



FACTORS MOTIVATING THE CHOICE OF A MILITARY CAREER IN HUNGARY IN THE 1980s, IN THE LIGHT OF LIFE COURSE INTERVIEWS

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Abstract:

The study deals with this particular form of the career choice decision along the lines of the career motivation of military officers entering the military in the 1980s. In the course of our research, we conducted life course interviews with ten former military officers, whose processing was carried out with the help of the identification of typologizable patterns of behavior in the given life situation. The majority of young people who choose a military career are already attracted to this profession in their elementary school years. However, another part of them only becomes interested in it much later, towards the end of high school. The background of early identification and pattern can often be a pattern carried by family or other close relatives, childhood book or film experiences. In such cases, the young person usually feels an attraction to certain external signs of identity (uniform, weapons).. Before the regime change, however, the social benefit of the career was a particularly important objective factor when choosing a career, as the military career functioned as a social mobility factor with its help.

Keywords: *military career, discipline, motivation,*

1 MILITARY CAREER MOTIVATION

According to research results (Kanyóné, 2002), the factors that make up the attractiveness of a military career are organized around five motivation areas. And these are identification and pattern following, the specifics of the field, the demonstration of strength and competence test, the objective and subjective advantages of the field, and the forced choice (Kanyóné, 2002).

The research of Kanyóné (2002) and Papuláné (2013) highlight that the majority of those who choose a military career are already attracted to this profession when they are in the elementary school. The motivational sources for identifying and following the example of those who make an early career decision are childhood experiences related to the military career, which are fed by film and book experiences, military games, and computer games. These ideas also include the attraction to external signs of identity (uniforms, weapons). In addition to all of this, the identification can also come from the personal example of a relative, a father, or even a professional soldier in the circle of acquaintances (Kanyóné, 2002; Varga, 2011; 2012; Papuláné, 2013).

Factors such as the variety of the course, the operation of military equipment, organization and discipline make up the interesting features of the course.



According to the research results, young people who choose a military career are characterized by a strong motivation to achieve, which is manifested in the fact that order and discipline, clear and unambiguous tasks are among the attractive factors of the military career for them (Kanyóné, 2002; Papuláné, 2013). In the attraction to the military career, the validation of physical strength is of great importance, as well as the interest in military technology. According to this, young people belonging to the active, realistically oriented personality type with "masculine" interests are most attracted to the military career. This is supported by the fact that young people who choose a military career are also motivated by the opportunity to prove their strength. Their motivations include meeting masculine challenges, proving their ability, and fulfilling the role of manager and leader (Kanyóné, 2002).

The subjective benefits associated with the career are mainly the factors that trigger the recognition of others and serve self-realization. Among the students participating in military higher education who are preparing for a professional military career, the factors that make up the attractiveness of the career include "duty to the homeland", "leadership of the people", "an officer's career", as well as a sense of professionalism (Kanyóné, 2002; Papuláné, 2013). Factors that strengthen the individual's self-esteem and self-esteem play an important role in their career motivation. Their attraction to the military career is driven by the need for usefulness, importance, and respect. Fulfilling one's duty to one's country and making sacrifices provide the moral dimension of their career motivation, in which the need for importance, usefulness and respect also appears (Kanyóné, 2002).

In addition to the individual characteristics of the personality, values and interests, social influences also affect the factors influencing the attractiveness of the military career. Among those who choose a military career, it represents an important value that choosing a military career means a secure job and income. The majority of children from families experiencing unemployment were mainly attracted to the field by this. The income conditions of the family had an influence in other aspects as well. Among the attractive factors of the military career for children of low-income families is further education in military higher education, which can be considered free of charge, which is the only opportunity for them to continue higher education and social advancement. The same is supported by Papuláné's 2013 research, about 30% of those preparing to become an officer indicated obtaining a diploma as one of their motivations for choosing a career (Papuláné, 2013). These constitute the motivations that refer to the objective benefits attached to the career (Kanyóné, 2002).

Lászlóné Kanyó's research results also highlight that there has been a change in the importance of career motivation factors in the last decade. While previously the main motivation was an attractive income, access to housing, and other social benefits, at the time of the research, these were the most important motivations for children of disadvantaged, low-income families. For children of families with average or above-average income, self-realization factors are much more important. Secure employment, graduation, and social



advancement play an important role for them as well. All of this means that a significant number of young people do not choose the career of a military officer primarily because of their attraction to the career or their identification with the profession. External social reasons play a role in their decision, which prioritize the objective advantages of the career (Hammil et al., 1995; Kanyóné, 2002). The research conducted in 2013 (N=334 people) also supports this, among those choosing a military career, financial security and a secure job were an important motivation, which was indicated by the majority of respondents in the first place (Papuláné, 2013).

When choosing a career, it is also possible to make a choice out of compulsion. This can also be the result of the indecision typical at the time of choosing a career, the lack of interest, or if the original choice fails due to academic results and the costs of learning and teaching. The social status of the family is a factor that greatly influences the life path of young people. In many cases, children from low-income families choose the military career because it promises a secure career start, employment free from the risk of unemployment, and because further education places less of a financial burden on the family (Kanyóné, 2002).

