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Postoje vojenských profesionálů k dalšímu profesnímu vzdělávání

The attitudes of the military professionals to the further professional education of personnel

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Abstract:

The concept of a lifelong learning is a foundation for both the professional and further professional preparation for the military professionals of the Army of the Czech Republic. Specifications of the certain soldiers' duties manifest themselves in the content, formation and methods of their assembly at the individual, team and unit level. Their preparation consist of moral education, intellectual education and military training. Furthermore, the preparation is focused on improving the level of professional competences to follow especially military commands. The article presents chosen results of the study, which was held under the Faculty of Military Leadership of the University of Defence in Brno.

Key words:

Lifelong learning, career education, military preparation, research.

JEL Classification : XXX

Abstrakt:

Východiskem profesní a další profesní přípravy vojenských profesionálů Armády ČR je koncept celoživotního učení. Specifika služby vojáků se projevují v obsahu, formách a metodách jejich přípravy na úrovni jednotlivce, týmu a jednotky. Jejich příprava obsahuje výchovu, vzdělávání a výcvik. Příprava je zaměřená ke zvyšování úrovně odborných kompetencí k plnění úkolů zejména vojenského charakteru. Příspěvek představuje vybrané výsledky výzkumu realizovaného v rámci Fakulty vojenského leadershipu Univerzity obrany v Brně.

Klíčová slova:

Celoživotní učení, profesní vzdělávání, příprava vojenských profesionálů, výzkum.

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Introduction

Lifetime learning brings a major change to the concept of educating and organization principle. Learning, should we consider traditional education facilities of education system, or outside of those, is understood as a unique, connected unit, which allows to gain various qualifications and competences anytime throughout the life. It emphasizes the development of skills and knowledge during employment. Lifetime learning and education are important aspects for people in both civilian sector and security forces. For planning to educate an adult audience it is important to make use of their experiences and choose a fitting education approach to match specific cases. Authors of the paper are discussing figure's points of views leading to create and maintain a favorable conditions for self-development in the army forces. Based on the results so far, it seems that the ability to self-develop oneself is a sign of self-confidence and a sincere professional interest. The prerequisite to gain similar point of view was a previous purpose research, where similar conclusions were made. This confirms a connection between professional interest to improve profiles of personalities and developing a positive attitude towards education in the Army of the Czech Republic and other security forces.

Education of adults

These days are characterized by the rapid development almost in all areas, not only in scientific but also in practice areas. Knowledge or skills acquired during schooling and scholarship have tendency to become obsolete. If people in companies and all kinds of institution are supposed to succeed in their jobs, it is necessary to educate themselves continuously, complement their attainments and develop their skills and adopt desirable working habits and attitudes. In process of planning adult educative activities is desirable to use learning from experiences and choose different forms and methods of educations in accordance with variability of learning styles.

Further education is a process focused on providing education after reaching the grade of education in a formal school facilities, or more precisely, after coming out to the labour market. Further education is generally divided to civic, interest and professional education. The definition of the concept of education itself is inspiring. The authors of the pedagogical journal define it as an essential term of pedagogical theories and practices. They distinguish personality concept when education is understood as part of the socialization of an individual. As a created system of information and procedures is education characteristics for content concept, education by institutional concept is understand as social-organized activity guaranteed by institution. Socio-economic concept understands education as one of the characteristics of the population. For process concepts, educating/ learning, is the process of realization of the role of individuals and the society in the sense of previous concept. (Průcha, Walterová, Mareš, p. 270) According to Veteška, education is necessary to "perceive as a process of the human potential development which is realized through the learning mechanism" (2009, p. 15).

Competence of employees

Each job has specific requirements, which applicants meet or not. Different positions demand different personal qualities. For instance, besides physical condition and professional attainments, for a policeman in the streets, being able to quickly and accurately analyze the situation, make operational decisions and solve situations is particularly important. Capabilities of the head of the department should also include organizational skills (the ability to effectively delegate tasks), controlling and monitoring subordinates.

Certain organizations are defining personal qualities in competence systems. In the modern concept, competencies are considered to be complex capabilities and further assumptions/prerequisites to perform the required performance. Competence is the capability to perform and successfully manage a specific profession or function. Competence can be differentiated as follows (Plamínek, 2008):

- abilities constituted by potential (intelligence, observation),
- knowledge (criminal law, criminology),
- skills (active listening/ being attentive/ being able to drive a vehicle),
- personal behaviour/properties (taciturnity, reliability, deliberation),
- attitudes (attitude towards citizens, the organization or work duties).

