

MILITARY EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF COMPLEMENTARY VALUES IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES

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Abstract: *In Romania, the army as a social force, respects and promotes national values, simultaneously with the defense of national interest. The values and moral principles of the army's ethics are largely reflected in the process of education and training of children, these landmarks have always existed and represent models for many generations. The results of the current studies conducted among the school population, compared to the values collected 20 years ago, show us a significant decrease in the level of accumulation of appropriate motric luggage among students. This paper brings to attention the results of a study carried out with 85 subjects, 55 students and masters aged between 19 and 25 years old. Communication of leaders at inter-ministerial level, can produce adaptations of the curricular contents of traditional education for the benefit of military education. Through the synergistic action of the leaders, an important contribution can be made to the complex approach of training the future specialists, in the context of the change of Romanian military realities.*

Keywords: *communication, values, adaptation, realism, efficiency.*

Effective cooperation between the European Union and the Council of Europe materializes through collaboration and promotion of the common values of the rule of law, freedoms and fundamental human rights, as well as pluralistic democracy throughout Europe and its neighborhood. While keeping this spirit, we can expect a tangible result of the good cooperation between the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance and other ministries of the Romanian Government involved in the performance of the military education system. In the run-up to the First World War, pre-military gymnastics became increasingly present in schools and sports societies. A good gymnast was also a good soldier and a good citizen, as General Luigi Capello wrote in the *Gymnastics Federation Magazine*¹³⁴.

We continually accept that a democratically developed society can only exist by the adoption by the majority of citizens of a set of values and a considerable percentage of high school and university graduates. We hear around us, more and more often in recent years, various explanations or justifications of

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¹³⁴ Cattaneo, C., *La nouvelle loi sur l'enseignement public*, "Il Politecnico", 1860, VIII, pp.116-123.

situations that invoke the level of training or the degree of accumulation of skills that those who complete their high school or university studies should possess. There are many aspects that surround the theme of education through various ways of intervention. Among the most important are the curriculum, the teaching modalities, the importance of using advanced technical means, to list only a few, while we cannot ignore the existence of political visions in terms of education in general but also the various forms of education. The way in which all forms of education are carried out is regulated by laws drawn up by parliamentarians and implemented by the governors. Interventions in different forms and in different ways in education have an impact on all those involved: school principals, teachers, students, administrators but also on the entire population as a whole.

Since the 1800s, education and school have become important goals in society, decisively influencing people's lives, with a wide range of political or other issues remaining in secondary plans. In military schools at the beginning of the 19th century, sports activities were extremely important. The curriculum contained disciplines such as gymnastics, horse riding, swimming and shooting, as well as applicative paths. These disciplines were a very important component of the training of military personnel. The Copenhagen Military Gymnastics Institute (1804), the Central Royal Gymnastics Institute of Stockholm (1813), the Joinville-le-Pont Military School (1852), the Aldershot Military School (1861) and the Valentino Military School in Turin (1833), were the first training centers for civilians, due to the interest that such activity represented within the population of those times, other than future military personnel. The transmission of experiences was profitable, the activities being similar and equally useful for the population¹³⁵.

In Romania followed a period of time of major importance, because then there were faced various ideas that generated various orientations and that helped to shape our education system in what it is today. Finally, the various activities implemented are brought together in a single plan, rationally designed to meet the official objectives of the institution¹³⁶. As a result of this, it was found that purchases acquired through education by a student are not only useful to him or her, but also to his/her family and other members of society. Progress through education and continuous training contributes to the well-being of others by promoting a stable and democratic system in society based on real values and skills.

The main objective in terms of military education in Romania, is to ensure a well-prepared professional resource capable to act independently or within the North Atlantic Alliance, both against possible unconventional and asymmetric

¹³⁵ Teja, A., Tolleneer, J., *Sport in uniform. Fifty Years of History in Europe (1870-1914)*, „Proceedings of the International Congress of Studies on the History of Military Sport”, CONI, Rome, 1998.

