

INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC AND MILITARY TRAINING ON LEARNERS' ESTABLISHMENT AS MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERS

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Abstract. *The world is constantly changing in all areas. Education is no exception. Students are focusing more on hands-on skills or finding information themselves. Therefore, the challenge for educators is to explain the skills. This study is devoted to the problems of motivation and the subsequent motivation salience of the learners in the process of training. The leader has a significant influence on the behaviour of the other participants in the overall activity. His authority is based on his personal qualities and contribution for achieving group goals, on his abilities and the possibility to take a consent of those who are influenced. The scientific work presents empirical research in a real environment focusing on the influence of academic and military training at the university for the establishment of learners as military and civilian leaders.*

Keywords: *leader, leadership, motivation, academic and military training, military and civilian leaders*

Introduction

Educational shifts are dynamic, diverse and non-linear. Especially so now, as the world appears to be moving rapidly due to technological advances and increased interconnectedness between countries and cultures, given the persistence (or even increasing) of differences in educational results within nations, races, and disparities in privilege. Is academia shifting away from the traditional learning and on to the - age learning? In today's age, students are focusing more on hands-on skills, or finding information themselves, in order to boost their knowledge so they can later use in their lives. Therefore, the challenge for educators is to explain the skills and switch from broad statements of intent to more detailed discussions on educational practice.

The leader has a significant influence on the behaviour of the other participants in the overall activity. His authority is based on his personal qualities and contribution for achieving group goals, on his abilities and the possibility to take a consent of those who are influenced. The study is a part of a large-scale research, which is devoted to the problems of motivation and the subsequent motivation salience of the learners in the process of training. The scientific work presents empirical research in a real environment focusing on the influence of academic and military training at the university for the establishment of learners as military and civilian leaders. The study, which is offered to the esteemed audience, is a small part of a research in the period 2013-2019, which ends with a successful defence of the degree "Doctor of Science" in the field of "Security and Defence" at the National Military University in Bulgaria. This part has not been published so far, so the author allows himself to present the results to the scientific community.

The successes and failures of an individual organization depend on its leadership

The successes and failures of an individual organization depend to a large extent on its leadership which represents one of the most important parameters defining organizational appearance, development, and functioning. Everything depends on the individual and what he or she is going through in their life. This is how one of the interviewed servicemen answered the question what would motivate him to join the army today. Nowadays, both the army and other state institutions face the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified personnel. This calls for a study of the causes and motives that make people enrol in the armed forces. (Grigorov, 2020)

While management is rather guiding and coordinating the work of team members, leadership can be defined as the process of influencing an organized group that would make it strive for achieve its goals. (Dzonev, 1997) The manager is officially appointed, but if he wants to be a leader, he must influence not only by means of the legal, awarding, and coercive powers given to him by a formal organization, but also by means of expert and reference power based on his personal abilities. It can be considered that the leadership is informal, regulated, obligatory and implemented on the laws and mechanisms of organizational psychology. Management is one of the functions of governance with an institutionalized, formal and rational nature. It does not contain informal components. (Semerdzhiev, 2007)

According to the terminology generally accepted by the scientific community, the leader is a person who: has recognizing his leadership followers; takes to lead and manage the activity of the followers by motivating them; gives a vision and shows the true direction and direction of the effort; stands out as the first among his followers with their common sense, honesty, responsiveness and concern for others; confirms and articulates values, standards and expectations; serves as an example and role model; listens, explains and involves other people in decision-making; represents the organization. (Semerdzhiev, 2007) A typical definition for the leader is that he/she directs and influences others to achieve the overall goal. He/she really give direction, but also has to maintain the people's conviction that knows where the organization is going. According to Drucker, leadership is an elevation of human imagination to higher heights, the pursuit of higher standards of fulfilment, the formation of the person beyond its normal outlines. (Drucker, 1992) According to Dzonev, leadership is a phenomenon of group dynamics where, as a result of the action of members in the performance of a common activity, one rises to organize the group in solving a particular task. (Dzonev, 1997)

