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## Analysis and evaluation of changes in the process of adaptation of soldiers to military service

## Analiza i ocena zmian w procesie adaptacji żołnierzy do służby wojskowej

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the subject of the process of soldier's adaptation to military service, which is an important element that may affect further service as well as shaping his attitude and the way of performing tasks. Although compulsory conscript service was abolished in 2008 and currently candidates are only volunteers, the adaptation process is invariably an important stage of military service, which is not a frequent subject of scientific consideration. Therefore, the investigations presented in this article are valuable not only because of the subject matter, but also because of their uniqueness, resulting from the scope of the research, which includes both soldiers of compulsory military service and cadets, who are one of the main sources of power for the army. The aim of the study was to assess the process of adaptation to military service among newly recruited soldiers and to compare the changes that have taken place over 25 years in the perception of this issue. This will allow to find out (the main research problem) whether the type of military service (mandatory basic military service versus voluntary basic military service) changed the perception of this difficult period by young people entering the ranks of the army. The paper poses the following research hypothesis: The type of military service had a significant impact on the perception of this difficult period by young people entering the ranks of the army. The study used the method of diagnostic survey, participant observation, analysis, synthesis, inference and comparison. The obtained results showed that the problems related to adaptation to military service remain largely unchanged.

**Keywords:** process of adaptation, compulsory recruit military service, voluntary recruit military service, Polish Armed Forces, adaptation to military service

**Abstrakt.** W artykule podjęto tematykę dotyczącą procesu adaptacji żołnierza do służby wojskowej, co jest ważnym elementem mogącym wpłynąć na dalszą służbę a także kształtującym jego postawę i sposób realizacji zadań. Wprawdzie w 2008 roku zniesiona została obowiązkowa służba zasadnicza i obecnie kandydaci są wyłącznie ochotnikami, jednak proces adaptacji jest niezmiennie ważnym etapem służby wojskowej, który – jak wskazuje literatura w tym obszarze - nie jest częstym przedmiotem naukowych

rozważań. Dlatego przedstawione w niniejszym artykule dociekania są cenne nie tylko ze względu na tematykę, ale także na ich unikalność, wynikającą z zakresu badania, który obejmuje zarówno żołnierzy zasadniczej służby wojskowej, jak i podchorążych, stanowiących - po zanieśieniu powszechnego poboru - jedno z głównych źródeł zasilania armii. Za cel badania przyjęto dokonanie oceny procesu adaptacji do służby wojskowej wśród nowo powołanych żołnierzy oraz porównanie zmian, jakie miały miejsce na przestrzeni 25 lat w odbiorze tego zagadnienia. Pozwoli to dociec (główny problem badawczy), czy rodzaj służby wojskowej (obowiązkowa zasadnicza służba wojskowa versus dobrowolna zasadnicza służba wojskowa) zmienił postrzeganie tego trudnego okresu przez młodych ludzi, wkraczających w szeregi armii. Założono (hipoteza badawcza), iż rodzaj służby wojskowej miał istotny wpływ na postrzeganie tego trudnego okresu przez młodych ludzi wstępujących w szeregi wojska. W badaniu wykorzystano metodę sondaży diagnostycznego, obserwację uczestniczącą, analizę, syntezę, wnioskowanie i porównanie. Otrzymane wyniki wykazały, iż problemy związane z adaptacją do służby wojskowej pozostają w znacznej części niezmiennie. **Słowa kluczowe:** proces adaptacji, zasadnicza obowiązkowa służba wojskowa, ochotnicza służba wojskowa, Siły Zbrojne RP, adaptacja do służby wojskowej

## Introduction

The armed forces have been undergoing profound changes in recent times, primarily related to the process of professionalization of the army, aimed at ensuring the best conditions for the realization of the constitutional tasks of the Polish Armed Forces (Kajetanowicz, 2021, pp. 83-103; Zakrzewska, 2022, p. 12; Wiśniewski, 2019, pp. 92-112). Their scope concerns many areas of the army's functioning, from changes in the army command system (Wrachoł, 2022, pp. 164-179; Sadowski 2020, pp. 170-192), through modification of its structure (new types of armed forces) and the tasks of the organs of leadership and command of the army (Bodziany, Ścibiorek & Ślusarczyk, 2021, pp. 474-492; Zarobny, 2020, pp. 122-144; Palczewska, 2021, pp. 80-95), modernization and purchase of new technologies and replacement of obsolete military equipment (Piekarski, 2019, pp. 42-64; Yanakiev, Stoianov, Kirkov & Velev, 2020, p. 3-10) or systematically increasing the size of the army (Compa, 2020, pp. 79-98; Legucka, 2019, p. 5). One of the key milestones was also the abolition of compulsory military service in 2008 (Zapałowski, 2021, pp. 130-139; Compa, 2020, pp. 79-98).

