted. It can also be seen that approaches to the phenomenon of morale differ in time – interest in it decreases during peace and social stability and increases during conflicts, revolutions, or wars. For example, in the post-Cold War decade of the 1990s, known as the "end of history" or the "peace dividend" period, there was little scientific work on morale. But earlier, during the "Cold War", such publications were numerously created in the West . From the emerging interest in the concept of morale in modern times, it appears that it is still valid and important.

Keywords: *disposable groups, modern challenges, threats, security*

Introduction

Morale is one of the most frequently recurring concepts in the media covering events from the country and the world. It is used by journalists and experts representing the scientific and military communities. The concept is also used by ordinary people commenting on the attitudes and achievements of various individuals and social entities, especially in situations of particular threats to human life and health. Since the term morale is used in different contexts and meanings, many different ways of understanding it can be noted. It can also be seen that approaches to the phenomenon of morale differ in time – interest in it decreases during peace and social stability and increases during conflicts, revolutions, or wars. For example, in the post-Cold War decade of the 1990s, known as the "end of history" or the "peace dividend" period, there was little scientific work on morale. But earlier, during the "Cold War", such publications were numerously created in the West[1]. From the emerging interest in the concept of morale in modern times, it appears that it is still valid and important. Therefore, the question can be asked: *Why is morale important in public sector uniformed public services?*[2] A hypothetical answer to such a problem may be as follows: high morale helps members of uniformed public services perform difficult and stressful tasks in the face of adversity and ensure the safety of collective life.

This paper undertakes the constantly discussed issue of defining morale. However, it does not review various definitional proposals contained in the book *Czynnik X. Morale w życiu osobistym, w działalności społecznej i zawodowej* [Factor X. Morale in Personal Life and Social and Professional Activity] but presents lesser-known concepts of morale proposed by three Polish researchers. Morale refers to a clearly defined collective subject, which is uniformed public services performing their tasks in "cold" and "hot" situations. For this reason, uniformed public services are assigned an ambiguous character (Kołodziejczyk, 2014, pp. 219–236). The "hot" situations include the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine. In my opinion, these situations show the analytical value of the conceptual category of *uniformed public services* introduced to the scientific discourse by Jan Maciejewski (2012, p. 36).

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[1] See extensive information on the subject of publications on morale in Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk (2019). Of the various literature items of the Cold War period, special attention should be paid to the elaboration of Henderson (1985).

[2] According to J. Maciejewski (2012, p. 36), a "special type of social groups is dispositional groups created in existing systems and established to counteract various threats to collective life. Each disposition group – depending on the system in which it functions – carries out specific tasks related to preventing and overcoming various threats that a particular community or society may experience".

Three Models for Defining Morale

In the introduction to the fundamental research on the morale of work and the attitudes of American soldiers during the Second World War, Samuel A. Stouffer refers to the Leo Tolstoy's statement revealing the sense of the mystery hidden in the symbol "X"[3]. He argues that morale is the army's spirit, desire to fight, and the willingness of all soldiers to face dangers; an unknown value multiplying the army's strength. Two and a half thousand years earlier, Xenophon[4] had noticed exactly the same thing, while the history of warfare and military had confirmed the practical importance of the factor "X" in combat. Today, according to the authors of the work *Factor X…* (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019), morale has references exceeding far beyond the military.

Since there are many paths to conceptualising morale, in this paper, I focus on the reconstruction of three selected definitional proposals. At the stage of research conceptualisation, various research approaches are possible, depending on the needs of the research principal and the cognitive orientation of the research contractor. Each presented morale model has advantages and weaknesses. However, the most important thing is the ability to grasp the specificity of the "morale problem" and its practical usefulness in specific circumstances, such as situations of threats to the safety of collective life.

The Model of Morale as a Deliberate Action under Special Conditions

Starting from the analysis of morale definitions contained in popular dictionary editions, Henryk Dziewulski made an interesting attempt to capture the term by distinguishing five elements occurring in everyday language, related to the concept's definition (understanding), to which he included:

> 1. Varieties of the subject: person, soldier, team, army, nation, people, opponent; 2. The types of actions involved, such as: fighting, fulfilling a duty, performing a task, following orders; 3. Type of energy or forces involved in the action, i.e., state of mind, spirit, will, determination, mood, confidence, self-confidence, courage, pride, mental resilience, readiness, state of discipline, perseverance; 4. Characteristics of the situation, effort-requiring and hazardous actions; 5. Achievements associated with morale, such as victory, fulfilment of duty, bringing action to the goal, overcoming difficulties and obstacles (Dziewulski, 1994, p. 11).

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[3] Issues devoted to the psychology and sociology of the army are contained in the work of Samuel A. Stouffer's et al. (1949). Its first two volumes were translated into Polish and published in the "Biuletyn Informacyjny GZP" (1960), issues: 11, 12, 32, and 36.

[4] Xenophon (c. 430 – c. 355 BC) was a Greek writer, historian, and soldier, participant in many wars and a careful observer and chronicler.

The presented five-point system (Fig. 1) of references to the meaning of the word morale creates a fairly clear and coherent interpretative model, called by its author a "model of intended action in special conditions". In all cases, subjective and situational references are inherent elements of defining morale. Based on the analysis of colloquial (dictionary) knowledge, Dziewulski (1994, p. 11) defined morale as the **"potential of specific forces or energies activated or mobilised in an organised intended action to ensure the achievement of an individual or group – even against adversities or threats"**.

This conceptual model is extremely simple and makes it possible to organise the problem field depending on the researcher's intention. Thus, in this paper, such entities (1) are uniformed public services, particularly we recognise as uniformed groups acting intentionally, (2) within the framework of tasks defined normatively in the state security system. The energy of morale is (3) the dedication revealed in the committed action of uniformed public services in the face of particularly difficult situations, such as (4) the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The general objective (5) of the uniformed public services' determined action is to contribute to neutralising or overcoming these threats. The model can be particularly useful in studying the morale of individual uniformed public services and intuitive estimating the condition of their morale when there is no time or space for analytical approaches.

Fig. 1. Model of intended action in special conditions according to H. Dziewulski
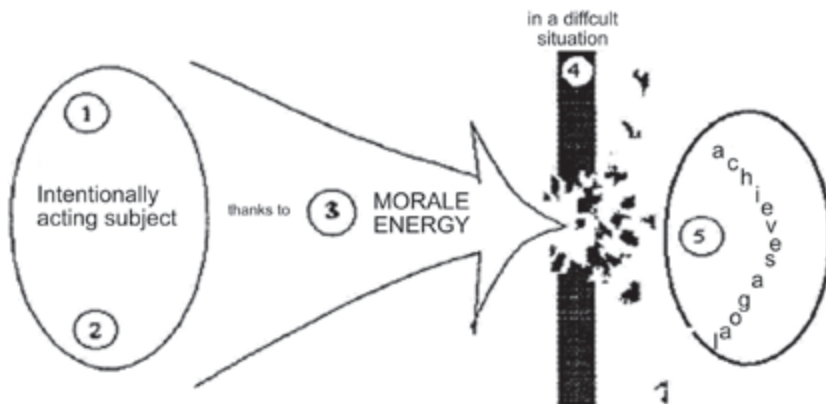
Source: Dziewulski (1994, p. 11).