The other members of the group accept the leader voluntarily and build their own attitude towards him as a leader, and towards themselves as followers. The leader is a member of the group that has a major impact on the behaviour of other actors in the overall activity. The status of authority is mandatory. His authority is based on his personal qualities the contribution. A leader must be accepted as such, and the influence needs the consent of those who are influenced. Why is it so essential and why the question of increasing the percentage of female officers within the armed forces ranks is arisen with so much sharpness. (Zhekova, 2013) Obviously, both power and influence are not characteristic of leaders and managers. The people at all levels of the organization and out of the organization as clients and suppliers may influence the behaviour and attitude of others, they have power. The authority, on the other hand, is the power given in a certain position. So, although people at all levels of an organization may have power to influence others, those with a formal position have authority only. (Ștefănescu, 2010) As Ștefănescu points out leaders are characterized by self-confidence and generating of powerful emotionally reactions in those who follow them. They have the capacity of transforming their followers, the organizations, the society and they can even

change the history progress. The leaders have a special relationship with their followers. They have charisma and they are determined to change the world. (Ștefănescu, 2011)

Academic and Military Training at the University for Building Students as Military and Civil Leaders - Experimental Study

The dynamics in the unprecedented transformation of society at the beginning of the 21st century caused significant changes in the concepts of organizations, the views of their mission and the organizational culture of their management. New research in this field has led to changes in the theory and practice of management, becoming the guiding principle for all processes of good governance based on a scientific basis. (Marinov, 2018)

Academic and military training at the university to build trainees as military leaders must provoke young people to think critically, to create, to solve problems and to be proactive. These are the skills needed to build successful entrepreneurs, business leaders and active and responsible citizens. Through practical activities they turn their ideas into reality, embing creativity and innovation in their work, take risks and achieve their goals. Main goal of National Military University is to prepare highly qualified officers and specialists with higher education, who are capable to carry out active cognitive activity, with confirmed positive moral and volitional qualities, with developed intellectual and physical options and with knowledge and skills for management on human and material resources. The fulfilment of the main goal of the National Military University in Bulgaria has been reflected in the officially adopted training documentation - detailed, agreed with the users and established qualification characteristics, curricula and programs for bachelor's degree in the Professional Field of Military Affairs in the Specialties of the Regulated Profession "Officer for Tactical Level of Management".

In this respect, Doncheva writes on a new way of thinking about training and educating trainees. The learning process is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon. It has different aspects: more generally or more closely psychological, sociological, historical, etc. that are explored by different sciences. Thus, it (the educational process) is generally subject to many scientific fields. Each one, fulfilling its purpose, examines a certain aspect of it, which, in its summary form, constitutes its subject. The very realization of the process of forming personal readiness for life is a matter of technology, algorithm, choice and application of ways and means, a question of methodology. (Doncheva, 2017)

The present scientific work is part of a large study currently being conducted at the National Military University, Bulgaria and which is dedicated to the problems of motivation and subsequent motivational expression of students and cadets in the learning process.

During the basic stage of the study the following were examined:

- Basic groups - cadets who graduated in the academic years 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016, and 2016/2017– total 155 respondents.

- Control group for comparison included first-year cadets who started their training in 2013/2014 – 77 respondents.

- Control group for comparison included first-year civilian students who started their training in 2013/2014 – 88 respondents.

The control groups in the study included first year cadets and students in the 2013/2014 academic year. We believe that the use of such a comparison is relevant and indicative of whether there are differences in the perception of the individual elements studied by the motivation excellence in diverse groups of learners.

