STRESS
IN MILITARY PROFESSION

THEMATIC COLLECTION OF ARTICLES

Belgrade 2018

Contents

PREFACE

The thematic collection „Stress in the Military Profession" is one of the results of work on the Ministry of Defence project, which had as its goal to determine various psychological factors which contribute to adjustment of employees to specific conditions of work in the military profession.

The military profession is considered a very specific and an exceptionally stressful profession. The reasons for this lie primarily in characteristics of the working environment and tasks implemented daily by the members of the military, relating to the three missions of the military: defence of the Republic of Serbia from external armed threats, participation in building and preserving peace in the region and the world, support to civil authorities in combating security threats (Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, 98/2006).

At the time of development of the project concept, at the phase of analysis of theoretic and empirical data about stress in the military profession, the importance of connecting and collaborating with military psychologists of foreign armies became obvious. The result of that collaboration is this thematic collection.

Here, I would like to extend my gratitude to professor **Gideon A.J. Van Dyk, PhD (South Africa)** who helped me establish a connection with a psychologist from Canada **Jacques J. Gouws, PhD (Canada),** who, in turn, introduced me to a professor from India **Col Samir Rawat, PhD**. Thanking to them and our collaboration this thematic collection saw the light of day.

This publication contains Chapters by psychologists from South Africa, Canada, India, Slovenia, Croatia Serbia, Moldavia, Estonia and Great Britain.

The Chapter by professor Marié de Beer and Adelai van Heerden, MA presents the results of psychological testing for the purpose of selection through time, which represents a significant contribution to the military psychology. The authors point out the importance of adequate psychological selection as a predictor of adjustment, education/training and efficiency in the military profession. It also stresses the selection as a factor in prevention of stress and mental disorders in the military.

Merle Parmak indicates the importance of positive motivation for expressing unquestionable capabilities for military service and defines the factors of internal and external motivation for devoted performance of military duties.

The Chapter by **Col professor Samir Rawat, Abhijit P. Deshpande, Gunjan Singh** points to a large number of psychological factors which help adjustment to professional and operational stress, supported by the results of an empirical research.

Gunjan Singh, Samir Rawat, Abhijit P. Deshpande have cadets as their target group and they cover the locus of control as a regulator of the subjective experience of stress. Additionally, the Chapter points to the importance of adequate professional psychological selection and choice of important psychological indicators for potential prospects in the military profession. Locus of control is one of the good indicators of adjustment to professional and operational stress.

The Chapter by the **assistant professor Jelena Minić** promotes the Salutogenic Model of health and indicates the sources of human health in the modern society. The Salutogenic Model is a good theoretical model for a series of prevention and intervention programs. The author elaborates the importance of family as a factor in health resources. The Chapter examines empirically the hypothesis on the effects of the primary family coherence on the development of individual coherence and the development of resources for psycho-physical resistance of an individual. The findings from the Chapter should be considered and applied as an innovation in the selection process in the part of the primary family effects assessment, especially when entering the military profession during selection for military schools and academies.

The Chapter by the **assistant professor Anita Pešić** covers an interesting research topic which has not been investigated in the military environment until now. The quality of emotional partnership and adjustment to the specific characteristics of the military profession are psychological factors that can create a phenomenon of overlapping (of work and private life) or separation (work and privacy separation). During an extended period spent in a military organization, and it is assumed that professional military personnel are working at the military their whole careers, the overlap is inevitable. This circumstance makes this research topic continually relevant and interesting for research.

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Chanchal Agarwal, Abhijit P. Deshpande, Samir Rawat provide a theoretical and empirical explanation of the value of altruism and how important it is for people whose professional choices include the military. The results indicate that the respondents with higher level of demonstrated altruism from war experiences obtain more life experience and a better chance for further growth and development.

In their Chapter the **assistant professor Patricie Blatnik and professor Matej Tušaka** give a detailed explanation of therapeutic techniques for controlling stress and fear which are characteristic for combat situations. The Chapter points out the necessity to better tie together the general knowledge in theory and practice in order to realize the importance of psychological preparation of soldiers for introduction into their first combat situation.

Professors Boris Kordić and Lepa Babić explain the mechanism of trauma in their Chapter. They stress the importance of organizational tasks such as: the quality of professional psychological selection, continuous training of employees about stress and creation of a working environment which helps to overcome stress. Also, the importance of psychological selection that looks at the existence of an attachment figure for candidates - "stability figure" and the assessment of the primary family as a factor in the formation of a stable psychological structure in countering stress. The importance of education as continuous learning how to recognize mental states, harmonizing knowledge about changeability of trauma, and the important organizational task of creating a stable working environment that enables understanding, support, and mental processing of stress.

The Chapter by **Dragana Alargić, PhD and Ksenija Đurić-Atanasievski, PhD** promotes communication skills as a means of overcoming conflict situations and psychological stressors. It is interesting to monitor empirically the application of communication skills and indicators of change in organizational culture within a military organization.

In another joint Chapter Matej Tušak and Patricia Blatnik indicate sports activities as an important factor in overcoming professional and operational stress and prevention of psycho-physical illnesses. It should be pointed out that sports activities represent the basis of physical military training and other military trainings (close order drill, tactical, shooting training...). High level of fitness of soldiers is a precondition for sucessful completion of military training, good health, mental stability, and in case of injuries and wounds, speedy return into active service.

Assistant professor Boris Glavač, PhD and assistant professor Jasmina Nedeljković, **PhD** promote psychological and physical preparation in their Chapter, as well as learning about mechanisms to overcome stress. They point to education processes which must have their continuity: from a student at the military high school to soldiers at professional tasks. An excellent context for connecting knowledge in psychology and physical education.