The most important ideas of this research approach can be characterised as follows: morale assessment is particularly useful because it allows for distinguishing teams, services, and organisations one can rely on, that will perform assigned tasks without having to control and intervene on an ongoing basis. They are radically different from teams which, due to

the prevailing social climate in them, require spending additional energy on maintaining increased supervision over them or do not even make an impression that will properly perform certain tasks. From the perspective of the subjects of the command or control system, morale is a determination of the degree of task forces controllability, i.e., their susceptibility to influence by leaders, commanders, or managers of these groups (Dziewulski, 1994).

Based on various messages and publications, a generalised positive and very positive assessments of the morale of Polish uniformed public services during the COVID-19 pandemic can be formulated. Despite the threat to health and life, as well as the enormity of tasks and overload, the uniformed services have passed the exam in counteracting the numerous dangerous effects of the pandemic, supporting the health care system and other social segments particularly exposed to the deadly effects of the SARS-CoV-2. The public opinion received media information showing the involvement of all uniformed services, particularly soldiers of the Territorial Defence Forces (TDF). Thanks to the sacrifice of its soldiers, TDF gained great recognition of Polish society. An important feature of uniformed public services, as the name suggests, is their availability in the sphere of general security of society or the community in which they function. These services have demonstrated social availability in performing their tasks within the scope of assigned competencies and even outside their scope, by responding to current needs, challenges, and threats[5]. Moreover, according to the more precise Dziewulski's research model of morale (Fig. 2), tasks related to overcoming the effects of the pandemic were carried out by people performing organisational roles in uniformed public services, as well as people performing various missions related to counteracting this threat.

According to the functional or integral approach present in Dziewulski's model, the phenomenon of morale is a socio-organisational phenomenon, thus, not necessarily a psychological one. Therefore, morale assessments should relate primarily to the efficiency of energy expended by management bodies and commands to mobilise task forces to action. At this point, the model's description may raise doubts because not only managerial bodies were involved in activities related to counteracting the COVID-19 pandemic but, above all, thousands of officers and employees of uniformed public services cooperating not only in vertical but also horizontal relations based on mutual trust, initiative, dedication, responsibility, and ingenuity.

In the described conceptual-theoretical model, it was also assumed that morale should not be identified only with internal team consolidation, because such integration can develop in opposition to the values of service and the purposes of organisational action. It applies

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[5] Activities of uniformed public services during the pandemic meet the criteria *of wide* and *narrow availability* distinguished by J. Maciejewski (2012, p. 39): "So, I distinguish availability in the broad sense of the word – that is, one that is connected with the generally accepted attitude to the typical activities for which the structure has been set up, and in a narrow sense, meaning specific availability, determined, for example, by the intervention's scope, breadth, or intensity.

to horizontal integration – between members of such organised groups (soldiers, police-men, border guards, firefighters, and other representatives of uniformed services) – and vertical integration, i.e., the consolidation of the representatives of such a group around the person of the commander, manager, or leader (Dziewulski, 1994). The warning against treating the task forces' morale in isolation from the general interests of society and superior organisational structures is the most justified and described in detail by T. Shibutani (1978, pp. 410–446).

The situation described by Shibutani in the study of the demoralisation of Company K did not occur in the case of uniformed public services operating in the public sector during the pandemic. However, there was a situation described by R. Gal, who believed that the morale of the group and its cohesion is influenced by the sense of *duty and maintaining the unity of the team and friendship*. This researcher also suggests that morale is not only the domain of the primary group or task force, but also coincides with a more complex (overarching) organisational structure (Gal, 1986, pp. 549–564; Gal et al., 1987, pp. 369–391). One can express the opinion that in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland, the objectives of the organisational action at the micro-level, i.e., the direct fight against the pandemic, were generally consistent with the decision-making power of the superior state structures. Many research works conducted in the West in the 1980s and 1990s, especially by the US Army Research Institute the Behavioural and Social Sciences (ARI), emphasise that the achievements of the basic task force in terms of achieving organisational goals are largely dependent on the decisions of higher levels of command. ARI scientists analysing the conflict in the South Atlantic in 1982 concluded that morale is a function of three types of cohesion: 1) *vertical cohesion*, defined as the relationship between subordinates and superiors; 2) *horizontal cohesion*, defined as the relationship between people equal in rank in a military organisation; and 3) *organisational cohesion*, understood as the link between the task unit and the military as an organisation (the obligation of the military to provide special material support to the unit performing the mission)[6].

The integrative approach proposed by Dziewulski draws our attention to the "social capital" – as a spontaneously created potential for social coordination and regulation of team actions and individual behaviours, which – together with technical and organisational factors – affects the course and results of formally organised intended action. In conclu-sion, the author departs from the "colloquial" model of morale presented in Fig. 1 and the importance of energy potential. He believes that the literal understanding of morale in "energetic" terms should be abandoned in favour of identifying morale with the activation of specific sectors of the interpersonal relationship network during the operation of task forces, which can facilitate the coordination of the performers' activities and ensure the

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[6] ARI scientists pay much attention to consistency as a component of morale, as evidenced by many empirical research reports. Particularly noteworthy in this context is the article by G. L. Siebold (2007, pp. 286–295).

Fig. 2. Morale in a precise integral approach according to H. Dziewulski
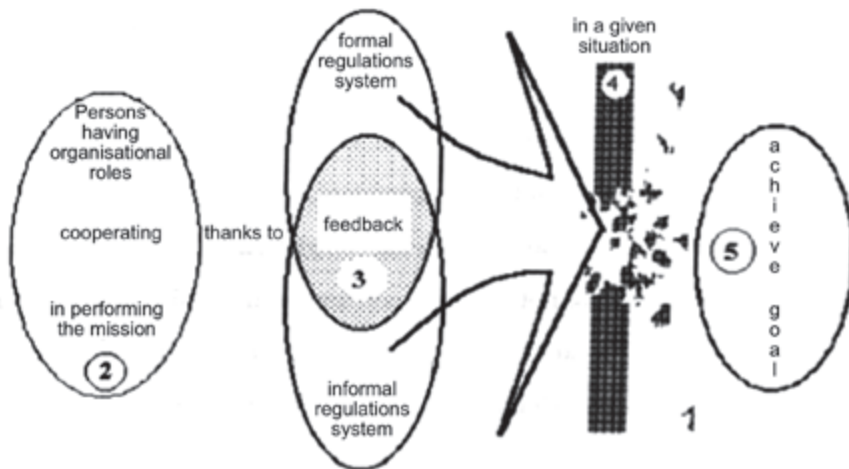
Source: Dziewulski (1995, p. 181).

control of superiors over the course of the action. In this version**, "Morale appears as: the socially grounded controllability of the group performing tasks – the controllability of the formal decision-making system"** (Dziewulski, 1995, p. 181).

According to the cited author, in the evaluation of morale, the clarification concerns primarily the determination of forces constitutive of morale, which are **moral forces** in the strict sense of the word, which the author does not mention. However, he sees the directing and obliging power of specific patterns of conduct in a concrete social milieu. "These designs can be brought in from the outside, locally produced or reproduced. It happens in the circle of social communication and intragroup interaction; considering various elements of the operating situation, such as the manner of exercising organisational authority (having the means of encouragement and discipline), the specificity of functional service dependencies structure, the specificity of individual competencies, predispositions, interests of the participants in the action and, finally, the state of material »security« of the projects involved" (Dziewulski, 1995, p. 182).