292 people studied in the first year of their education in the 2013/2014 academic year at the Land Forces Faculty of the Vasil Levski National Military University. 237 of them are men and 53 of them are women. The control group for the study consists of 77 cadets and 88

students, who occupy respectively 47% and 53% of the total number of respondents, achieving control group's balance. At this stage, a distribution of military specialization / civilian control groups was also carried out. The control group "cadets 1st course of education 2013/2014" is characterized by the following distribution - 77 people, of which 68 men and 9 women. The control group "full-time students 1st course of education 2013/2014" is characterized by the following distribution - 88 people, including 64 men and 24 women. The gender breakdown is common and not surprising given the military organization being explored. It is important to admit, that the first steps in this respect have been taken, as all higher education courses and professional positions for women in the armed forces in Bulgaria have already been opened. (Zhekova, 2013a)

Training in a military higher education institution and the preparation of cadets and students for future leaders in society - comparison and levels of agreement on the 5-point Likert scale

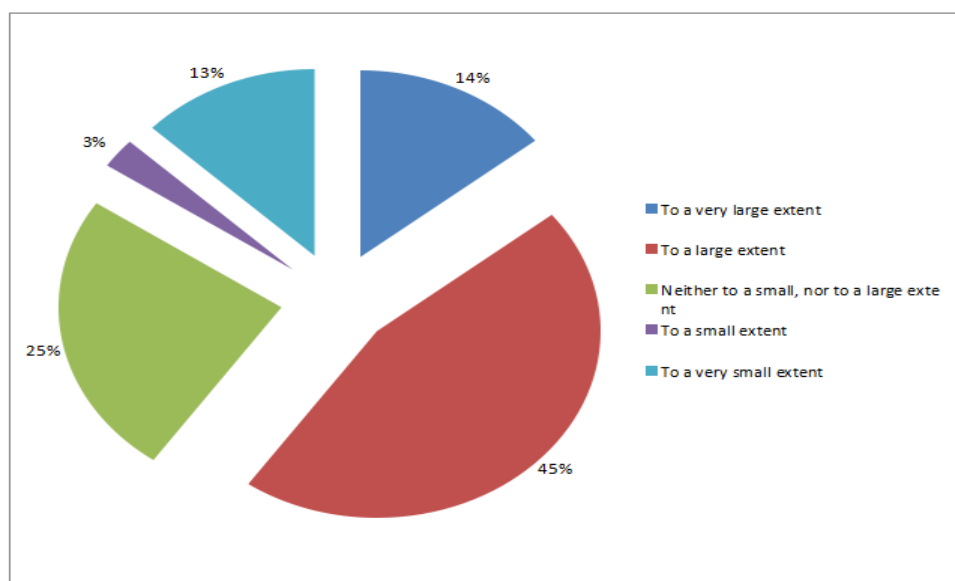


Figure 1. To what extent do you think military training will prepare you for a future military leader? cadets 1st course of education 2013/2014

To the question "To what extent do you think military training will prepare you for a future military/civilian leader?" the answers of the respondents from a control group of 1st course cadets 2013/2014 formed the following distribution - 14% of the respondents responded that military and university education prepares trainees to become future /military/ leaders to a very large extent, 45% say it is into a large extent, which accounts for 59%. Indirectity was found in 25% of respondents. They say the answer "neither to a large extent nor to a small extent". The response "to a small extent" is reported by 3% of the respondents, and the "to a very small extent" is indicated by 13% of respondents. (Fig. 1)