A unified competence system can serve both organizations and workers in many respects (Bělohávek, 2005):

- in communicating values of an organization (transferring cooperation information), because it makes clear what is preferred,
- in consolidating organizational culture because it determines the expected way of employees acting,
- it allows clear expression of employee requirements by setting degree of requirements for individual employees at individual workplaces,
- it will lead to a unification of human resources tools – the creations of a human resources system to provide a common basis for many subsystems e.g. employee appraisal, recruitment, learning and development, career management, job evaluation and employees rewarding subsystems,
- it allows the comparability of positions, organizational units and individual employees.

Competencies are an important tool for planning and evaluating employee trainings in an organization. From a pragmatic point of view, we will divide competencies in a several areas (Bělohávek, 2005):

- essential competencies – they have character of attitudes, characteristics or skills (communication, citizen orientation, reliability), usually related to all employees,
- leading competencies – (leading and motivation, leadership) which are related only to a team of executives who have subordinates,
- cross-sectional competencies – knowledge or skills which are required by the absolute majority of the employees (criminal law, computer skills),
- particular (industry) competencies – expertise or professional skills defined for a particular profession/job position or workplace (accounting, programming).

Essential and cross-sectional competencies are usually determined by the organization's management. Particular competencies are determined by the head of the specialized units.

Evangelu (2009) differentiate/classify competencies into:

- personality characteristics (adaptation to the environment, openness to the new impulses, stability of thought, etc.),
- social characteristics (empathy, relationship prudence, communicational skills, etc.),
- professional characteristics (team leadership, ability to coordinate, deliberate action).

How can be competence developed in case of various problems? The following table gives an overview of the problems that may appear the table of suggested solutions (Bělohávek, 1996; Evangelu, 2009; Prokopenko, Kubr, 1996; Armstrong, 1999):

Competence	Way of solving/solution
professional competencies	courses, books and magazines self-study
language skills	courses, working abroad, contact with foreign colleagues
information technology	IT courses, study
a lower intellectual ability	inclusion into a simple routine work
social characteristics	coaching, motivation, assertiveness courses, teamwork, emotional intelligence
organization of work	coaching, time management courses
leadership	courses of leadership and motivation, coaching

strategic management	coaching (emphasis on priorities and delegation, delegation courses
emotional lability	relaxations techniques, psychological counselling
citizen orientation	communication courses, training in dealing with the situations
substandard teamwork	coaching (collective/common tasks), teamwork courses
lameness, unwillingness to communicate	communication courses and presentations, coaching (increasing self-confidence)

Table.1: The overview of problems and suggested solutions

Source: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

The competence model will allow us to set up the requirements for the employees qualification level to assess the qualification degree and to determine the level of improvement after the education event. Job profiles are designed for these purposes. The job profile determines the degree of single competence which should be fulfilled by employees. (Evangelu, 2009; Bělohávek, 1996; Koubek, 1995)

Competence rule says that “all the organizational issues are possible to content to the concrete missing or inadequate competences of particular people”. (Plamínek, Fišer, 2005, p. 68). Those competences are necessary to find and ensure to get them into the system. The only way how to ensure this is through particular workers. The goal is to work on the developing person’s concrete competence of the employee who performs the task. From an andragogical point of view, the application of learning and development concept based on competences is particularly important because it is linked to measurable learning outcomes. That is the reason why this concept is applied in performance – oriented organisations. In the field of professional education, the attention is devoted to the acquisition and deepening of competencies. From this reason the attitude of professional soldiers to the competence of “ability to learn and concentrate” was one of the partial goals of the research.

Further professional education of personnel

According to Beneš the adult education has become a part of the organization’s personal policy and in these days there is a tendency to acquire the professional qualifications and competencies. Within the framework of professional education, also further professional education takes place, is at firsthand link to the specific professional classification and job satisfaction of the individual in the organization.

Training system of security corps is based on the concept of the lifelong learning. Further professional training is affected by the specific background, is realized in the departments education institutions and by single organizations parts. A partial part of further professional education in the Czech Republic is the personnel training system of the Ministry of Defence. The starting point of the military personnel trainings is Act No. 221/1999 Coll., On professional soldiers which imposes the duty for creating the conditions for systematic training and deepening qualification to the Ministry of Defence.