¹³⁶ Goffman, E., *Asylums; essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1961.

threats, keeping the established framework in the strategic planning of modernization and continuous transformation of the Romanian Army. Military education in Romania in recent years must prioritize its efforts to continuously adapt its own architecture to NATO and European Union standards and strategy, linked to the dynamic and complex evolution of the international political and security environment.

Previous experiences in joint actions within the coalition have shown that interoperability between the forces participating in the exercise or actions is of particular importance in the final result. While historical interoperability has been seen primarily as a matter of technology, Steven Paget argues that cultural is also equally important, if not more significant¹³⁷. Cultural cooperation can be developed in several ways, but international exchanges of students and teachers during the military education process have the potential to remedy negative stereotypes, strengthen strong existing links and enhance interoperability. As a considerable number of officers who have benefited from at least one international exchange in professional military education institutions progress to the highest ranks of their own armed forces, the potential long-term benefits are vast¹³⁸ (Steven Paget, 2016).

The instability caused by the multitude of factors and values with which they vary, a situation encountered in the missions or exercises in which students and graduates of military education institutions must participate, is very similar to the confrontations or various situations that a performance athlete has to solve in each confrontation with opponents on the ground or with himself. The change in the confrontational environment, from sports competition to theatre of military operations or vice versa, has an important, sometimes decisive, contribution to the one who has the necessary training and exercise to make the transfer of acquired skills, attitudes and skills. In both military confrontations of any kind and in the sports arena, there is only one constant, i.e. the continuous variability of all factors that act unpredictably.

The ability to adapt thinking and actions quickly to new conditions encountered in the field, when the context suddenly changes, is a characteristic found in both the lives of the military and those who struggle in sports arenas. Organized military education and training is the only way we can successfully reach the end. Traditionally, military education is able to provide military professionals with the necessary skills, specific mental models and professional operating procedures for training and learning in the workplace¹³⁹. The value of a team is equal to the value of the least trained, trained, trained comrade or teammate. The permanent raising of the level of training is achieved by the individual acquisition of knowledge and skills, by initial training, before the start

¹³⁷ Steven Paget, *Interoperability of the Mind*, The „RUSP” Journal, 2016, 161:4, 42-50.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁹ Paananen, S., Pulkka, A. T., *Processes and Practices in Military Training and Education*, 2019.

of studies and training periods in military schools, colleges, high schools or military academies.

1. COMMON VALUES. THE SOLDIER AND THE SPORTSMAN HAVE THE STRUCTURE BUILT ON THE SAME PILLARS.

In Romania, the army as a social force respects and promotes national values simultaneously with the defense of the national interest. The values and moral principles of the army's ethics are largely found in the training process of children in the vast majority of sports games. These landmarks have always existed and have been role models for many generations. Not infrequently, loyalty to both the colors of the flag and to Romania was conveyed emotionally when the state anthem was sung, both in the various events organized by the army or when a Romanian was on the highest step of the world or Olympic podium. No other discipline in the curriculum better cultivates this skill, namely, the performance of tasks received responsibly, following the rules, as happens in physical education classes. This appropriation is common to that of any military. Participation and understanding of the spirit of sports games, as well as the tasks that each team member has, builds in each child, young, student, a solid basis for the implementation of military values and the continuation of personal development.

The preservation of the overall objective of the team, of the group, before the personal one can be found only in military activity or in sports life and is cultivated from a young age, when character is formed and values are placed on the hierarchical scale. There is no other discipline in the world of sport in which the fight on the field is fiercer and in which physical contact and intelligence are equally represented, as happens in the game of rugby.

However, respect is one of the main characteristics of the rugby player, as is the case in the military situation, for whom respect is a defining and important value, as is courage. Courage is a characteristic feature of great importance in the life of the military and has countless implications and consequences. Linking the ability to analyze quickly and observe quickly, with taking on responsibilities with great courage, often makes the difference between failure and victory. Not infrequently, in the throes of confrontation and the unpredictable evolution of many factors, integrity produces a confrontation between petty interests, often, and the preservation of conduct based on real values. The preservation of integrity is sometimes achieved by giving up certain ephemeral benefits, but consistency in the preservation of values brings incomparably greater professional satisfaction. Last but not least, honor is a common value of the military and the athlete. Honor gives us strength in our most difficult confrontations. These values are common and their cultivation in school by the teacher, teachers and especially by the physical education teacher, builds a base that the child, student, young man and the military future bear and rely on in the most difficult confrontations. For

this reason, we believe that physical education classes can play a particularly important role in the future career of a young military man, but also for a future civilian adult who can thus understand the military culture, values and feelings that those in the Romanian Army share.