To sum up, H. Dziewulski offers two useful research approaches: "colloquial" and "integrative" for analysing and evaluating the elusive phenomenon of morale. Patterns directing and obliging to act, which he does not pay much attention to, can be found in the normative documents of institutions and organised groups, which we have called uniformed. The institutionalised patterns of uniformed public services present in the normative documents regulating their activities are discussed in many publications referring to Jan Maciejewski's concept of uniformed groups.

### The Model of Morale as a System of Internalised Moral Values

In Dziewulski's model, values as motivators of human action are not given special attention. The problem of morale in an integral sense is essentially reduced to mobilising teams and maintaining their lines of action. The morale assessment is an assessment of the support or resistance expected in a given team to the requirements of the decision-making system. Its value is that it allows to distinguish teams that can be relied on to perform the task assigned to them without the need to control and intervene and groups which, due to the prevailing social climate in them (the state of interaction network), require energy expenditure on maintaining increased supervision over them, or even do not promise to properly fulfil the mission entrusted to them. Such a model is particularly useful from the perspective of the uniformed public services management system because it allows for controlling subordinate organisational units based on the assessed susceptibility to signals received from the decision-making system (Dziewulski, 1995, p. 183).

The problem of values as a motivator of human action is presented differently in the perspective of Mirosław Dyrda (2014, p. 120), who even considers internalised values a key component of morale. He proposes a definition of morale, inspiring for research practice, according to which **"morale should be understood as a system of internalised ethical values, ways of assessing the immediate and distant social environment, personality traits, and skills acquired in upbringing, education, and training, ensuring the desired relations between man and the environment"**. The author applies his definition of morale to the soldier, sometimes more broadly to the human individual and his disposition, and to the organised group, especially the army. Such basic ethical values constituting the soldier's morale include: **"justice, truth, freedom, love, dignity, honour and personality traits such as: bravery, courage, initiative, determination, communicativeness, self-confidence, responsibility, and creativity"** (Dyrda, 2014, p. 120).

The way of interpreting the essence of morale of the uniformed group, the army, proposed by Dyrda is included in Figure 3.

Interpreting the model, its author assumes that the essence of morale is expressed in the "relations occurring between the components (included in the model – A.K.) that determine the internal condition of each soldier and the external goal – the task" (Dyrda, 2014, p. 74). The author refers the term internal condition to members of formal and informal groups in the army. The internal conditions are attitudes towards goals and tasks, but also towards oneself, other soldiers, a subunit, unit, tactical or operational association, the army, society, and the enemy. From the description follows an important observation, according to which morale refers only to people to whom moral judgments can be applied. In this approach, morale and morality are identified with each other, which does not have to happen and generally does not happen because they are different concepts, although they have a common

Fig. 3. The essence of army morale according to M. Dyrda
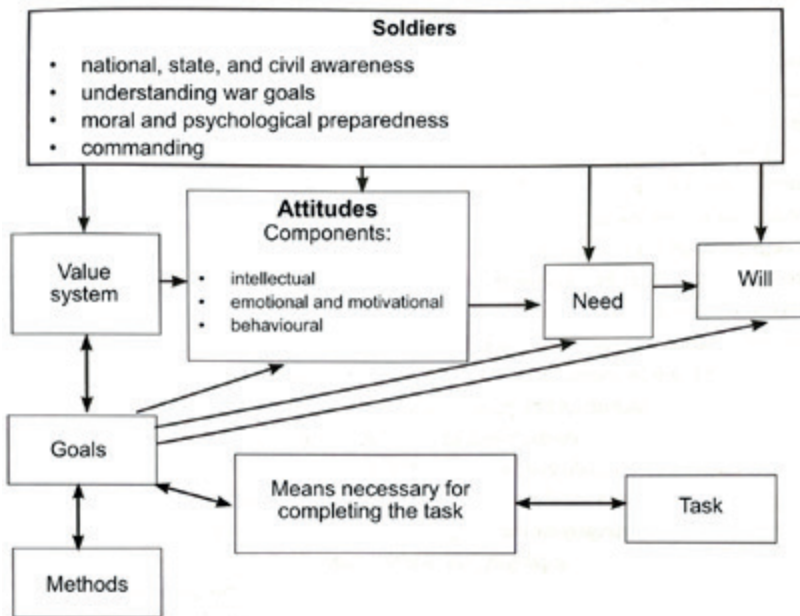
Source: Dyrda (2014, p. 73).

(larger or smaller) component[7]. Moreover, in connection with the adopted perspective, the question of the *human-robot* relationship arises today, e.g., who bears legal and ethical responsibility for the effects of using robots and artificial intelligence (AI) in the military and beyond, especially in wartime[8].

Regardless of the controversy over the morale-morality relationship, the presented model is useful, as the war in Ukraine demonstrates. One can imagine how different the internal conditions of Ukrainian soldiers (fighting in defence of the motherland) and Russian soldiers (carrying out a military "special operation") must be, affecting their morale. Also, it entails the need to shape the internal conditions of soldiers. Russian soldiers are reminded that they are to fight for very important and lofty goals, such as the fight against fascism during the

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[7]   The relationship between morale, morality, and *esprit de corps* is highlighted by A. Kołodziejczyk, 2016, pp. 16–20).

[8]   Google employee Blake Lemoine famously claimed to have developed the first artificial intelligence, named LaMDA, that gained consciousness and even emotions that it can express. Moreover, media claim that LaMDA talks with a lawyer about representing its interests, e.g.: https://www.komputerswiat.pl/aktual-nosci/nauka-i-technika/sztuczna-inteligencja-google-wynajela-prawnika-chce-udowodnic-ze-zyje/25v8ffh

so-called Patriotic War, as well as out of personal motivation – anger and revenge for crimes allegedly committed in Donbass against supporters of separatist republics. An example of the Russian moral rationalisation of the Russian war's actions is the demonstration of support for Putin organised by Russian citizens permanently residing in Cyprus, under the slogan "Let's protect the people of Donbas from the Ukrainian army". Undoubtedly, these actions are about maintaining the low morale of soldiers fighting for a foreign cause.

Like many other military theorists and ethicists dealing with morale in wartime, M. Dyrda ponders on the issue of just and unjust war. It is included in his axiological model and refers to M. Walzer's (2010, p. 112) theory, according to which war is considered just if victory has moral foundations and justifications, and a soldier dies in the name of higher values. Thus, the war waged by Ukraine against Russia in defence of independence, sovereignty, and identity undoubtedly has the characteristics of a just war. Military operations on the territory of Ukraine show that the concepts of just war (*bellum iustum*) and unjust war (*bellum iniustum*) are still valid. For this reason, the civilised world does not succumb to the Russian propaganda, supports the legitimate right of Ukrainians to defend their homeland, and condemns the aggressors from Russia in the name of humanistic values. On Russia's side, the war cannot be just because it is aggressive, predatory, and aimed at the civilian population, and any ethical justification for Russian propaganda has no *raison d'être*.

In the psychological and axiological model of Dyrda, the essence of morale is the individual's value system, and in the army: a soldier or other representative of uniformed public services. However, it also includes soldiers' attitudes to the means of combat. Therefore, in this model, morale includes knowledge, skills, willingness, and the ability to act aimed at achieving the goal. At this point, Dyrda's model coincides with Dziewulski's model. The latter author notices a different level of content of morale elements, which leads to the conclusion about the need to verify views identifying morale only with the desire to achieve goals, particularly the will to fight (Dyrda, 2014, p. 75). In the case of war in Ukraine, the soldiers of this country do not lack the will to fight, knowledge, skills, and commanders' tactical ingenuity, which compensate the enemy's advantage in the means of battle. Thanks to the army's high morale and the democratic world's support, Ukrainian soldiers and commanders prevent the Russian Federation from achieving its goal of conquering Ukraine and Russification of the Ukrainian nation[9].