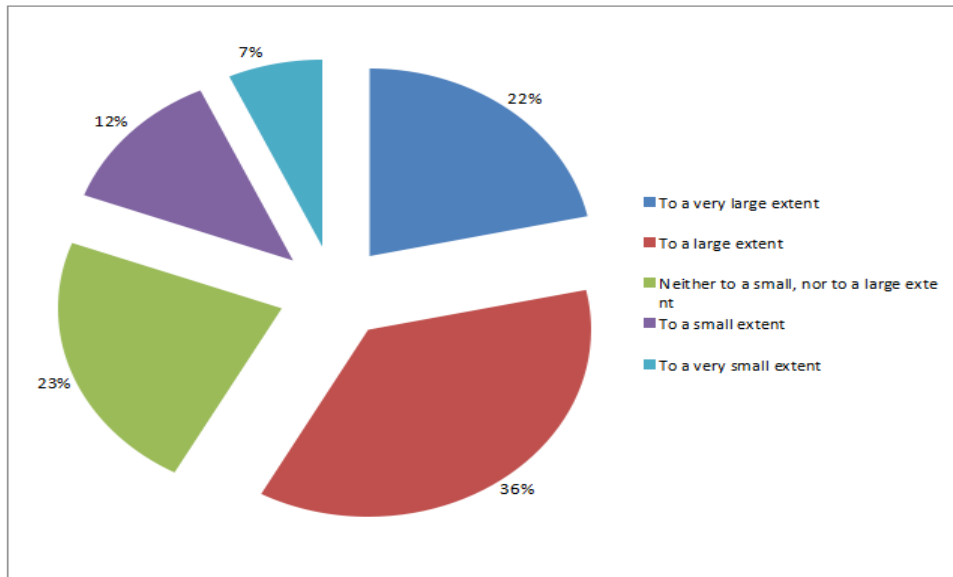


Figure 2. To what extent do you think that university education will prepare you for a future leader? (full-time students 1 course 2013/2014)

Respondents from the first group of respondents had the following distribution: 22% of respondents first responded that military / university education was preparing trainers for future / military / leaders to a very large extent, 36% said it was to a large extent, which formed a total of 58% agreement with the statement. Indirectity was found in 23% of respondents. They say the answer "neither to a large extent nor to a small extent". The answer "to a small extent" is indicated by 12% of the respondents, and the answer "to a very small extent" is indicated by 7% of respondents. (Fig.2)

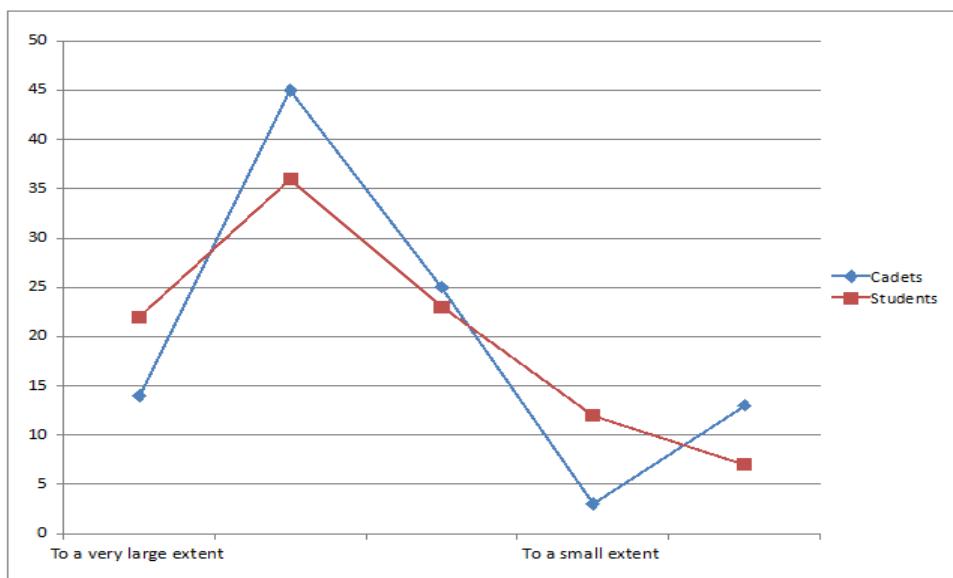


Figure 3. Comparison of levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares learners for future /military/ leader. (control groups first course of education)