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to carry out this work, a number of specialized articles, press releases or expert statements relevant to the theme, theoretically based or other relevant research on the proposed theme, namely the importance of consensus and awareness of the importance of military education in state development, have been covered. The statistical data presented represent a segment of a study that started in early 2021 that was carried out on a sample of 75 subjects, pre-university teachers, 35 students from the first and second years of study, aged between 19 and 25 years and master's students from the last years of study, who were previously informed about the subject around which the questionnaire was formed. Responses provided by participants whose professional and personal experiences were able to statistically influence the outcome of our research were removed from the statistical analysis. Questions were sent via an app to the target group, with each participant only able to vote once.

The form in which the questionnaire was completed was based on one of the products in the format provided by The Mentimeter. In this form, the subjects received a link that they accessed, instantly received the question and all the proposed answers. Subjects chose a single answer, with the centralization of all responses and the provision of a graphic illustration by The Mentimeter.

3. RESULTS

In order to establish a good and representative selection base for all forms of military education, it is necessary that an increasing number of pupils in secondary or high school cycles can have the appropriate skills baggage and a high level of motor skills development. The fact that in the school curriculum these skills that we want to develop equally are not represented in correlation with the needs and the actual degree in which they are needed by the school population, influences less favorably the formation of a wide selection base for military schools of the Ministry of National Defense, but also those of the Ministry of Interior¹⁴⁰. The answers to the questionnaire questions confirm the hypothesis of the paper and underline the need to achieve inter-ministerial connections leading to better communication and increase in the value and approach of the educational act by linking the curricular to the needs and new challenges faced by the young generation. A direct beneficiary of this possible approach is also the military education system, the selection base being thus much broader and with an increased initial level of training, which subsequently leads to higher level results.

¹⁴⁰ <http://oldsite.edu.ro/index.php/articles/6372>, accessed 15.05.2021.

To the question: "Do you consider it possible that at the end of your university studies you will attend a military educational institution?", "Fig.1 ", a question that was asked of students in years II and III of "Ovidius" University in Constanta, the results analyzed provided a somewhat expected surprise. A percentage of 53%, composed of two variants of response favorable to military education, considers such a variant possible, attractive. Thus, for the answer option -very possible - they opted 35% and for the answer option -I want, but I'm not ready - 18%. On the other hand, we have a total of 47%, composed of the -impossible- response variant present in our survey with a percentage of 31% and for the response variant -probably - variant that we accumulated with the previous one and for which they voted 16%.

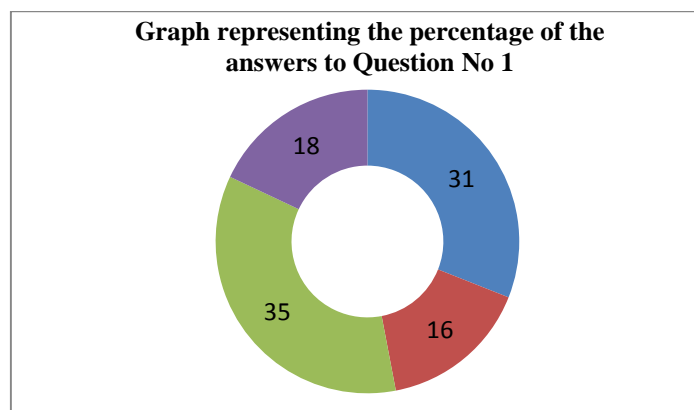


Figure 1. Answer to question number 1.