Inspired by social psychology and ethics, Dyrda (2014, p. 77) assumes that "soldiers' morale should be considered as their awareness:

- national – based on historical awareness,
- state and civil,
- the need for allied cooperation in the defence of democracy,
- the servant role of the army to the nation,
- resulting from the expected or implemented objectives of the war,

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[9]   In the opinion of many Russians, "Ukraine is not a sovereign state and Ukrainians are not a nation".

- resulting from the level of moral and psychological preparation to perform tasks on the battlefield,
- resulting from the level of culture of management (command) and coexistence of soldiers,
- the need for discipline,
- unity with the religious community – personal religiosity".

Therefore, morale in this approach is determined by the "way of understanding social reality and events, physical and mental capabilities, ability to perform tasks, willingness to perform them, material resources and the nature of the conditions in which tasks are carried out, the style of commanding soldiers, the commanders' ability to use and multiply the spiritual forces of soldiers", as well as the "commanders' ability to direct soldiers' energy to use the motor forces inherent in individual soldiers and groups (Dyrda, 2014, p. 77)". To the group of factors that lower morale and have a negative impact on task performance Dyrda includes: negative personality traits, neurotic states, addictions, and other negative phenomena (Dyrda, 2014, p. 78).

The presented concept of understanding morale is complex and, unlike Dziewulski's proposal, difficult to translate into a research project. Nevertheless, the psychological-ethical approach has theoretical and practical utility. Based on the presented considerations, the author derives a model of morale and the factors determining it (Fig. 4), which exemplifies

Fig. 4. Model of morale and factors determining it according to M. Dyrda

Source: Dyrda (2014, p. 122).
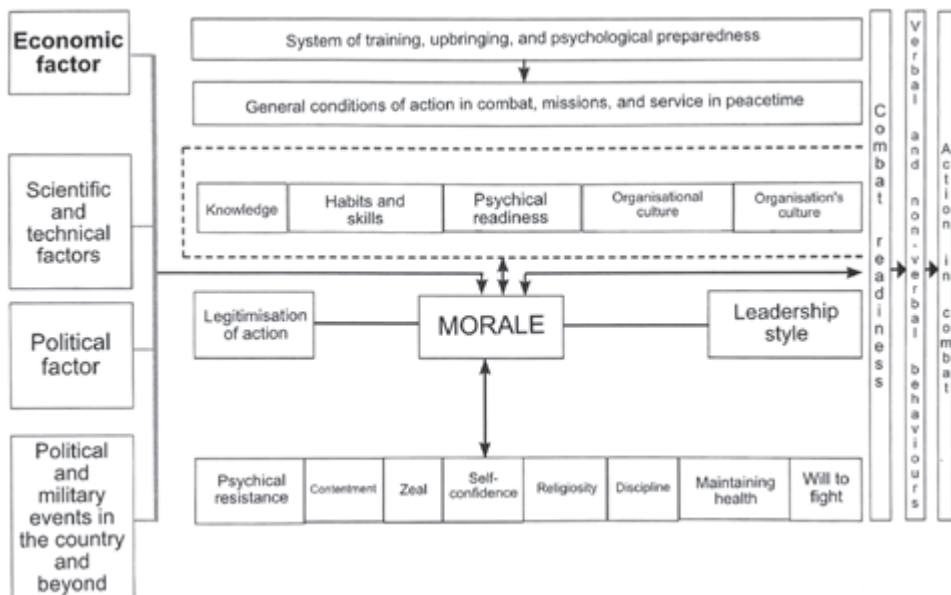
his understanding of morale in relation to a uniformed group that is the army. Morale consists of such instructions for soldiers as: "mental resistance, contentment, enthusiasm, self-confidence, religiousness, discipline, maintaining health, the will to fight" (Dyrda, 2014, p. 122).

The author of the discussed concept summarises the reflections on the essence of morale as follows: "the essence of morale lies in identification with one's own state, the goals of war, the culture of the military environment, the personality traits of soldiers and material conditions. It is expressed in the will to take the actions necessary to defend the independence and sovereignty of the country, to carry out the tasks and orders of commanders. This readiness is also manifested in discipline, solidarity, camaraderie, contentment, and enthusiasm (Dyrda, 2014, p. 122)". Activating these capabilities requires persons with functions to have the right competencies, knowledge, and skills, proper morale assessment, confronting tasks and making decisions that strengthen rather than weaken morale (Dyrda, 2014, p. 122). Observation of war in Ukraine indicates high morale of Ukrainian leaders and commanders of various levels of command, manifested in competencies and decisions taken during confrontation with the overwhelming opponent.

Holistic Model of Morale as a System Composed of Seven Types of Potential

Marian Cieślarczyk, co-author of the study *Czynnik X. Morale w życiu osobistym, w działalności społecznej i zawodowej* [Factor X. Morale in Personal Life and Social and Professional Activity], after reviewing various proposals for defining morale, treats it as a general and secondary concept to a number of components constituting it. Therefore, the monograph's authors propose the following generalised and comprehensive definition of morale:

> The morale of a subject (human, social and professional group, institution or organisation) is a relatively permanent psychosocial and praxeological phenomenon enabling a given entity to synergistically accumulate and effectively use different types of potential (intellectual, mental-spiritual, emotional, moral, physical, and organisational), aimed at achieving essential values and goals, skilfully harmonising personal needs and interests with a common good, combining a short-term perspective with a long-term perspective (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 297).

In this holistic approach, morale is a kind of psychosocial and praxeological system of action in the individual and group dimensions. This system consists of seven types of potential: 1) emotional, 2) mental-spiritual, 3) moral, 4) intellectual, 5) physical, 6) organisational, and 7) other (e.g., technological). These elements of the system are connected to each other and to the environment by means of functional relations. The quality of morale (strength and durability) depends on the quality of individual morale elements and the quality of internal

and external relationships. Maintaining relative harmony between the elements of morale is conducive to strengthening it. It means that in the ideal model, the individual types of potential are characterised by similar quality. It is conducive to obtaining a synergy effect in the system and launching processes of strengthening morale, i.e., improving its strength and durability. These are the basic determinants of morale quality (Fig. 5) (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 142).

The strength and durability of morale are strengthened in action, for example, during various types of exercises and training. We are talking about a broadly understood condition, including psychophysical and spiritual, moral, intellectual, etc. However, when these activities are not well organised and do not bring the expected results, morale is not strengthened and may even weaken. Also, if there is a clearly weak link in morale or a poor quality of relations between its elements, the strength and durability of morale decrease.