The psychologist from the Slovenian Armed Forces **Nika Kavšek, MA and professor Darja Kobal-Grum** list and explain the different types of stress (physical, biological, psychological, sociological...) as well as various factors which represent resources or risks for adjustment and overcoming of stress. An empirical research done on respondents from the Slovenian military and the results unequivocally show that there is a demarcation line between professional stress and stress in life in general.

The Chapter by **Lidija Prisac, PhD** is interesting for a number of reasons. The first one is that the topic of psychological experiences of conflict participants is dealt with by other areas of science and not only psychology, for example, military history. The second one is that the Chapter describes psychological experiences of people who are members of the official army, but are not soldiers, psychological experience of war by civilians employed in the military, in this case war reporters and photographers. Similar professional experiences also belong to military psychologists, doctors and other non-military staff in armies all over the world. The Chapter used methodology characteristic for historical sciences through dominant use of the content analysis method. The knowledge provided in this Chapter is important for understanding the psychological consequences on people who are professionally engaged in defence which predominantly has the character of a civil war.

Professor Robert Masten discusses in his Chapter on some of the experiences armed forces have during peacekeeping operations in terms of stress, as well as with regard to their motivation for participating in such operations. Experience suggests that the high levels of stress experienced leading up to and after the mission itself merit special attention. While experience during the actual mission may differ in terms of the level of intensity individual soldiers experience based on their assignment, there are some stressors which are experienced equally, such as separation from family, monotony, etc.

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In his Chapter, **professor Jacques Gouws** demonstrates exceptional knowledge of the specific nature of the military profession and it is a Chapter which gives contribution to the development of theoretic and empirical topics for the subject matter and tasks of military psychology. Examining the factors inseparable from the military profession indicated that military psychology has great importance as the knowledge and experience necessary for all army employees, especially the officers.

Profesor Gideon A. J. Van Dyk gives us a very meaningful and innovative Chapter. He argues that the change in military operations leads to two questions. The question in the first place is, are psychologists in the military aware of challenges in the changing nature of operations? There is a practice in the military that psychologists operate, treat and manage stress and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with a compartment approach like behaviour or cognitive, with the possibility that part of a patient's psychopathology has never been treated? The second question then is what will be the effect of such practice on the mental health and combat readiness levels of our soldiers? This research advocates for a more holistic approach in the management and treatment of stress and PTSD in the military.

The Chapter written by **Ion Xenofontov, PhD** is another text demonstrating the significance of psychological experiences of people who were participants in war conflicts and the need for other disciplines to join in on examining this phenomenon, such as military history. The Chapter describes psychological experiences of former fighters who were not employed in the army but were drafted. The Chapter used methodology characteristic for historical sciences through dominant use of the content analysis method. As the author points out the Chapter contributes to development of war studies, understanding the phenomenon of war and its consequences and motivation for finding peaceful solutions in crisis state situations. The author relates the experiences of combat participants and symptoms which characterize the Afghanistan Syndrome/PTSD but also various other kinds of psychosomatic disorders and affective changes as consequences of participation in war operations. The experiences in this Chapter are important for understanding the wider social and political environment of war operations and relations towards fighters during and after a conflict.

The Chapter written by **Andreja Bubanja, MA** vividly describes the specific character of the working alliance of psychotherapists and army members. It stresses the realistic obstructions of this alliance which are in part the

consequence of military upbringing, and in part due to relation towards their combat tasks.

Editor
Anita Pešić, Assistant Professor
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SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION AS A FACTOR OF ADJUSTMENT AND OVERCOMING OF STRESS IN THE MILITARY PROFESSION

Anita Pešić[*]

***Abstract*:** The issue covered in this chapter relates to the importance of perceiving the subjective experience of acceptance/rejection as a factor of adjustment and overcoming of stress in the military profession. The theoretical basis of the chapter is the Parental acceptance/rejection theory by Ronald P. Rohner (Parental acceptance/rejection theory–PARTheory, Rohner, 1984). The empirical part of the chapter examined the theoretical concept in relation to factors of adjustment and overcoming stress in the military profession. In conducting this esearch the Adjustment to the Military Profession Questionnaire developed for the needs of the research was used (Pešić, 2018), Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire–PARQ (Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire; Rohner, 1984) and the „Dyadic Adjustment Scale"- DAS (Dyadic Adjustment Scale; Spanier, 1976). The research sample consisted of 443 Professional Army Servicemen (PAS) from the Serbian Armed Forces. The results of the correlation analysis show that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the experience of acceptance by parents (mother, father) or an attachment figure and the factor of adjustment and overcoming stress in the military profession, namely in the field of professional success, positive experience of work and co-worker's, good collaboration and communication with both superiors and subordinates. The article aims to stress the importance of family in creating a subjective acceptance/rejection experience as a significant factor in adjusting to the specifics of work in the military profession and overcoming professional stress. The obtained results contribute to innovation in: professional psychological selection as the first factor in prevention of stress, plans and syllabuses of professional military training for employees on professional stress as the second education factor in adjusting and overcoming stress in the military environment. Likewise, the theoretical foundation considered and the empirical results may support the development of a psychological empowerment program for the purpose of improvement of resilience of the military profession members to stress.

***Key words*:** military organization, PAS, acceptance/rejection, adjustment, overcoming, stress.

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INTRODUCTION

The military profession is considered exceptionally stressful. The reason for its stressogenicity lie primarily in the character of tasks implemented by military members on daily basis, which pertain to performing tasks from the 3 missions of the military. The missions and tasks of the Serbian Armed Forces are defined by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in accordance with the Constitution, and are based on the inalienable right of the Republic of Serbia on individual and collective defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and fundamental principles of the international law governing the use of force. The missions of the Serbian Armed Forces are as follows: Defence of the Republic of Serbia from external armed threats; Participation in building and preserving peace in the region and the world; Support to civil authorities in combating security threats (Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, 98/2006).