The personal training system of the Ministry of Defence is functional and provides opportunities of the secondary school and academic education. It is creating the conditions for reaching the qualification requests in the form of training in career and professional courses.

The basic qualification requirement for professional soldiers is to complete a career course. The required level of a foreign language knowledge is established with regard to the planned military grade.

Knowledge of English is required and in specific working place knowledge of other languages is required as well. The other qualification requirements describe as the expert knowledge and skills which are necessary for serve on a specific working place.

Methodology

The aim of the research realized within the Faculty of Military Leadership of the University of Defence was to identify the key reasons for the involvement of soldiers in further professional training (i.e. career courses, language education, special training and self-study). The research was carried out in several stages in period of the time in 2016 and 2017. The findings of the research are presented below.

The theoretical basis of this research project was the concept of lifelong learning and economic and sociological theory of rational choice. According to this concept respondents make decision based on the possible benefits and losses. In accordance with Mareš et al. we define the attitude of the individual (pupil) to learning like a relation to education/learning which influences the learning process and overall development (1995).

The research was based on the assumption that the participation of adults was influenced by motivation. For research needs the willingness of respondents to participate in education was considered to be a basic motivating factor. Getting the support of the superior was considered an external factor. The research project was focused on clarifying three main research questions.

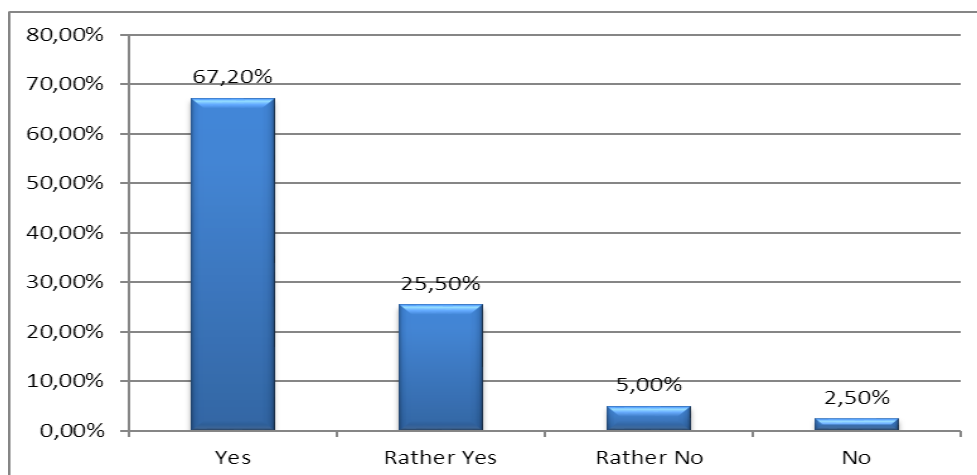
With regard to the set objectives of the research, the combination of quantitatively oriented empirical investigation was used. The heavily structured data collection was used through questionnaires. The questionnaire included 21 closed-ended and semi-closed-ended questions aimed at identifying the opinions and attitudes of respondents

The basic group consisted of randomly selected professional soldiers of selected organizational units in proportional representation of all the rank corps. In total, the questionnaires were handed over to 240 professional soldiers. 36 questionnaires, which lacked answers to some questions, were excluded. A total of 204 questionnaires that were completed correctly and submitted by the date stated were included in the final group for the evaluation.

Interpretation of chosen data

In total, almost 93 % of respondents find participation in professional training courses important due to the possibility of further career progress. Reasons for this pedagogical phenomenon were explored in the frame of qualitative approach when respondents answered during the structured interview that this is caused by setting of career approach conditions in each specialization

In-service soldiers must carry out the career precondition in the moment of service. For their approach professional development is necessary and their prerequisite is participation in individual career and professional courses. According to Rabušicová et al. people act in a way that others around them think they should act (2009).