Although the subjects on the questionnaire follow a form of higher education, a significant percentage, i.e. 53%, considers it attractive to complete their studies by focusing on a form of military education. Another question, the second of the questionnaire applied, was trained every two weeks, after the students became familiar with the routes encountered in the entrance tests in military schools: "Do you think that after familiarization and strengthening utilitarian skills, are you more interested in military education?". This brings new arguments in support of our approach, in which the detailed and clear presentation of the conditions for admission, as well as the scale it must meet, are explained before the possible candidate completes the application path. Thus, 38%, was recorded by the group that opted for the answer - yes, I am interested - which proves that the lack of confidence in their own abilities, is caused by a poor level of preparation. Those who are not interested are present in our survey with 35%."Fig.2". The sum of the percentages of those who have a favorable position in relation to the forms of military education is 65% and is composed of the first answer presented and the last, respectively - I am interested, but I can't - which has a percentage of 27%.

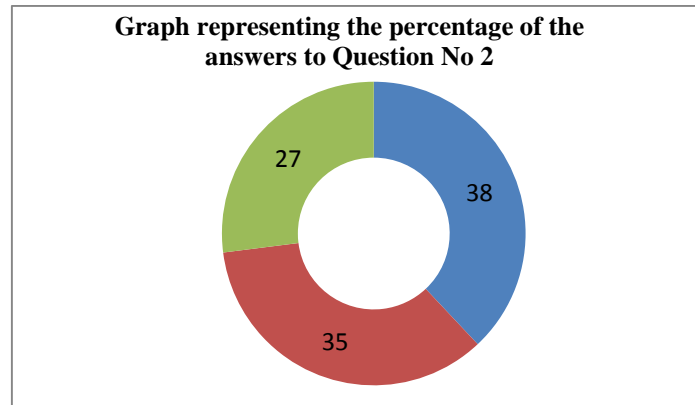


Figure 2. Answer to question number 2.

Sport thus becomes a tool for aggregating ideas and people, but also for forming the future citizen who, by this means, builds his own identity.¹⁴¹

Question number three was: "*It is useful for admission to military education to have:*" the first option was - *a booklet* - 17%, which makes an argument in the continuation of the steps taken to promote military education and to make known the educational offer, the second option - *hours of physical education in which to prepare us for the elimination test* - 66%, shows us precisely and unequivocally where to intervene and what is the main barrier that students perceive as difficult. This percentage thus becomes the most important argument in the process of completing and adapting the curriculum to the physical education discipline. In the next variant of the answer, which was - *hours of preparation for the knowledge test*- voted 14% of the number who participated in the questionnaire, the last variant of the answer to this question was - *not necessary* - this variant being represented by 3%.

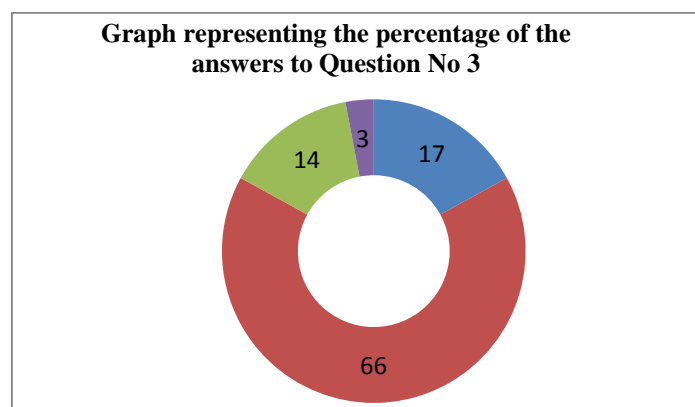


Figure 3. Answer to question number 3.

¹⁴¹ Teja, A., *Militaires et sportifs : une longue histoire*, „Confluences Méditerranée”, 2004, vol. 50, no. 3, , pp. 121-130.

The last question of the questionnaire was "*The following values: fairness, respect, honor and courage are the characteristics...*" Of the five variants of the answer, three did not meet any votes, namely, - *accountant* - 0%, - *architect* - 0% and - *economist* - 0%. We consider that all three occupations are absolutely honorable and we do not wish to make further assessments, the percentages recorded being largely predictable in terms of the delimitation of the two categories. The evolution of the result provided a surprise before the completion of the time allotted for the expression of the vote, for 70 minutes, the option - *military* - having 5 - 7 percent more than the answer - *sportsman* - variant, but at the end of the 120 minutes, the result in this question was 53% sporty and 47% military.