The military profession requires more from an employee than other professions, it is demanding due to the specific internal relations of subordination and single seniority, adherence to a strict hierarchy and the obligation to execute orders, sanctioning the refusal of orders, military discipline, adherence to the rules of international war and humanitarian law (Gostović, 2009). The synonyms to the military profession are a profession without working hours, changes in working environment, risk to life and health, also honourable, highly responsible, hierarchically organized. The specifics of the military profession reflect in the increased psychophysical strain at workplace, frequent and long absence away from families, unconditional honouring of the military organization hierarchy, readiness for transfer for the needs of the service, limitation of the freedom to express one's own opinion, to participate in political and trade union organizations (Ćirić et al. 2009). The specifics of the military profession also reflect in specific education, process of health and psychological selection, separation from the primary family, mostly at the age of 14, whereby the family home is replaced by a boarding school where military rules and regulations have to be observed.

The listed specifics of the military profession imminently lead to socio-psychological limitations which require continuous adjustment so as not to become a constant cause of continuous stress and psychosomatic reactions. Deliberations on what are the stressors and what are the consequences of the military environment stressor effects are numerous. What is common is that stress is an everyday companion of employees in the military environment. Stress can be defined as life experience accompanied by biochemical, physiological and cognitive changes and behavioural changes in a person's

effort to adjust to the situation in which their vital values are threatened or in an effort to „neutralize" the consequences caused by a traumatic event (Kostić, 2000, Pajević, Kasagić 2001) On the other hand, adjustment is the creation of possibilities to harmonize the needs of a personality and its behaviour with the possibilities and requirements from the environmnt. This is most often achieved by adjusting to certain conditions through change of patterns and structure of behaviour in accordance with the requirements of the environment or the broader community. Adjusting of PAS to all specifics of the military environment (way of life, organization of work, series of limitations, etc.) is certainly a specific process, especially in relation to other work environments (Šaranović, Suša, Đorđević, 2016).

It might be said that any change in the life of an individual requires a new adjustment, whether to a new living (physical) or working (social) environment. The very process of adjustment to new life and work conditions cannot be temporally limited to a certain number of days, but it duration can vary and it depends on the complexity of the environment and its requirements, but also the characteristics and specifics of each individual, which relates to adjustment in the military as well (Šaranović, Suša, Đorđević, 2016).

Various psychological factors are indicators of adequate adjustment to the military environment and overcoming of stress in the military profession: the achieved level of education, quality of military training, physical fitness, cohesion of the military environment, relations with superiors and subordinates.

THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE RESEARCH – THEORY OF PARENTAL ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION BY RONALD P. ROHNER

This article takes the family as a factor assisting in adjustment and overcoming stress in the military profession. The influence of the family of origin is examined, and its task of transforming an individual from a biological entity into a social being which exhibits socially acceptable patterns of behaviour. In the family of origin is taught: language and communication skills are learned, patterns of behaviour, working habits, lifestyles and interests are developed. All these factors are resources but they also represent the risks for adjusting and overcoming stress. The influence of the quality of the emotional partnership and the influence of the PAS family in the mature age on the ability to adjust and overcome the stress in the military environment were also considered.

The theoretical starting point of this work is the theory of Ronald P. Rohner (Parental acceptance/rejection theory-PARTheory, Rohner, 1984), which is basically a theory of socialization, attempting to explain and predict the main causes, consequences and correlates of acceptance/rejection by the attachment figure on the behavioural, cognitive and emotional development of a child, and on functionality and performance in adulthood. The dimensions of parents' warmth discussed in the theory are related to the quality of the affective relationship between parents and children, i.e. the physical and verbal behaviour that parents use as an expression of their feelings. One end of the continuum is labelled as acceptance and refers to warmth, attention, care, concern, upbringing, the love that parents feel and show to their children. The other end of the continuum is characterized by rejection which refers to absence or lack of feelings and behaviours associated with acceptance accompanied by various damaging psychological and physical behaviours (Rohner, Khaleque, Cournoyer, 2003).

According to PART Theory attachment figures are all persons a child or an adult maintains a long-term emotional relationship with, i.e. the persons who are emotionally important and irreplaceable by another (Ainsworth, 1989, Bowlby, 1982, Colin, 1996, according to: Rohner, Khaleque, Cournoyer, 2003).

If the needs of an adult for a positive response from the attachment figure are not adequately met, specific emotional reactions and behaviours occur: feelings of anger, restlessness, and other destructive emotions that lead to an emotional shutting down of the person in order to protect against new unpleasant experiences. Also, defensive behaviour or counter-rejection can occur, where the rejected person rejects his rejectors, which may result in a series of interpersonal conflicts. The rejected often construct mental representations of emotional connections as unpredictable, uncertain, untrustworthy. Negative feelings resulting from the decline in self-esteem and self-sufficiency due to perceived rejection reduce the capacity to overcome stress. This is why the rejected persons often feel upset, emotionally unstable (Rohner, Khaleque, Cournoyer, 2003).

The theory can be divided into three subtheories. The personality subtheory strives to explain what happens to children who perceive being loved/not being loved by their parents, and what kind of adults they develop into. Given the topic of the research, the family context as a factor of adjustment and overcoming of stress in the military profession, this part of theory will be dominant in the chapter. The subtheory of confronting (overcoming) deals with the topic of how some rejected people (children/adults) successfully face the effects of daily rejection, without any negative effects on mental health. The prominent ways are: social-situational factors (the existence of an alternative warm and supportive person, spending as little time as possible with the person who rejects, thus reducing the effects

of the negative behaviour of the rejecting figure of attachment); and certain ways of thinking that allow a person to deal with difficulties: depersonalization - the person does not attribute the rejection to himself but to the situation which the unfriendly attachment figure is in, a sense of individuality - a person's consciousness of their personal uniqueness, distinctiveness, diversity from others; self-determination - represents the degree of belief of the rejected person that they have an impact on their own life. (Rohner, Khaleque, Cournoyer, 2003).