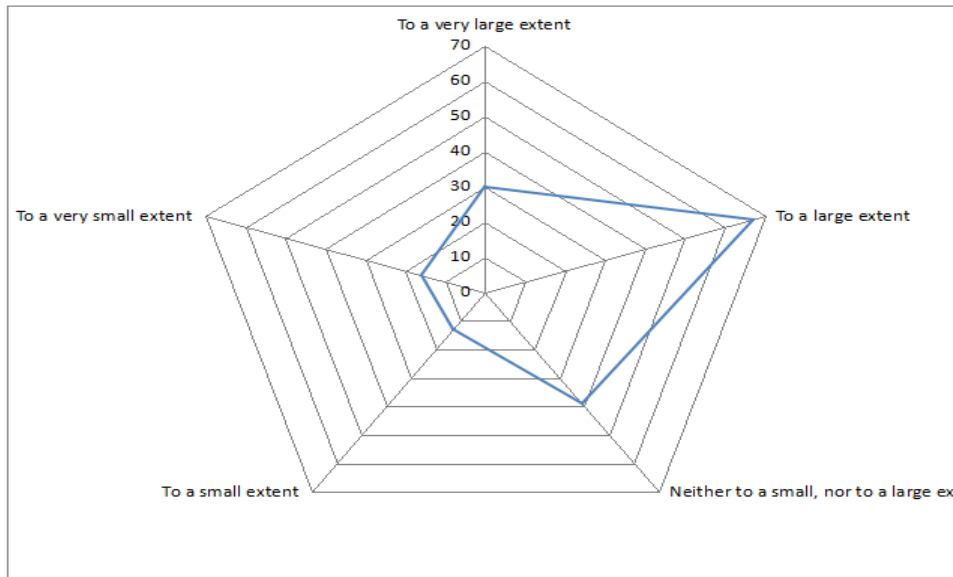


Figure 4. Measuring levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares learners for future /military/ leaders. (common presentation of control groups first course of education)

Examining the overall performance of the two control groups that are in the first year of study during the academic year 2013/2014, we find that respondents are united around the answer "to a large extent" they believe that military / university education prepares learners for future /military/ leaders. Data shows an agreement found in over half of respondents and low rates of disagreement. (Figures 3 and 4)

When comparing the levels of agreement with the assumption that military / university education prepares the students for future /military/ leaders for the two control groups, we do not detect statistically significant differences with respect to the assertions, as the control group of cadets shows 60% agreement and only 15% dissent, and the control group of students shows 58% agreement and 19% disagreement with the statement. (Fig.5)

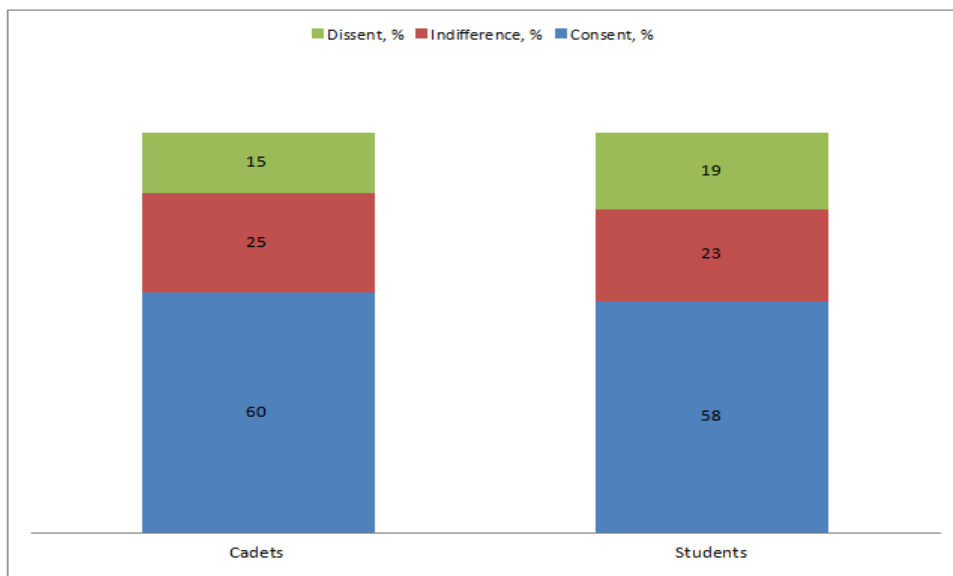


Figure 5. Comparison of levels of agreement with the statement that / military / university education prepares learners for future / military / leaders in control groups first course.