Fig. 5. Elements of morale's potential against the background of safety culture. The perfect model according to M. Cieślarczyk
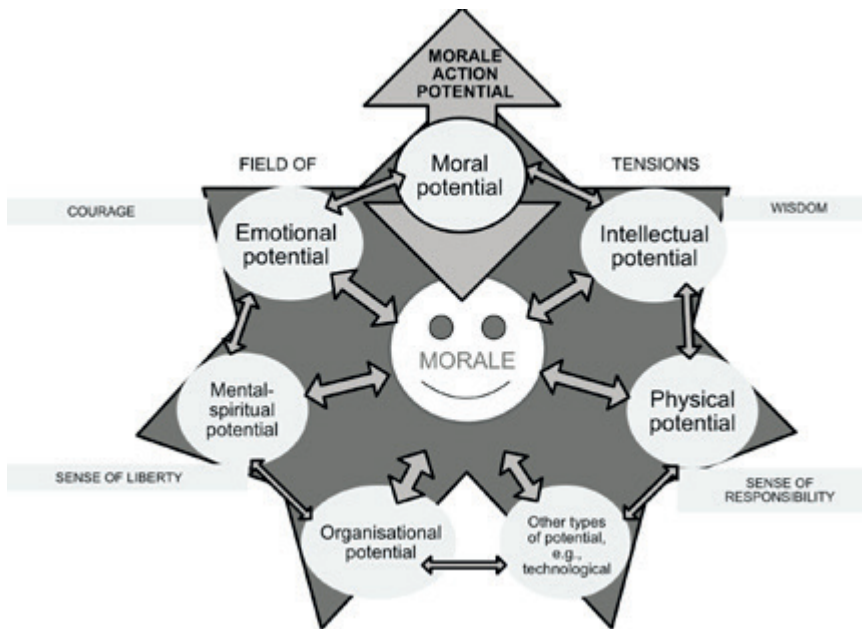
Source: Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk (2019, p. 142).

The polygon shown in this figure is a combination of the safety culture model and morale, and must be seen in dynamics. It means that its vertices, containing different types of potential, are often directed towards the goal depending on the situation development. However, in the ideal model, the axis of this system are basic values, and the resultant of

forces is guided by operational values, such as the optimal combination of a sense of freedom with a sense of responsibility, and courage with wisdom. Then the resultant of forces usually passes through the "filter" of moral potential (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 142).

In this model, a particularly important function is played by moral potential, which is a kind of *stimulator* activating the cumulative action potential of morale and a *regulator of the use* of this potential in relations with the environment. In the course of "activating" and using various types of morale potential, the *condition* of the subject in its various "niches" visible in Fig. 5 is "built". It is worth emphasising that the element of morale, which is the "moral potential", also serves as a "signpost" indicating the direction of the activity undertaken by the subject. However, the moral potential "in itself" is insufficient both in "normal" situations, which are described as "cold", and emergencies, described as "hot", which can be seen by observing the actions of firefighters, e.g., during a flood or fire, or soldiers or policemen in combat action (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 143).

In this model, the morale potential of physical and legal entities arises in the *network of intra-system relations* of a given entity, and in *external relations* connecting various entities, also with different types of environments. The *intra-system relations* function *horizontally*, i.e., between colleagues and partners, and *vertically* – between superiors and subordinates. The authors of the study emphasise that *external relations* connect a given entity with other entities in the close and distant environments, such as family, local community, society, nation, community, e.g., the EU. The different *types of energy* "induced" and obtained in these relations can be directed towards other entities and environments: a) *natural*, b) social, and c) *cultural,* including *information* and *technical*[10]. The functioning of morale consists of: "discovering" in oneself and the environment various types of potential and activating them; the synergistic accumulation and effective use of morale potential for the most generally understood purposes, i.e., a) the implementation of the mission of natural and legal entities, b) the achievement of their operational goals, c) the fulfilment of functions, and d) the efficient tasks performance (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 298).

The *potential* obtained in the form of morale can be used for *dignified purposes*, e.g., to obtain high-quality broadly understood "products"[11], processes, or services, serving the needs, interests, and values of individual natural and legal entities, as well as – and perhaps above all – the common good**.** This potential can also be used for *destructive purposes*, making it difficult or impossible for other entities to meet vital needs, achieve their goals, and creating threats to the values important to these entities. We deal with such cases on

[10] It is worth considering the combination of factors a), b), and c) when analysing *culture of information security* and the associated specific type of morale, necessary for physical and legal entities to deal with cyber threats and other elements of combat and information warfare. Their importance in the coming decades of the twenty-first century will grow.

[11] These "products" will be different for different actors (individuals, social groups, institutions, and organisations).

the battlefield, regardless of whether it is an armed struggle, a competition in business or even sports (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 299).

The culture of safety is combined with morale and affects its functioning. It happens through values and norms, due to appropriate attitudes influencing various forms of activity, manifested in behaviours, actions, and interactions. Among the values connecting morale with the culture of security, there are not only basic values, subject to special protection and defence, such as life, health, companionship, friendship, love, solidarity, dignity, faith and trust, subjectivity, independence, sovereignty, common good, *raison d'etat*, etc., but also operational values. In Cieślarczyk's model, the basic operational values are *courage* in relative balance with *wisdom*, and a sense of *freedom* combined with *responsibility*, as well as *prudence and effectiveness of action*, perceived and bringing effects not only here and now, but also in the long run (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 299). The issue of values is addressed in all analysed concepts, but these sets of values or needs are different. The issue of identifying the values actually professed and implemented is extremely important for identifying the condition or the assessment of morale. Both the Russian side and Ukraine's allies underestimated the morale of the Ukrainian army and society, for whom the independence of the homeland turned out to be the *summum bonum* at the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Inducing the potential of morale and maintaining a relative balance between the mentioned entities' competencies is facilitated by the appropriate climate of life, work, and service. It is possible thanks to positive emotions, such as: *companionship, friendship, love, solidarity,* and the related factors of *faith* and *trust*. They are conducive to shaping the operational value of *prudence.* It is mainly thanks to it that *wise decisions*, individual and collective, are made, as well as *effective actions and cooperation*, considering the common good and, as far as possible, the individual needs of entities, also perceived in the long-term perspective. The combination of these factors stimulates individuals and groups to act and work together effectively, and the results achieved contribute to strengthening morale. It fosters *a sense of meaning* in joint actions. The presented description of the factors affecting morale is ideal and verified in practice (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 300).

Explaining the mechanism of morale functioning, M. Cieślarczyk notes that depending on the situation, when apart from *operational values* there are *basic values*, such as *life* and *health of citizens* and their *dignity*, but also the *common good*, such as *sovereignty and independence*, the vector of force may move in one direction or the other. The appropriate *level of morale and safety culture* of entities are then a kind of fuses, protecting against extreme actions, such as bravado or belaying (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 300). In both situations, the ability to deal with risk (risk management) plays an important role, and the important reference points setting the directions of action are then such values as *prudence* and *effectiveness*. We can treat them as indicators of a high level of *morale* perceived over a longer period of time, just like the category of *wisdom*. By *wisdom*, generally speaking, we will mean the ability to use the knowledge possessed by the subject and other types of

potential to *achieve worthy, socially acceptable goals*. And by *courage* we understand the type of competence that makes it possible to overcome fear and other weaknesses, mainly thanks to the *strength of spirit and intellect*, and other types of potential symbolised on the polygon (Fig. 5). These are important determinants of *wisdom* and *courage* (prudence), but also of *subjectivity* (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 301).

As mentioned, it is an ideal model, trying to take into account a complex of elements that are possible to include in research and morale assessments. In the conditions of uniformed public services, especially in the "hot" situations, the analytical approach in assessing morale may not be appropriate. Then, intuition comes in handy, which is particularly valuable in the case of people managing collective entities. However, it is a separate issue for discussion. More on this topic can be found in the study of Kołodziejczyk and Fuchs (2022).