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The importance of the sense of acceptance from the figure of attachment or secure attachment (at the young age by the parents, at the mature age by the emotional partner), is proven by the results of the empirical research.

Children, later adults, raised in a warm family environment with less strict demands and prohibitions show more independence in work, more originality and creativity, cooperation, higher level of social maturity, friendly feelings towards other people, less hostility and dissatisfaction and less insecurity (Watson, G., 1957, according to: Šaula, 1989); tend to have a stronger sense of professional identity and are more independent in making career decisions (Blustein, 1995).

Professional maturity is positively related to the Secure Pattern of Family Affective Attachment. Students with a higher degree of professional maturity are more likely to be Securely attached. Professional maturity is negatively related to Occupied and Rejecting pattern of family attachment. This connection is in accordance with the theory of affective attachment, according to which children with a secure attachment pattern are exploring the world around them more and are better in establishing relationships with people. Consequently, they are exploring the work world more, and? they are better informed about the procedures for achieving career goals. All this, according to Super's theory, classifies them in the category with a higher degree of professional maturity. (Đorđević, 2014).

Parents are the first figures of authority, which set a model (matrix) for what people expect in relationships with authority. They also state that internal models of authority, as well as internal models of affective attachment (Bowlby, 1988, according to: Pistole, 2003), are initiated by occurrence of anxiety. When people experience insecurity or stress in a work situation, their internal models are activated, prompting them to reject or establish an affective relationship until they feel safe again. A high sum of points on an anxiety/ambivalence scale significantly correlates with the mentioned anxiety

related to work and concern regarding relationships at work; while a high sum of points on the avoiding scale is in correlation with general dissatisfaction with work, arguments with colleagues, concern about working hours and difficulties in social life and relationships at home. (Hardy&Barkham,1994). The results show that affective attachment pattern correlates with effort made at work, job satisfaction, tendency toward excessive commitment and anxiety in performing duties (Davila, J. Burge, D., & Hammen, C. 1997).

When talking about managers, a supportive mentor (supervisor, employer) can help an employee develop self-esteem and self-confidence, which will lead to maintaining a balanced, satisfactory working atmosphere and less stressful interpersonal relationships. Applying the theory of attachment in examination of social support, it has been shown that social support, more than instrumental or technical support, results in a higher level of satisfaction at work, and a lower degree of stress (Nelson& Quick,1991, according to: Pistole, 2003).

Also, the research results analysis shows that the higher degree of emotional quality of partnerships is statistically significantly connected to quantitative estimates of work success (official marks) and to almost all elements of subjective work success evaluation - self-assessment of success, interaction with subordinates and superiors (Pešić, 2017).

The feeling of abandonment produces a type of stress and anxiety which initiates searching for security and prevents risk taking (Kahn,1996, according to: Pistole, 2003).

Behavioural and attachment components in adults are similar to those observed in early age. Adults also demonstrate: desire for proximity of the attachment figure when under stress; increased pleasure in its presence; anxiety when that person is inaccessible and pleasure and joy when she reappears (Shaver 1988; Weiss 1982, 1984, according to: Pistole, 2003).

The employees who are securely attached will have less conflict in communication than those who are insecurely attached. There were attempts to examine compatibility of attachment styles and communication strategies in the relationship between superiors and subordinates. Bowlby 1989; Weiss 1994, according to: Pistole, 2003).

A family climate characterized by a weak affective exchange between the child and the parents combined with the strict control of the child's behaviour, with the demand that the rules be respected without exception, develops a withdrawal in social communication in the child, surrendering to the influence of the "stronger ones", avoiding taking responsibility and disappearing in the mass (Majstorović et al., 1999).

Research has shown that children, thanks to parental support, in adulthood develop the skills necessary for success in life: health or lack of

psychosomatic problems, good communication with the environment and people, adjusting to a given situation and finding solutions, flexibility, work motivation and satisfaction, emotional satisfaction, friendship, life happiness. If parents do not satisfy the child's needs, they create aggressive, emotionally cold people, with low self-esteem and emotionally unstable, exhibiting problematic behaviour, rebellious, depressive, delinquent and generally unsuccessful people. Research by domestic authors shows that personality structures characterized by low self-control, low cooperation, protection and research, and high extraversion and aggressiveness and orientation determines internet addiction, but these personality traits are a potential psychological basis for other forms of addiction as well (Đorđević, Kostić, Milojević, 2011). That is, the same research shows that internet addicts drink, smoke and experiment with psychoactive substances (PS) more than those who spend less time online. This information is important for the military environment because the abuse of alcohol, cigarettes and PS are forms of misconduct in the military. These results justify the research of parents' relationship with children in the military profession selection process.

METHODOLOGY

The military environment, in its entirety, with a series of its specifics, certainly represents a complex living and working environment. In this sense, in military psychological literature it is defined that the adaptation of an individual depends on multiple factors that can be grouped together as follows: 1) the severity of the conditions of military life and training - measured by professional success; 2) characteristics of personality (andragogical and psychological). In addition to the aforementioned factors, the quality of social relations has a significant impact - the relationship with superiors and subordinates, as well as the system of entire military organization (Šaranović, Suša, Đorđević, 2016).

Having in mind the specifics of the military environment, the problem of research is to determine whether and how the family context contributes to the adjustment and overcoming of professional stress. By family context, we mean the primary family in the early period and the emotional partnership in the mature period of life.

The aim is to determine whether there is a statistically significant link between the subjective perception of acceptance/rejection from figures of affection (parents, emotional partner) and elements of adjustment to stress in the military profession.

The independent variables are: dimensions of parental acceptance/rejection according to PART theory (dimensions: parental

warmth/acceptance, aggression/hostility, indifference/neglect, undifferentiated rejection) and marital quality dimensions - dimension of satisfaction in the dyadic partnership, cohesion of the partnership - getting along in the dyadic partnership, expressing feelings.