Table 1. Introduce levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares learners for future /military/ leaders, based on a 5-stage Likert's scale for the 2013/2014 academic year

To a very large extent	Largely	Not to a large extent or to a small extent	To a lesser degree	To a very small extent	
14	45	25	3	13	cadets
22	36	23	12	7	students
2	64	23	11	0	Alumni 2013/2014

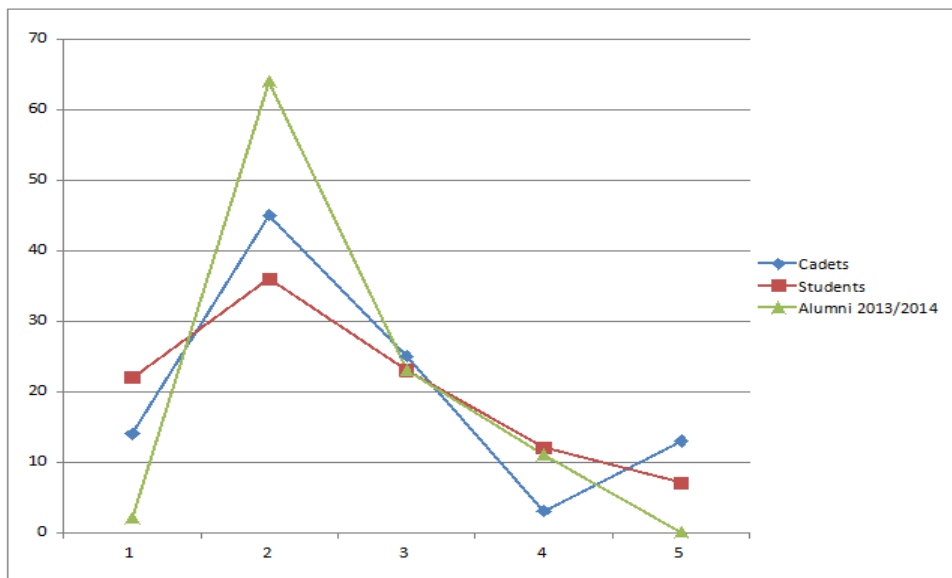


Figure 6. Visual representation of the levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares students for future /military/ leaders in respondents from the 2013/2014 academic year in %

By comparing the levels of agreement with the statement in five-stage Likert's scale between the 2013/2014 class and the control groups, there is a consensus about the answer "neither in large nor in small degree". Among the other responses of respondents surveyed for the academic year 2013/2014, we find the following differences - academic year 2013/2014 academic year showing only 11% dissent and 56% and 19%. (Figs. 6) No statistically significant differences were found, as evidenced by a chi-square analysis in which ChiSquare (4) = 1.788; p-value = 0.775.

Table 2. Presenting the levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares trainees for future /military/ leaders in three-stage Likert's scale.

Respondents	Consent, %	Indifference, %	Dissent %
1 course cadets 2013/2014	60	25	15
1 course students 2013/2014	58	23	19
Alumni cadets 2013/14	66	23	11
Alumni cadets 2014/15	61	9	30
Alumni cadets 2015/16	53	21	26
Alumni cadets 2016/17	32	29	39

In presenting the levels of agreement with the statement in three-stage scale Likert for all respondents of the survey ascertain levels of consent from 53% to 66%, the lowest they are for the 2016/2017 academic year curriculum, similar levels of indifference fluctuating mostly around 23% and differences in levels of disagreement with the claim ranging from 11% to 30% in the graduate classes of the 2014/2015 academic year. (Fig.7)