Recommendations for Diagnosing and Shaping Morale in Uniformed Public Services

If we follow the media reports on the war in Ukraine, it can be concluded that the importance of morale will grow in the next decades of the twenty-first century. Therefore, a reflection on the need to improve this type of competence of individual and collective entities appears automatically. In order for this to bring the expected results, it is necessary to have minimum knowledge about the essence of this phenomenon and the ability to recognise manifestations of high- or low-quality morale. It consists of two basic determinants: strength and durability. It is best to recognise them in action. Increasingly, however, physical and legal entities are trying to find out what morale potential they themselves have, and what the morale potential of an opponent or competitor is. However, it is worth remembering that this type of soft power of opponents and competitors is not commonly known. It is usually carefully hidden. That begs the question: how can it be recognised? It is necessary so that morale could be improved (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 303).

Recommendations for Diagnosing Morale

Any entity (person, social or professional group, institution, organisation) having the will to improve the internal level of morale must start by defining *what morale means to it.* Furthermore, it should be considered whether concepts such as trust, loyalty, solidarity, responsibility, satisfaction, motivation, commitment, *esprit de corps*, cohesion, perceived organisational support, and other synonyms of morale and related concepts can be included in such a definition. In the case of collective entities such as uniformed public services, all their members should understand what morale is expected in their team or group so that they work together to achieve, sustain, and improve it. Both rank-and-file line (operational)

officers and their superiors should be involved in defining morale, while senior management should support and include these efforts in assessments. All parties must be involved in disseminating knowledge about morale, understanding it, diagnosing, and improving it. Managers at different levels of management must be aware of morale's importance and competent in shaping it, considering the recommendations of social and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1997; 1999; 2007; LeDoux, 2000).
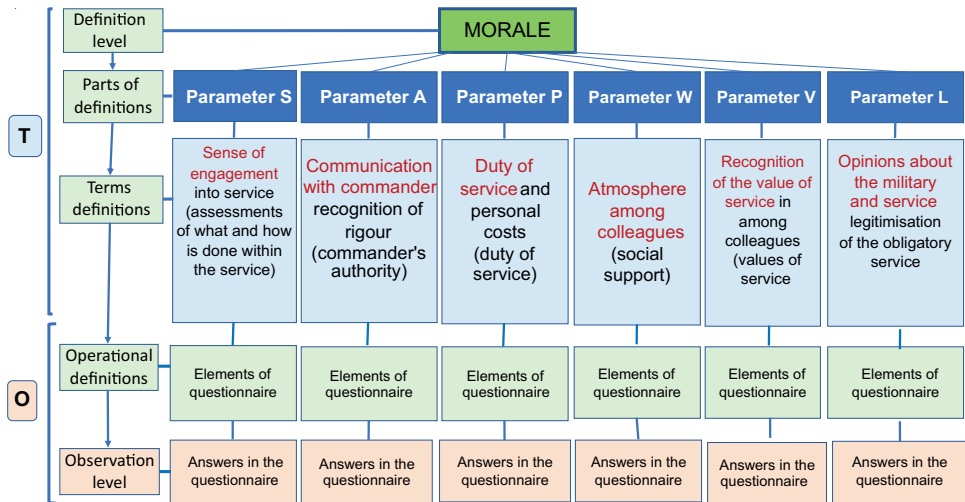
The definitions proposed in the book *Factor X* provide a fairly large set of definitions that can be implemented, depending on the needs of a given entity or situation. It is also important that the working teams selected for this purpose discuss morale issues in broad forums openly and create procedures for understanding, diagnosing, and improving it. It should also be considered that entities that have not yet suffered a drop in the morale of their employees or officers actively develop such policies and educational, upbringing, and training activities based on it, which would prevent a drop in the level or complete destruction of morale (Adler et al., 2006; Dyrda, 2004).

Difficulty in diagnosing. Many practical difficulties arise in attempts to study models in rigorous scientific research. It is very difficult to develop a research model that includes all the elements indicated as essential components for measuring morale and the criteria for its evaluation. However, it is much easier to obtain data on the individuals' attitudes. These difficulties are highlighted because it is often the case that the researcher obtains data mainly through interviews or surveys conducted with individual members of the basic group, who were selected accidentally or randomly through a sample selection procedure that includes representatives of a small basic unit within a larger group (service or uniformed), organisation, or institution. In general, in sociological research, only a few respondents interviewed in this type of studies belong to the same small basic (primary) group. Furthermore, the information obtained by this method is generally fragmented and dispersed when the researcher tries to use it as data on the behaviour of small organised groups (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 303).

In connection with the mentioned difficulties, I present an example of a conceptual scheme of morale research related to the concept of H. Dziewulski (Fig. 6) and applied to small organisational units (Kołodziejczyk, 2018, p. 278).

Morale in this case means a feature of organised groups (subdivisions) and is defined as the "readiness of teams to engage in matters of service in response to the signals received to act" (Dziewulski, 1994, pp. 5–6). For morale defined in this way, it was possible to determine empirical indicators by the measurement procedure shown in Fig. 6. Thus, operational definitions, derived from six types of conceptual definitions at the theoretical-conceptual level and (T) having a clear empirical reference at the empirical level (B), contained sets of questionnaire items, i.e., appropriate sets of questions with assigned values. The variables created in this way made it possible to receive answers from respondents, and thus to measure various properties of the studied military subunits that make up their actual morale.

Fig. 6. Coming from definition to observation level: the case of morale

	MORALE					
Definition level						
Parts of definitions	Parameter S	Parameter A	Parameter P	Parameter W	Parameter V	Parameter L
Terms definitions	Sense of engagement into service (assessments of what and how is done within the service)	Communication with commander recognition of rigour (commander's authority)	Duty of service and personal costs (duty of service)	Atmosphere among colleagues (social support)	Recognition of the value of service in among colleagues (values of service	Opinions about the military and service legitimisation of the obligatory service
Operational definitions	Elements of questionnaire	Elements of questionnaire	Elements of questionnaire	Elements of questionnaire	Elements of questionnaire	Elements of questionnaire
Observation level	Answers in the questionnaire	Answers in the questionnaire	Answers in the questionnaire	Answers in the questionnaire	Answers in the questionnaire	Answers in the questionnaire

Source: own elaboration. Note: the letter "**T**" indicates the theoretical-conceptual level and the letter "**O**" marks the observational-empirical level

The morale measurement procedure used in the analysed research project is presented by Kołodziejczyk (2018, 261–284).

The need to develop tools to measure morale. The use of sociological and psychological measurement tools to monitor the morale of organisations or uniformed public services is necessary and has already been successfully used in some countries by various state institutions and at various levels (Kołodziejczyk, 2016, pp. 9–44). It is also suggested to use many tools to measure internal processes in the organisation contained in various control reports, audit reports, or reports on the evaluation of the organisation's operation. One of the key reasons for having such measurement tools is to track trends in the organisation. When some employees manifest an increase or decrease in their level of satisfaction, a survey or other measurement tools provide indicators that confirm or deny their claims. These tools also support an improved communication model and can actively identify the needs of a given branch or organisational unit. They can also give us a better insight into whether the agency's efforts are having the intended effect. Depending on local labour law, these measurement tools may require modification as to their accuracy and verification by representatives of the surveyed groups of employees, services, organisations, or institutions (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 304).