The dependent variables are professional elements of adjustment to stress in the military profession (Pajević, D., Kostić, P., Maravić, G., 1988): performance evaluation as an indicator (of quality and usefulness of work, professional efficiency, productivity, precision and timeliness in performing tasks, independence and entrepreneurship, self-initiative and creativity); self-evaluation of success, andragogic elements (degree of education and average grade); adjustment to the military environment through quality of interpersonal relation with superiors and subordinates.

Instruments: Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire – PARQ (eng. Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire; R. P. Rohner, 1984), „Dyadic adjustment" Scale - DAS (Eng. Dyadic Adjustment Scale; Spanier, 1976), Adjustment to the Military Profession Questionnaire (Pešić, 2018) is a self-evaluation instrument constructed for the needs of this research.

The basic hypothesis is that there is a significant correlation between parental acceptance/rejection and the emotional quality of partner relations with elements of adjustment to the specificities of the military profession. In other words, the respondents who regard the relationship with their parents and their emotional partner as accepting demonstrate higher level of adjustment to the specifics of the military profession and environment, which is also shown through higher professional results and functional interpersonal relationships.

The research sample was purposive and consisted up of 443 professional army servicemen (PAS) employed at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Serbian Armed Forces (SAF).

Basic information on examined characteristics were given through the indicators of central tendency (arithmetic mean (AM), standard deviation (SD)). Statistics was used – namely Correlation analysis (Spearman's correlation coefficient) to determine relations between variables included in the research.

RESEARCH RESULTS

We assumed that the military specific organizational demands can be easily overcome by employees with accepting relationship with their parents. Such employees have a base that enables the belief in personal qualities, abilities and knowledge, self-esteem, emotional stability, self-confidence at work, readiness to easily recognize and adapt to new organizational changes, experience the working environment as a positive place for further

professional development, evaluation of associates primarily as well-meaning, accessible and collaborative, which enables better communication and work functionality. These are all elements of successful adaptation to the military environment and indicators of overcoming the stress of the military profession.

Interpretation of the obtained results has its limitations that stem from the characteristics of the sample. By analysing the results, we interpret parenting styles in the families of origin of the now adult people of different educational background in the military profession. We link their assessment of childhood experiences and the current success of children/adults who have already achieved high educational results - graduated from university, with a smaller percentage in the sample who finished postgraduate studies. Also, we learn about the quality of emotional relationships by examining only one, most commonly the male partner.

The respondents state that their parents showed acceptance, warmth, love, care, concern, support, understanding, respect, which was evident from the results achieved by their children.

The aim of the research is to recognize the indicators (or predictors for the needs of the selection process) of adjustment to the specifics of the military profession in the category of highly educated employees in the military profession from the point of view of family context.

In the sample, the highest marks are given to parenting acts of mothers and fathers (AM: M-16,26; F-15,35) where respondents perceived their parents as warm and accepting (Table 1 and 2). Another subscale with higher empirical values, ie close to the theoretical maximum is Aggressiveness/Hostility subscale.

Table 1. Perception of acceptance/rejection from mother (complete sample)

Subscales PARQ	number of items	theoretical range	empirical range	AM	SD
WAR	5	5-20	5-20	**16,26**	3,35
AGR	7	7-28	7-27	**9,35**	2,49
IND	6	6-24	6-21	8,10	2,94
UND	6	6-24	6-22	7,06	1,72
complex rejection	19	19-76	19-65	24,00	5,34

WAR- parental warmth/affection, AGR- parental hostility/aggression,
IND- parental indifference/neglect, UND – parental undifferentiated rejection

Table 2. Perception of acceptance/rejection from father (complete sample)

Subscales PARQ	number of items	theoretical range	empirical range	AM	SD
WAR	5	5-20	5-20	**15,35**	3,45
AGR	7	7-28	7-26	**9,33**	2,46
IND	6	6-24	6-23	8,76	3,15
UND	6	6-24	6-22	7,20	1,96
complex rejection	19	19-76	19-69	24,74	6,18

WAR- parental warmth/affection, AGR- parental hostility/aggression,
IND- parental indifference/neglect, UND – parental undifferentiated rejection

By analysing the influence of parental acceptance/rejection to elements of adjustment to the specifics of the military profession (Table 3) we see that the respondents who gave high marks for experience of acceptance by their parents have higher scores in their performance review: mother (r = .784, p<0,01), father (r = .738, p<0,01).

__Higher performance review__ **was found in the respondents who see their mothers as warm and who develop the feeling of acceptance, i.e. are less hostile.** Performance review is a collective measure of various indicators of professional adjustment and performance: the realization of tasks, respect of standards and norms, an indicator of the relation of an officer to the rights of subordinates, their peers and superiors, respecting regulations and procedures, human rights, ethical norms, accountability, indicators of commitment to work, care for staff security and asset maintenance, as well as reliability in realization of tasks, independence, resourcefulness, physical abilities. The obtained results are in accordance with the theoretical basis of the research. The perception of parental acceptance influences the development of personality: friendship, the existence of an emotional response, emotional warmth, self-respect, self-sufficiency, a positive view of the world. These are elements of social cognition and mental representations, i.e. the concept of belief in oneself and others, the positive perception of the world based on past experiences. The results of the research support the PARQ theory personality subtheories, the relationship with the mother and the experience of oneself and the world, as well as the quality of relationships that are established with the world and the working environment (Rohner, 2004).

The respondents who highly evaluated the **acceptance by the mother**, evaluated highly their professional success (r =.249, p<0,01), familiarity with the rules and regulations of the military profession (r =.143, p<0,01), sense of respect by their superior (r =.135, p<0,01), helping their subordinates to solve

professional tasks (r =.158, p<0,01), private problems (r =.215, p<0,01), transfer of knowledge and professional experience (r =.171, p<0,01).