The fact that these two variants amounted to 100%, when five variants were presented, shows that the common values form a close link between the construction started in primary school and continued in military education. A properly constructed base, on solid pillars, leads to the achievement of high objectives, which can only be achieved by accepting these common values. Preparing children and young people for the future includes the transmission of these values by parents within the family and by trainers in the educational system. The fact that these two variants amounted to 100%, when five variants were presented, highlights those common values form a close link between education started in primary school and continued in military education. A properly constructed base, on solid pillars, leads to the achievement of high objectives, which can only be achieved by accepting these common values. Preparing children and young people for the future includes the transmission of these values by parents within the family and by trainers in the educational system.

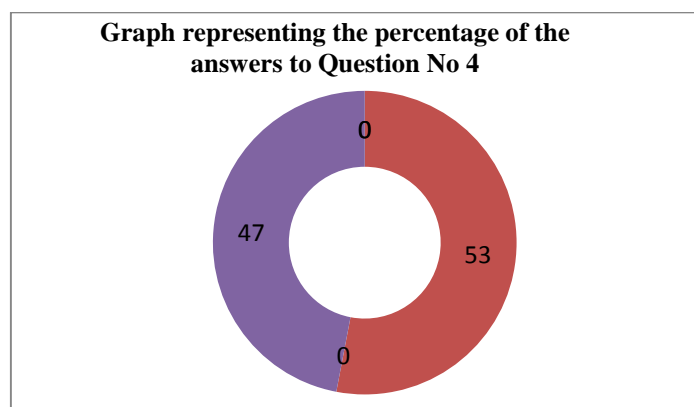


Figure 4. Answer to question number 4.

4. MOTIONS

In order to obtain better results at admission exams and during the first year of study in military education in Romania, we propose to complete the curricula of secondary and high school education in several disciplines, including physical

education discipline, with closer means and borrowed from purely military training, to acquire the foundations of life as a soldier, combat technique, military values. Keeping the focus, oriented towards the continuous adaptation of the study programs and their interdisciplinary correlation with the various capabilities of the partner armed forces, using the latest generation computing and communication techniques, leads to effective results in joint actions in complex simulations of real situations built as truthfully as possible in the virtual environment. The development and construction in the military schools of Romania of common systems within NATO, in which the multiple theoretical knowledge and various other training methods present in other military education systems, existing in the partner states, are interconnected and can make a contribution in the complex process of preparing future defense specialists.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we tried to highlight certain aspects that could provide proposals aimed to strengthen and improve some approaches in military education, as well as the importance of this form of education within the complex architecture of a modern European state, reliable partner, NATO member. We believe that a level of awareness of the decision-making factors in the legislative and executive areas of the state, equally achieved through specific means, can constantly strengthen the role of important vector of social development in the construction of a modern Romania. The pandemic about which much has been said and which has obviously affected all forms of education, has brought about many changes and imposed on us the introduction of new means and technologies for transmitting knowledge, imposing on teachers the use of creative and attractive methods so that they can achieve their proposed objectives. The capacity of the executive to support this adaptation effort made by military educational institutions, by completing and updating the material base, modernizing the logistical tools of modern didactic, can become an important factor in the complex process of training and training, which is expressed in all joint actions executed in exercises and theaters of action. The shared spirit of sport and military life is the guarantee of achieving any proposed objectives. It is related to personal experience, as well as acquiring disciplinary skills that result in understanding what, and why things are done¹⁴². Our wish, those of us who are not directly involved in military education, is to participate in the reorganization of priorities, so that military education to provide well-trained specialists with all the support realized by the national and European legislative framework, in the context of changing the Romanian military realities. Weapons can be given and withdrawn, but military education remains as long as man remains¹⁴³.

¹⁴² Boud, D., Hager. P., *Re-thinking continuing professional development through changing metaphors and location in professional practices*, *Studies in Continuing Education*, 2012, 34:1, 17-30.

¹⁴³ Cattaneo, C., *La nouvelle loi sur l'enseignement public*, "Il Politecnico", 1860, VIII, pp.116-123.

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