2 THE CAREER CHOICE MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY SUBJECTS

We believed that in the case of those entering the military career, environmental factors and certain family circumstances may have contributed to the choice of this career. We hypothesized that these effects are even more decisive in the early stages of life. Among the family influences, we prioritized the family's social affiliation - the family's economic situation, parents' education and employment status, the socio-cultural milieu of the place of residence - as well as its connection to the military organization. In the case of applicants to the military college, we also considered the influence of their peers to be important, since in this age group they are young people who are not yet fully mature in terms of independent decision-making. In addition to all this, of course, we did not forget the importance of the pedagogical impact, if we found references to this. Among the characteristics of the attraction to the track, we also find the validation of physical strength and the interest in military technology (Kanyóné, 2002).

The first subject was placed in the Path of Ascension group. In his case, we found that he had several influences in his childhood that could have influenced his later choice of military career. Although the military service of his two brothers was only an indirect experience for him, through the family's life and everyday life, he was able to gain experience of the fact that being in the military entails serious sacrifices and obligations, since he could see his brothers quite rarely at that stage of their lives. The grandfather was also a soldier. Although he could no longer have a personal impact on the subject's life, his example could also have an effect through stories and anecdotes. The uniform, the strict work schedule, moving away from the family, and the little free time associated with military life soon



appeared in his life. He was able to see with his own eyes and feel in his own life how the performance of service within the armed forces works, how many sacrifices must be made for it and what constraints it entails.

The family's social status and simple way of life exerted its influence much more than a counterexample, since 1 found pleasure in much more active forms of activity. At the same time, in addition to all this, the family's positive attitude towards learning may also have contributed to the fact that 1 was able to enter the only free higher education. The positive attitude influenced further education, and the modest financial conditions influenced free-of-charge.

Sports and physical exertion were constantly present in 1's life, since he played athletics in elementary school, orienteering in high school, and later delved into caving. His interest in technology cannot be evaluated only as a result of his high school period, since he was already a member of the school go-kart team at the end of elementary school.

Our interviewee No. 4 belongs to the group of Free career choosers, so it is somewhat difficult to attribute his career choice to family influence. This is especially difficult if we take into account that he did not even decide on a military career when he was in elementary school, but chose this profession after high school, at a higher level. At the same time, the family influence appears in the background of his decision, since thanks to his father's job, he had contact with all of the armed forces. In addition to respecting the uniform, he was also introduced to firearms by his father, who also hunted in his spare time. His technical attitude was also greatly influenced by his father's professionalism, as well as his workshop in the garage of their house, where he himself 4 liked to do DIY. Based on all of this, even if at the time of the interview our subject did not feel that these influences had influenced his decision the most, we see him as having been seriously influenced by these background factors. In any case, after high school studies, he had a feeling that he could pursue a kind of career in the military profession. Since, based on what has been said, no other factors indicate a supportive effect, we attribute this decision to a large extent to the family environment.

We included our subject number 5 in the group of self-directed career choosers. Because of this, a bit of a contradiction emerges in the sense that we blame his career choice on the account of family influence. However, in this situation, this seems to be the most obvious explanation. 5's rebellious, self-righteous character led him to major in agriculture when he opposed his parents' wishes. From there, the path led almost directly to the military, where his brother was already serving, and following him, with an unwanted profession in his pocket, seemed completely obvious. According to all of this, his 5 career choices, even if indirectly, were influenced by his family.

Interest in physical activity and technique also appeared in the life of subject 5, as he excelled in team sports and shooting. In addition, sport shooting also developed his attraction to weapons, which is particularly beneficial in the military field.



Subject 6 was also placed in the Path of Ascension group. His father was a civilian soldier, so it can be said that he was exposed to both the limitations and advantages of armed service at a very early stage of his life. Respect for the uniform and knowledge of the career became a full part of his life, therefore we found that the family milieu, the family pattern, had a serious impact on the military career choice (Kanyóné, 2002; Varga, 2012). Since 6 already cherished military dreams as a child, it can also be said that his attraction to the field already developed at that time (Papuláné, 2013). His need for physical activity further enhanced the development of his openness to the field.

3, 7 and 8 were children of divorced parents. However, in the case of 7, we cannot speak of a decision formed as a result of the traumatic experience, because his parents divorced after the decision was made. At the same time, we cannot talk about whether this background factor had a similar effect on 3 and 8, since 3's decision was based on a sense of failure stemming from a conflict at school. In the case of 8, however, the divorce was indeed perceived as a serious effect, since at the time of the decision he had been living alone with his mother for quite some time and wanted to get rid of this living situation. According to this, in the case of 8, we also find a kind of indirect effect by the fact that he escaped to a remote residential training course from his uncomfortable life situation. The subsidized nature of the training can also be credited as a determining factor in the choice, since 8 and his mother were farming with a low income source. Finally, 8's athletic activities and interest in technical things and weapons should not be overlooked. According to all of this, the choice of a military career can be attributed to the combined effect of family and personal attitude.

In the case of 2, 3, 7, 9 and 10, we found no signs of family influence in terms of career choice. Although in their case we cannot ignore the personal attitude, the five of them chose this profession under the influence of others and other factors.

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