Table 3. Correlation between acceptance/rejection from the mother and indicators of adjustment in the military profession

Parenting style of the mother	Subjective criteria of adjustment – self-evaluation												
	Success	Knowing rules and regulations	Superior accepts my proposals	Superior makes well intentioned corrections of my opinions	Superior allows professional training and education	Superior understands me and helps me with problems which influence my work	I respect opinions of my subordinates	I make well intentioned corrections of my subordinates' opinions	I allow/support further education and training of my subordinates	I am flexible in communication with my subordinates	I help my subordinates in executing tasks	I transfer my knowledge to my subordinates	I help my subordinates in resolving their private problems
Acceptance r =	**.249**	**.143**	**.135**	.066	.029	.031	.061	.025	.094	.003	**.158**	**.171**	**.215**
p=	**.000**	**.003**	**.005**	.169	.546	.516	.218	.611	.058	.952	**.001**	**.000**	**.000**
Hostility r =	-.058	-.074	**-.129**	**-.132**	**-.100**	**-.139**	-.089	**-.109**	**-.125**	**-.133**	-.030	-.023	-.012
p=	.235	.122	**.007**	**.006**	**.038**	**.004**	.072	**.027**	**.012**	**.007**	.552	.642	.811
Neglect r =	**-.255**	**-.123**	**-.123**	-.021	.069	.038	**-.119**	.044	.027	.019	**-.159**	**-.155**	**-.219**
p=	**.000**	**.011**	**.011**	.659	.153	.433	**.016**	.377	.586	.699	**.001**	**.002**	**.000**
Rejection r =	**-.108**	-.032	**-.142**	-.092	-.002	-.058	**.161**	**.128**	**.100**	-.062	**-.118**	-.070	-.012
p=	**.029**	.515	**.004**	.063	.967	.243	**.001**	**.012**	**.050**	.220	**.020**	.169	.809
Complex rejection r =	**-.140**	-.065	**-.134**	-.085	-.032	-.073	**.117**	**.117**	-.027	-.069	-.051	-.072	-.021
p=	**.005**	.188	**.007**	.089	.516	.142	**.023**	**.022**	.599	.179	.322	.161	.681

Respondents who have the experience of acceptance from their mother have a more positive image of themselves and their performance. The result is consistent with theoretical considerations. According to PART theory, based on experiences from the past, children with a sense of acceptance will have an image of themselves as worthy of love and attention, about the world as a safe place. They will develop into self-confident people, open to communication and cooperation with others, interested in the world in which they live, capable of

solving life's problems, capable of accepting other people and relations with them. Relationships and relations in a friendly world and society are more positive, so the individual himself has a high appreciation of both the world and his own place in and contribution to such a world (Rohner, 2004).

Likewise, the persons who see their mother as warm and accepting, **demonstrated better knowledge of *rules and regulations of the military profession*,** unburdened by relationship with their mother, they are better at exploring the world around them, are more curious, and therefore have more varied knowledge they use in their professional and private life (Rohner, 2004).

The set of items relating to *self-evaluation of the quality of relations respondents have with their superiors* shows that there is statistically a very significant positive correlation of the mother's acceptance estimate and the estimate of respect by a respondent's superior. There is a statistically negative correlation between the estimate of affection and benevolence of the superior with the feeling of Hostility and Rejection from the mother. The estimate of acceptance brought from the family experience was proven to influence the relations with the outside world and work environment. Co-workers are seen positively and favourably, which makes collaboration and solving professional tasks and problems easier.

The set of items relating to *self-evaluation of the quality of relations respondents have with their subordinates* shows that there is statistically a very significant positive correlation of the acceptance and the estimate of helping the subordinates in solving professional tasks and private problems, as well as in transfer of knowledge and professional experience. Assessment of the acceptance and care of the mother has created a personal attitude on the need to help and care for other people (a partner, friends, professional associates). There is statistically very significant and very weak negative correlation between the experience of Neglect, Rejection and Complex Rejection. These results are in favour of positive relations between a mother and a child, a relationship that is full of respect and tolerance, which as such builds a self-confident, curious person, who easily and successfully establishes relationships, a person with great predispositions to adjust and overcome professional stress.

The respondents who evaluated father's acceptance as high (Table 4), achieve good performance review ($r = .738$, $p < 0,01$). Also, the respondents who evaluated father's acceptance as high had a high self-evaluation of: professional success ($r = .217$, $p < 0,01$), knowledge of rules and regulations of the military profession ($r = .126$, $p < 0,01$), relation with subordinates based on transfer of knowledge and experience ($r = .109$, $p < 0,05$), resolving of work ($r = .099$, $p < 0,05$) and private problems ($r = .194$, $p < 0,01$).

Table 4. Correlation between acceptance/rejection from the father and indicators of adjustment in the military profession

Parenting style of the father	Subjective criteria of adjustment – self-evaluation												
	Success	Knowing rules and regulations	Superior accepts my proposals	Superior makes well intentioned corrections of my opinions	Superior allows professional training and education	Superior understands me and helps me with problems which influence my work	I respect opinions of my subordinates	I make well intentioned corrections of my subordinates' opinions	I allow/support further education and training of my subordinates	I am flexible in communication with my subordinates	I help my subordinates in executing tasks	I transfer my knowledge to my subordinates	I help my subordinates in resolving their private problems
Acceptance r =	.217	.126	.089	.038	.018	.019	.074	.074	.051	-.005	.099	.109	.194
p=	**.000**	**.009**	.069	.438	.717	.704	.142	.142	.308	.914	**.048**	**.029**	**.000**
Hostility r =	-.232	-.039	-.118	-.087	-.024	-.039	-.162	-.162	-.075	-.087	-.170	-.108	-.219
p=	**.000**	.430	**.016**	.076	.625	.430	**.001**	**.001**	.138	.084	**.001**	**.032**	.000
Neglect r =	-.203	-.096	-.122	-.080	.017	-.029	-.080	-.080	-.060	-.057	-.129	-.128	-.230
p=	**.000**	**.048**	**.012**	.101	.733	.557	.111	.111	.238	.260	**.010**	**.010**	**.000**
Rejection r =	-.164	-.023	-.147	-.108	-.029	-.055	-.127	-.127	-.083	-.064	-.071	-.091	-.053
p=	**.001**	.652	**.003**	.030	.563	.271	**.013**	**.013**	.108	.214	.167	.076	.303
Complex rejection r =	-.146	-.012	-.108	-.117	-.058	-.049	-.158	-.158	-.118	-.110	-.114	-.081	-.120
p=	**.004**	.815	**.032**	.020	.251	.329	**.002**	**.002**	.023	**.033**	**.027**	.117	.020