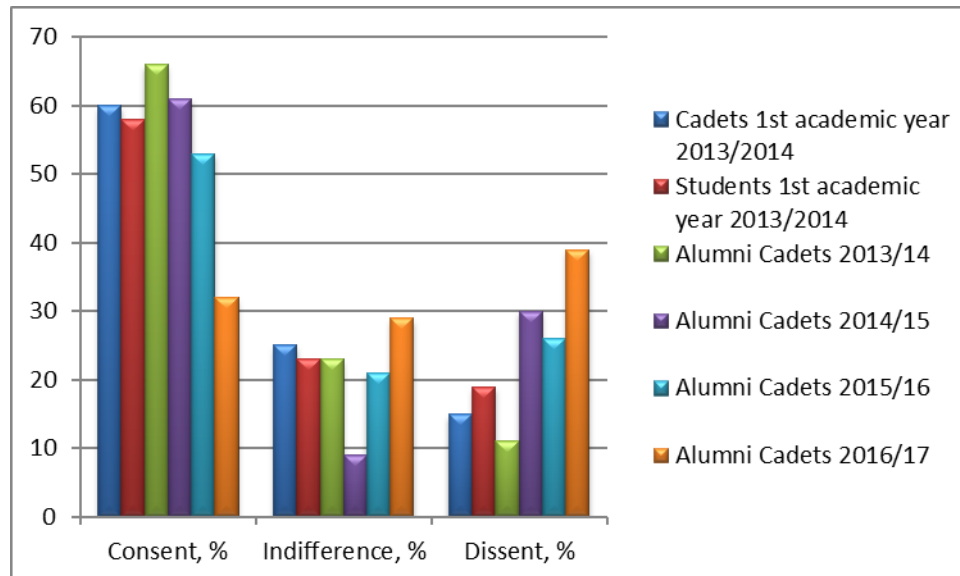


Figure 7. Presentation of the levels of agreement with the statement that / military / training at the university prepares students for future /military/ leaders in three-stage Likert’s scale.

Summary analysis and recommendations

We should point out some results:

Both control groups of students are aware of the immense importance and importance of their training at the National Military University of Bulgaria in their construction as future leaders, as evidenced by interviews of respondents that the military training at the university prepares trainees for future leaders to a very large or large extent.

When comparing the levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education between the 2013/2014 grade and the control groups, there is a similar level of agreement with the claim of all respondents and similar levels of indifference. Among the heterogeneous groups of trainees, statistically significant differences are found, as evidenced by the chi-square analysis. When presenting the levels of agreement with the statement that military / university education prepares the trainees for future / military / Leader leaders on three-step scale for all survey respondents, we find high levels of agreement in all respondent groups, with the exception of the 2015 student class / 2017 academic year. This, on the one hand, is a good attestation of the education and quality of education at the National Military University but it poses questions about future research and corrections in the problematic areas.

Conclusion

“Have you ever thought about a career in the Army? It is more than just a well-paid state job, it is about the honour to serve. It will also teach you how to be more disciplined, to improve your qualification. Moreover, you will be a part of something bigger and more important, you will serve our country, just like me and your grandfather.” This is an example

of a conversation between many fathers and their grown-up children in searching of the “right way” on the path of life. However, what is the reason for choosing that career – “defender of the fatherland”, may say only those who have chosen to service in the Army. In today’s complex and changing security environment, we seek and apply purposefully methods, techniques and means to hire skilled, high motivated and loyal military staff, who is able to realize the organizational goals set. Solving this problem is not very easy because in today's globalized world there are a lot of opportunities for the young people. (Grigorov, Grigor, Svilen Spiridonov, 2018)

A man in all his development strives to be a person who can inspire others and follow him. The theory of the subject no longer speaks of a leader and subordinates, but of a leader and followers, here hiding the key to understanding leadership - that is the purely human ability to inspire the people we manage. Being a leader is a form of spirit, behaviour, cultural expression. It should have nothing to do with "forcing" and "coercing". It is a consequence of the development of her personality acquiring knowledge, experience, skills - how to manage yourself and others by giving them a personal example. Being a leader is evolution - the next step up in human relationships. Leadership is directly related to the need for a person of authority, as one of the needs that needs to be met in order for the person to move on to the satisfaction of others so that he can feel complete, approved, and followed by others.

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