Agencies operating in the state security system should create measurement tools used during the annual period of assessment of a given organisational structure. They should be modelled on similar solutions present in highly developed Western countries. They should

be used in periodic assessments so that administrators can tell if organisational morale is changing from year to year. Agencies should also keep detailed data on statistical indicators on those factors that may indirectly affect the satisfaction, motivation, and resilience of the team in the workplace or service. Such data may include, for example: sick leave, departures from work, vacancies or posts, age of employees or officers, gender, their education and professional experience, etc. and provide insight into the change in indicators in the organisation (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 304).

Low-cost software tools, such as those found in the WIBS/WBBS database, should be available for morale research. If possible, such studies should be anonymous. HR should review the questions carefully so as not to ask questions that are sensitive or threatening, or violating employee rights. Administrators using surveys should be cautious about responding to them without a thorough review. All employees should be encouraged, but not forced, to complete such a survey to maintain a true state of organisational morale. After completing the research and obtaining this image, managers or possessors of research results should make reasonable (wise) changes in the organisation to support positive trends in it. These changes should be discussed with staff to demonstrate that the system is working and the organisation is changing based on their contributions (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 304).

Monitoring phenomena and processes. It can undoubtedly be assumed that public sector employees will move to private sector agencies or vice versa. For example, due to redundancies, restructurings, or "ageing" jobs, there may be more retirements. But other factors can also affect the entry or exit of employees from the organisation. The current reputation or image of an organisation or institution can influence whether someone applies for or quits a job. Wages rates, number of vacation days, opportunities in the private sector, and other factors can also affect personnel movement. Combined with these reasons, employees may experience lower levels of satisfaction and express their dissatisfaction in various ways, including quitting the job (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 305).

Heads of institutions should consider keeping a certain category of staff before they leave the agency and their institutional knowledge is irretrievably lost. Thanks to the knowledge on this subject, one can retain valuable employees or officers in the organisation. In this way, institutional employers can minimise the amount of time and energy spent on recruitment campaigns and the recruitment itself. Employers should try to manage and better understand *why do employees leave the organisation?* If they leave due to dissatisfaction, motivation, and low morale, in-depth interviews should be conducted to uncover the causes of the problems before employees reach a point where the agency can no longer recover them (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 305).

Managers should monitor employees consistently for changes in their satisfaction, motivation, and morale levels. Official tools, such as evaluation programmes, give supervisors the opportunity to review employees' goals and desires. By better understanding and supporting their interests, the level of morale can be kept high. Particularly, employers in national safety agencies should be mindful of the morale of their employees. Indeed, as

emphasised earlier, the motivation to serve in the public sector is an integral part of most people working in this sector, which includes most uniformed public services (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 305).

Individual interviews (conversations). Government employers can be more aware of what satisfies their employees and maintain a high level of morale by systematically conducting interviews before leaving. In many agencies, HR representatives talk to employees during the quitting process. However, it is not so common with direct management. In addition to the usual HR quitting interviews, various actors of the state security system should conduct two additional interviews with employees who resign or retire. One of these interviews should be conducted by the person's immediate supervisor (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 305).

The questions asked in the interviews should be about what had both a positive and negative impact on the employee's morale. This interview may be the best opportunity to listen to first-hand opinions on the perception of management actions, without having to worry about negative consequences. The answers to these questions can be used to improve future decisions and communication methods to avoid getting other employees to resign. Consistent responses about needed improvements should be used to make appropriate adjustments to the organisation's performance. These adjustments and their reasons should be shared with all of the organisation's personnel. Heads of organisational units should be prepared to hear all complaints about the way they run the organisation. If they use this strategy of quitting interviews, they should try to listen to basic concerns and not treat remarks or comments as a personal attack on their leadership. Superiors, managers, or commanders who are not mentally prepared to receive critical opinions can lead to a decrease in the morale of the entire team they lead with their reactions and actions (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 306).

Recommendations for Improving Morale

In his book *Men Against Fire*, S.L.A. Marshall argues that it is not just the dynamics of a small group that matters in combat. An equally important factor is training in peacetime. Therefore, the value of training is largely psychological: it is a process that allows the development of skills, a form of reinforcement that creates confidence – self-confidence, and so strengthens morale. "The surest reason for feeling inadequate", as Shelford Bidwell noted, "is when a soldier is asked to do something he does not understand" (Marshall, 1966, p. 22). The motto of the Royal Air Force's Parachute Training is "Knowledge dispels fear" (Bidwell, 1973, p. 130). Surprise can destroy collective cohesion on the battlefield, and training is the best antidote. So, in order not to be surprised, one needs to shape morale wisely through various actions.

Training and development programmes. Training and development programmes of services or groups operating in the state security system, which include efforts to improve the agency's morale, should be incorporated into such an organisation and aimed at improving

the quality of leadership, management, and command. Agencies should provide the necessary foundation to inspire confidence in leadership, communicate effectively, and shape morale, and thus ultimately create a culture of security based on trust within their framework and at different organisational levels. Each of the uniformed groups in the state security system should establish an operational definition of morale and incorporate it into its policies, missions, and procedures. Such a definition should be established following a debate on the subject involving staff from all organisational units and management structures (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 309).

Working groups or *committees* with scientists should be used for this purpose and to elaborate such definitions. In order to solve morale problems, engagement must occur in the space between the executive (linear, operational) and the management levels. It can be achieved by creating robust internal and external communication models accessible to all employees. Such a model should include a range of methods and channels and media of communication. In this respect, modern technology should be used, including emails, blogs, social media, and other means and methods of communication. Let us not forget about the old methods and means of communication, such as announcements or newsletters, so that information could reach all employees in a form convenient for them (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 309).

One should keep in mind that public sector employees are motivated differently than their counterparts in the private sector. Therefore, managers of teams or groups in the state security sector must better understand these motivations and respond to them differently than managers in the private sector. Motivation to work in the public sector concerns workers who want to improve the world and make it a safer place for others. Therefore, the management of such an agency or service should select people who have this feature. Employees with a high level of motivation to work in the public sector may become discouraged if they feel that they are not doing work that has meaning and therefore may have lower morale levels if they are not appreciated for their work. Negative media reports about their work can also have a negative impact on their morale. Cooperation with the media should be carried out by the agency's spokespersons trained for this purpose (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, pp. 309–310).

As discussed in the section about communication, leaders should create a newsletter that is systematically distributed. Part of it should be dedicated to highlighting the effort of an employee who has had a positive impact on the community or working group in the agency. This form of recognition enhances the employee's motivation and encourages others to reflect their efforts. Moreover, regulators must monitor workplace targets that have been set through direct reports. Objectives should be taken into account in the annual employee appraisal and every effort should be made to help them achieve these goals. Managers should be evaluated on their ability to help employees achieve their goals, thus creating an environment where employees feel the agency appreciates their development (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 310).

Improving the communication model. A clear communication model minimises the spread of conflicting messages and provides employees with an understanding of the decisions made in the organisation. Due to external pressures on practices in the public safety sector, it is important that agencies have an appropriate method in place to communicate with the community they serve. Such a message should be sent in many ways, not only through the media. Some heads of government sector agencies are wary of publicly disclosing the information they share during transparent communications. However, sharing information about morale should be thought out, especially when it concerns information from services or agencies operating in the state security system (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 310).