The quality of relationship with father proved to be statistically very significant in relation to experience of oneself and one's adjustment in the military environment.

The result on the sense of father's Acceptance and element of adjustment to specifics of the military profession indicates the importance of identifying with the father and the need to confirm, through high work results (performance review), the strength and power that is initially perceived and seen in the father's figure. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between the feeling of parental acceptance (mother, father) and educational and professional success, a

positive experience of work and people, good cooperation and communication, both with superiors and with subordinates.

The results of our research are consistent with theories and research where parental warmth, support, and acceptance have proven to be beneficial to good development results such as: communication skills, expressing thoughts and feelings, success, independence, motivation, curiosity (Rohner, 2004).

Children raised in a warm family environment, with less strict demands and prohibitions, show more independence, originality and creativity than children whose parents are also warm, but very restrictive. These children also show greater co-operability, social maturity and friendly feelings towards others, and less hostility, insecurity and dissatisfaction than children whose parents are very restrictive. (Watson, G., 1957, according to Šaula, 1989).

A record of cross-cultural research indicates that children and young people who have experienced a rejection type of relationship with their parents, regardless of differences in culture, language, gender, exhibit specific forms of poor psychological adaptation: problems in controlling hostility, aggression and passive aggression, dependence or defensive independence, violated self-esteem, an impaired sense of competence, emotional blockade, emotional instability, a negative view of the world (Rohner, 2004). Parents at the same time are the first and most important models of identification for their children. The behaviour of parents toward children also determines the behaviour of the child, while in adulthood it influences the perception of oneself, the world around him, attitudes and opinions about the world he lives in.

Research has shown that children across all cultures have a great desire for parental love and support which helps children, later adults, to develop the skills necessary for success in life: health or lack of psychosomatic problems, good communication with the environment and people, adjusting to the situation and finding solutions, flexibility, work motivation and satisfaction, emotional satisfaction, friendship, life happiness. If parents do not meet the child's needs, they create aggressive, emotionally cold people with low self-esteem who are emotionally unstable, exhibit problematic behaviour, are rebellious, depressive, delinquent and generally become unsuccessful people. The results of our research point to the great importance of the **sense of parental acceptance for adjustment to the specifics of the military profession; for achieving professional results, creating good interpersonal relationships in the working environment as a factor in overcoming professional stress**.

The quality of an emotional partnership affects the stability of the partnership, but also the physical and psychological health of emotional partners. Also, physical and psychological health are the primary prerequisites for working ability, adjustment to the military profession and factors of overcoming professional stress.

Many elements of work activity and workload affect processes and compliance of partner relations, altering the psychological and physical health of partners and behaviour within the partnership. Stress can be triggered by a real external event, but it may also be a subjective stress, an experience of incompatibility or dissatisfaction with work and life. It is important to distinguish the long-term effects of work stress and short-term change in stressors. Short-term work stress is most often caused by work overload, a conflict of work and partner roles, increased tension in the partner relationship, reduced quality and satisfaction with partner relationship. Transfer of dissatisfaction can be temporary, as a response to an increased burden that manifests itself most often by withdrawal of partners, irritability, impatience, and use of power. (Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, Crouter, 2001).

Partner support proved to be essential in raising the individual's resistance to stress, somatization and occurrence of various forms of addiction diseases (Grzywacz, Marks, 2000б).

We have assumed that the emotional quality of partner relations is closely related to adjusting to the specific nature of the military profession. Considering that one of the specifics is frequent absence of the emotional partner from home that has an impact on the quality of emotional partnership. The quality of emotional partnerships is monitored through the following dimensions: cohesiveness of partnership, satisfaction in the partnership, affection in a partner dyad, expressing feelings.

The results of the importance of the quality of emotional partnerships on adjusting to the specifics of the military profession (Table 5) show that the respondents who rated the cohesiveness of partner relationships with higher grades also rated their professional performance ($r = .175$, $p < 0.01$), knowledge of the rules of service ($r = .182$, $p < 0.01$), good professional relationships with subordinates according to*: respecting opinions* ($r = .137$, $p < 0,01$), ***well-intentioned correction*** ($r = .114$, $p < 0,01$), ***enabling and allowing training and education*** ($r = .140$, $p < 0,01$), ***flexibility in communication*** ($r = .110$, $p < 0,01$), ***help in solving professional problems*** ($r = .182$, $p < 0,01$), ***transfer of knowledge*** ($r = .154$, $p < 0,01$), ***help with resolving private problems*** ($r = .165$, $p < 0,01$. On the other hand, the respondents who evaluated the cohesion of partner relations as low, gave the same evaluation about their personal professional success, knowledge of rules of service and relations with subordinates.