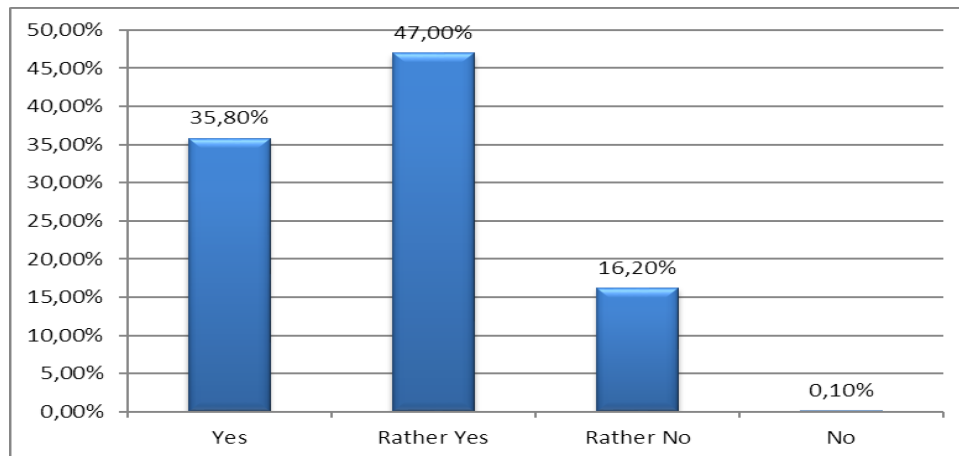
Graph 1: The importance of participating in carrier courses of further professional training for career development

Source: Social competencies of a soldier-leader. The Faculty of Military Leadership, UoD Brno, 2017

Another important part is active searching education and training opportunities orientated on increasing expertise skills. Because not only the declared interest in continuing education but also actively with the effort made to find suitable opportunities for professional development in significant.

In total, 169 respondents answered that they are active searching suitably education activities for their professional development. Only 16,2 per cent of respondents answered “Rather no” and 0,1 %

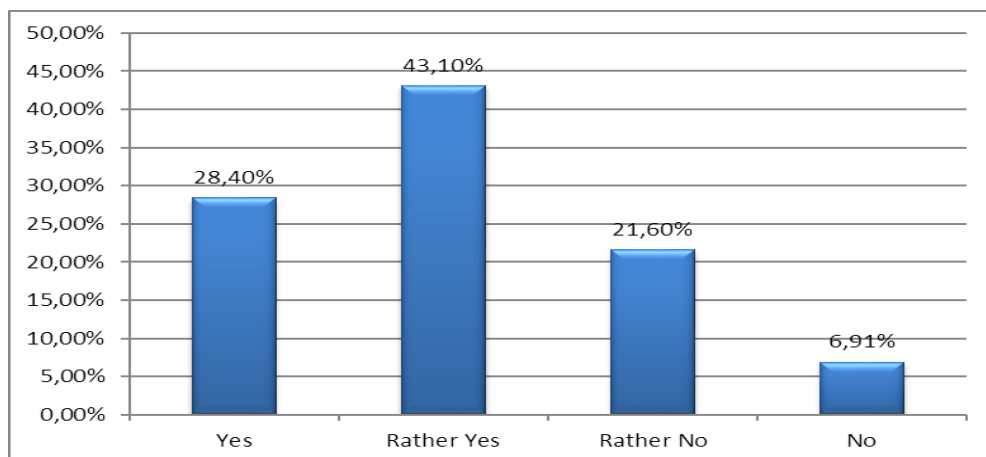
answered “no”. In responding to that negative response a part of the respondents replied that they are considering a change of post or that it had already been decided not to prolong the duration of the service.



Graph 2: Active opportunities searching to increase expertise

Source: Social competencies of a soldier-leader. The Faculty of Military Leadership, UoD Brno, 2017

In general, motivation is being described as a source, which influences our acting and by which is the acting possible to explain. Motivation for participation in education activities is influenced by both internal and external causes. Rabušicová for example notes that “an individual may want to meet employer requirements and at the same time enjoy the learning of something new” (2009, p.98). In a strictly hierarchical background the support of professional development by the immediate superior is perceived as the most important external motivation from our point of view. It is appreciated that 71,5 % of the respondents replied that the aid was noticeable. Most of the respondents in the next item also stated that career development issues were dealt with during the staff assessment interview.



Graph 3: The professional development support from the immediate superior

Source: Social competencies of a soldier-leader. The Faculty of Military Leadership, UoD Brno, 2017

Resume :

From the military professional’s training point of view can be stated that it would be optimal for all the components of continuing education will be represented in further education (professional, civic, and interest education). Adult education is connected with andragogical approach which is typical for respecting individual needs. It is up to the educated which form of education he decides to use, and which he decides to find and pass out for his own personal and professional development. However,

what was mentioned before does not apply in the case of normative professional education which is by its nature obligatory or mandatory. In these days is emphasizing the andragogical mission in the field of educational formation, personality cultivation and helping adult people to adapt to the changing external background.

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