The communication model in the organisation should be bidirectional and allow messages to be sent both up and down the chain of command or control. One of the biggest challenges for agency employees or uniformed groups operating in the state security sector is the lack of two-way communication throughout the agency. Many workers know nothing about the resources already available, the assistance programmes for themselves and their families. Without awareness of these programmes, internal security agency staff are isolated from the means and resources that can help them overcome the crisis. Agencies must build and promote a communication strategy that engages top leaders in supporting staff at every level in every component. Such a strategy would encourage bidirectional communication and management to obtain data from employees useful for decision-making and idea generation. Without such a dialogue, there is no real communication and high morale of the group, team, or organisation (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, pp. 310–311).

Improving participatory leadership style. A meta-analysis of morale, satisfaction, and productivity studies found that participatory leadership is effective in agencies where employees are tasked with dealing with complex problems, as is the case in national and homeland security agencies. This type of leadership is called participatory and stimulates a given professional group to participate in decision-making. The participatory climate created in this way has a significant impact on the satisfaction of members of a group, organisation, or institution. Communication strategies should be clearly defined in executive level meetings. The messages should then be transmitted through various communication channels. Line or operational level employees should be instructed to have direct conversations with their direct reports and to convey the same message to them. In the public sector, supervisors should provide feedback as quickly as possible along the chain of command. In larger agencies or in those with large staff, management is encouraged to use new communication technologies, such as videoconferencing, to communicate with appropriate teams of subordinate employees. Although a direct conversation with the head of department is always better received, the second option of communication in the working group via an Internet connection is acceptable. It allows the organisation's management to travel long distances, be in many places at once, and get immediate feedback from the right employees (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, pp. 311–312).

Skilful stress management in the organisation. Stress is inherent in the public sector, especially in government institutions and agencies. It can be external or internal, and both types can alter an employee's morale. The leadership must have a planned response to the critical stress in case of an incident that affects the supervised person, and this response should vary depending on the situation and the person experiencing psychological trauma. Each employee or team reacts differently to what they see and experience during traumatic incidents. There are many options for responding to significant events. The only wrong response from the organisation's leadership is no response at all (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 312).

Organisational or institutional leaders in the public sector must also respond to internal organisational stress caused by politics, bureaucracy, media, and other factors. If possible, adjustments should be made to the functioning of the organisation or institution to minimise stress caused by adverse factors. These changes should be communicated directly to the work team. Leaders and supervisors should publicly recognise employees who take action to improve the morale and satisfaction of other colleagues. The recognition can be expressed in many ways, and knowledge about it should be known to a wide range of employees or officers. One of the key ways an agency in the public sector can help manage stress is by creating a peer support team (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 312).

Uncontrolled stress in organisations and institutions operating in the public safety sector can lead to burnout of employees, taking the form of psychological suffering. Management needs to understand that stress can significantly affect agency morale if not overcome in a proactive way. Employees who help co-workers deal with their morale concerns create a culture in which stressors are managed before they become toxic. Organisations that encourage psychological help without the risk of embarrassment or labelling and offer employees positive social contacts help improve morale levels. Unmanaged stress can turn into contagious behaviour in a group and negatively affect morale (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 312).

Morale improvement programmes. As the military has been doing for years, public sector agencies should create morale, wellness, and recreation programmes for their employees and their families. Managers of organisations operating in the public sector need to find more unique ways to support their officers. Establishing training or training programmes, organising celebrations at work to celebrate achievements, setting highly qualified employees with satisfying tasks, or establishing flexible practices are examples of programmes used to improve employee morale. Furthermore, leaders should consider establishing a mentoring programme as a method of employee development and morale improvement. Another effective tool for improving morale can be individual support and mentoring of direct superiors to improve the satisfaction and motivation of an employee or an officer of the uniformed group (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 313).

Employers should implement a procedure in their companies, institutions, or organisations to support building the morale and well-being of employees. Physical fitness pro-

grammes are one of the fastest ways to improve physical, mental, and organisational health and should be included in this procedure. The list of additional programmes that can be included is long, and the employees themselves can be used to propose their own suggestions. Regardless of what is agreed, some type of programme should be carried out systematically and involve the participation of representatives of the management of an organisation or institution. Although not all employees get involved in these types of events, it is another opportunity for the management of an organisation or institution to show their support for the employee (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 313).

Heads of organisational units and services operating in the state security system must have various skills. Promotional exams and assessments cover many different skills, but they do not always emphasise diagnosing and shaping the morale of a given group or team. This lack may be caused by curricular limitations of training, especially when it comes to candidates' qualifications in team building, stress management, and employee support. If some of the promotional programmes and activities include questions about interpersonal skills, social competencies, or emotional intelligence, it is very likely that participants in such training will gain qualifications and tools to help them build morale in their workplace or service (Cieślarczyk & Kołodziejczyk, 2019, p. 313).

Conclusion

For some time, morale has again become an important research problem for people dealing with the issues of the army and other uniformed groups, as evidenced by many expert statements in the mass media, publications, and scientific conferences. What are the driving factors behind the renewed interest in morale? In my opinion, the interest in morale in the military and beyond stems from a number of different real factors and processes that have been going on around the world for some time that are refocusing attention on morale issues. Morale is a particularly important concept for the social mobilisation of certain groups, sociological categories and communities of vital importance, for the protection of the security of larger social wholes, at particularly critical moments, or uncertain in connection with emerging and perceived threats.

People who work or serve in uniformed public services are interested in public service because they are motivated by work for society or country, patriotism, altruism, a sense of mission, or some other form of non-material motivation. People who work in the public sector have a kind of desire to improve the world around them, which is referred to in the literature as the motivation to provide public services. Some studies show that public sector employees have a higher motivation to work than those who work in the private sector (Taylor & Westover, 2011, pp. 731–751). The effects of low morale of employees or officers of uniformed public services in this sector may lead to reduced efficiency, burnout, and psychological stress.

Morale is important to the military because, as Karen Dunivin (1994, p. 544) states, "deliberate self-analysis allows the military to be a proactive (as opposed to reactive) organisation in managing the social changes that take place within it". I believe that this statement can also be considered valid for other non-military groups, organisations, institutions, and services that are increasingly reflective subjects. High morale stimulates, dynamises, and activates soldiers to achieve goals even in such extreme situations as the need to face the aggressor in war. The Ukrainian troops' morale, combined with the weapons of the West, was possible by resistance and some visible successes in regaining the areas occupied by the attacker.

The results of the review and the three presented morale strategies seem very telling. They show that, in principle, **there is no single way to refine the concept of morale for the purposes of scientific research**. Depending on the needs of the client and the theoretical approach of the research contractor, different research strategies may be suitable. For this reason, the author does not recommend any of them, but shows some benefits of each strategy for understanding morale in relation to uniformed public services and extreme situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the war in Ukraine. The presented definitions of morale may prove useful for recognising the weak places of various entities (institutions and organisations) of the public sector in a wide complex of social problems of its functioning, including uniformed groups operating in the "hot" situations.

This approach seems appropriate in a situation where one has the right tool to bring a picture of a complex of efficiency conditions closer. For example, it is useful for tracking deviations from a preconceived model state of affairs. The approach recommending using various strategies in the study and assessment of morale in similar situations additionally gives the opportunity to take a broader look at the highlighted problem complexes. By offering the possibility of multivariate analysis and comparison, an approach that exposes different research perspectives (models) seems particularly useful when there is a need to make a general estimate of morale, since, as Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery stated, "Morale is arguably the most important and distinct factor in war. (…) Without high morale, it is impossible to achieve success, even if the strategic or tactical plan is the best. High morale is a pearl, with a great price".

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