Table 5. Correlation between the emotional quality of partner relations and indicators of adjustment to the military profession

Emotional quality of partner relations	Subjective criteria of adjustment – self-evaluation												
	Success	Knowing rules and regulations	Superior accepts my proposals	Superior makes well intentioned corrections of my opinions	Superior allows professional training and education	Superior understands me and helps me with problems which influence my work	I respect opinions of my subordinates	I make well intentioned corrections of my subordinates' opinions	I allow/support further education and training of my subordinates	I am flexible in communication with my subordinates	I help my subordinates in executing tasks	I transfer my knowledge to my subordinates	I help my subordinates in resolving their private problems
Dyadic relationship satisfaction r =	-.108	-.063	-.052	-.084	-.084	-.076	-.071	-.107	-.089	-.009	-.028	-.096	.004
p=	**.039**	.232	.323	.109	.110	.149	.190	.046	.098	.869	.607	.075	.934
Cohesion of partner relation r =	.175	.182	.087	.080	.024	.017	.137	.114	.140	.110	.182	.154	.165
p=	**.000**	**.000**	.076	.104	.632	.730	**.006**	**.023**	**.005**	**.029**	**.000**	**.002**	**.001**
Getting along in dyadic partnership r =	.099	.108	.173	.121	.146	.165	.164	.214	.213	.145	.107	.145	.069
p=	**.044**	**.026**	**.000**	**.013**	**.003**	**.001**	**.001**	**.000**	**.000**	**.004**	**.033**	**.004**	.169
Expression of feelings r =	-.070	.004	.057	.108	.157	.158	.113	.169	.162	.129	.078	.045	-.038
p=	.156	.927	.245	**.026**	**.001**	**.001**	**.024**	**.001**	**.001**	**.010**	.119	.374	.445
Total results of respondents r =	.111	.167	.140	.107	.089	.121	.187	.205	.209	.178	.177	.174	.118
p=	**.036**	**.001**	**.008**	.043	.092	**.022**	**.001**	**.000**	**.000**	**.001**	**.001**	**.001**	**.029**

The respondents who gave higher values to items relating to **cohesion of dyadic partnership, also have better performance review results** (r =.333,

p<0,05).). The respondents who gave lower values to items relating to cohesion of dyadic partnership have lower performance review results.

Respondents who expressed greater **satisfaction in the dyadic partnership** evaluate their professional performance with lower marks. Respondents who are more satisfied with the dyadic partnership are aware that the emphasis on their engagement at work has been shifted to family life (usually due to starting a family, child care), and also that they have not been investing as much time in the professional engagement as they would want.

Respondents who rated getting along in dyadic partnership with higher marks, gave them also for their professional success, knowledge of the rules of the service, relationship with superiors and subordinates. Conversely, respondents who rated getting along in dyadic partnership with lower marks also assessed their professional performance, knowledge of the rules of the service, relationship with the superiors and subordinates as low.

There is a statistically significant **positive** and very low correlation between **expressing feelings and self-evaluation of relations with superiors:** *benevolence in correction, allowing training and education, understanding and help in solving problems influencing the quality of work, self-evaluation of relations with subordinates: respecting opinions of subordinates, benevolent correction of opinion, allowing education and training, flexibility in communication*. Respondents who gave higher marks to expression of feelings, gave higher marks to relations with superiors/subordinates as well, in the majority of spheres.

We started the research with the premise that marriage as a social institution should provide more than basic functions of marriage that are usually mentioned, economic security, giving birth to and raising offspring. Marriage and emotional partnership was viewed as a modern institution fulfilling many needs such as: belonging, loyalty, protection, togetherness, support and intimacy, mutual respect and understanding, empathy, acceptance, good communication, harmonization, help in realization of professional and life interests. All these needs represent a resource for adjustment and overcoming of professional stress.

We believed that especially important for adjustment to the specifics of working in the military profession is the quality and satisfaction in marriage or emotional partnership. The analysis of the research results showed that **a higher level of emotional quality of partnership is statistically significantly correlated to quantitative evaluations of professional success (performance review) and almost all elements of subjective professional success (self-evaluation of success, interaction with subordinates and superiors).**

The results show that the initial hypothesis of this research stating there is a statistically significant correlation between the family context and adjustment to the military profession is confirmed. There is a statistically

significant positive correlation between the feeling of Acceptance by parents (mother, father) and educational and professional results, positive experience of work and people, good collaboration and communication, both with the superiors and the subordinates; and also that there is a statistically significant correlation of higher degree of emotional quality of partnerships and adjustment to the military profession.

In the end, i point to certain methodological limitations in research and suggestions for further empirical research that would complete knowledge of family operations on adapting the specifications of military profession.

Research constraints stem from the characteristics of the sample: Respondents are between 22 and 56 years of age (apparent is the distance from the primary family, especially if they see that due to the needs of school, the primary family left 14-15 years), and with a university degree and postgraduate studies in country and abroad. About the educational styles of parents inferred on the basis of reports from the children, now adults, but not on the basis of their parents. About the emotional quality of partner relationships we received information from only one emotional partner, without comparing it with the views of another emotional partner. The results of this research indicate the possible directions for further research on the problem of adaptation in the military profession.

The next research on a sample of members of the military profession could include the examination of the characteristics of the work and the working environment, the psycho-social status of the members, the emotional stability, the locus of control, the strategy of the first time of stress. authoritarianism, value system, computing skills, motivation for work, sports engagement.

CONCLUSION

The results of the empirical research on the importance of the family context for adjustment to the specifics of the military profession, i.e. on the importance of primary family in early age and high quality emotional partnership later in life indicate several possibilities.

They indicate the necessity of viewing the family context in the selection processes for admission to military schools and academies as an important factor of adjustment to the specifics of the military profession, as well as prevention of psychosomatic reactions and prediction of professional success.

Also, the results point to the topics which should be included in curriculums and syllabuses of military trainings regarding the topics of specifics of working in the military profession, on professional stress, professional and personal psychological factors which represent resources or

risks for adjustment to the specifics of the military profession and overcoming stress in the military profession.

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