All reforms were introduced gradually, but the basis for their implementation always had to be a well-prepared and trained soldier who had to undergo a stage of adaptation to the new environment (Lazarus, 2020, pp. 3-14; Wang, Wang, Zhang & Ma, 2020, pp. 341-352). This is a very important process, as it can affect further service, and if conducted improperly will cause difficulties in adaptation that will detract from the attitudes of soldiers, discouraging them from military service and negatively affecting the degree of tasks performed. Nevertheless, this key period has not been the subject of scholarly inquiry, and the literature in this area is quite scarce. Some considerations include, for example, the competencies that a modern officer of the Polish army should possess, among which is the required ability to adapt to changing conditions (Orzech & Mischczuk, 2022, p. 13; Rzepecka, 2019, pp. 113-119; Mendel, 2019). Also discussed is the issue of adaptation associated with

the participation of soldiers in operations abroad, both in the context of adapting to conditions during such a military mission and after returning home (Dzik, 2021; Szachniewicz, 2019, p. 441). The selected items deal with the mental health of soldiers in general and, in this view, refer to the process of adaptation (Wądlowska, 2019, pp. 182-2020; Wasilewski & Stachelek, 2020, pp. 101-121). Literature presenting the adaptation of the newly drafted soldiers has not been found, except for the author's own earlier analyses (Bawoń, 1999). What is more, there is a lack of research showing this problem from the soldier's point of view. Therefore, the considerations presented in this article are extremely valuable, not only because of the subject matter that fills the identified gap, but also because of the uniqueness of the research conducted, which with its scope includes both soldiers in basic military service and cadets, who constitute one of the main sources of supply for the army.

Therefore, the purpose of the presented study is complex and concerns, on the one hand, the evaluation of the process of adaptation to military service among newly drafted soldiers, and on the other hand, it allows to assess what changes have taken place over 25 years in the perception of this issue. This will thus allow us to find out (the main research problem) whether the type of military service (compulsory recruit military service versus voluntary recruit military service) has changed young people's perceptions of this difficult period as they enter the ranks of the army. It was assumed (research hypothesis) that The type of military service had a significant impact on the perception of this difficult period by young people entering the ranks of the army. In addition, it is possible to compare the characteristics of people who joined the ranks of the army in two distant time periods. Achieving the stated goal of the study was possible primarily through the use of the diagnostic survey method, but participatory observation is also extremely important, which allowed inference and comparison of the results contained in the survey questionnaires. The results obtained showed that over the course of a quarter of a century, the problems associated with adaptation to military service have remained the same despite the fact that it used to be professional military service and is now voluntary military service.

### **Theoretical aspects of soldiers' adaptation to military service**

The genesis of the terms adaptation and social adaptation is in the natural sciences, where it means the adjustment of an organism to the environment in which it lives. This matching is a process of continuous exchange between the organism and its environment, transforming the environment and matching it to the structure of the subject called assimilation (Szewczuk, 1985, pp. 8-25) and transforming one's own structure accordingly to the requirements of the environment called acclimation (Szewczuk, 1985, pp. 8-25). These two modes of interaction combine to maintain a state of constantly rebuilding equilibrium, which is what adaptation is.

According to Piaget, adaptation occurs when an organism transforms itself according to the requirements of its environment, (<https://edukacja.um.warszawa.pl>, 2023). According to J. Piaget, mental life is subject to the same structuring laws as living organisms (<https://edukacja.um.warszawa.pl>, 2023).

Adaptation, on the other hand, according to W. Szewczuk, (Szewczuk, 1985, pp. 8-25) in the broadest sense, is the tactic of such changes in the behavior of an individual, in their body as a whole or in some part of it, which enable the optimal functioning of the individual. Obuchowski, in his book "Creative Adaptation," also argues that the concept of adaptation, adjustment is derived from biological sciences, where it also means changes in living organisms that enable them to function in changed conditions.

As emphasized above several times, adaptation should be understood as a process of adjustment of an individual to new conditions, as a result of which there is a balance between human needs and the requirements of the environment. This also applies to the beginning of a soldier's military service. Therefore, it can be assumed that the young person's adaptation to the conditions and requirements of service and military life also means the adjustment of their body and psyche to the new conditions, resulting in a state of balance between their needs and behavior and the requirements and conditions of military service.

### **Analysis of selected causes of soldiers' adaptation difficulties to military service.**

In order to understand the essence of the difficulties of adaptation of soldiers to military service, and to effectively carry out prophylactic activities, it is necessary to know the processes of this phenomenon. The genesis lies in the social maladjustment of soldiers to military service, which is why the analysis of the reasons requires a comprehensive approach. Some causes act simultaneously, others arise accidentally and function singly. In each case, it is necessary to indicate the mutual relationships existing between the causes and the mechanisms of their cooperation.

Information about the degree of maladjustment to military service is provided by symptoms in the form of various forms of negative behavior of soldiers. The most characteristic symptoms of maladjustment to military service include (Kosyrz, 1980, pp. 14):

- lack of discipline and dutifulness, failure to comply with the rules, norms and orders of the military,
- unkind attitude towards colleagues, superiors and tendency to conflict,
- reluctance to learn, work and serve,
- suggestiveness, inability to get out of a difficult situation,
- low activity and poor mental resilience to the hardships of military service,
- aggressiveness, living in the moment, adventurousness.

Military discipline itself and the strictures associated with it, that is, a set of prohibitions and orders, have a “negative” effect on soldiers and cause a marked increase in the number of socially maladjusted soldiers. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the lack of pedagogical experience of young commanders and their decisions, which are not always properly made (Obuchowski, 1985, p. 14).

### **Assessment of the phenomenon of soldiers’ difficulty in adaptation to military service**

The adaptation of conscripted soldiers to the requirements of the military environment is one of the most important problems for commanders. The change from civilian to military living conditions is undoubtedly a complex process, with varying degrees of difficulty for individual young people. Nevertheless, society is constantly changing, and so it is interesting to see how adaptation processes have changed over the years. According to the literature review conducted, there are few studies in this area. However, such an assessment is allowed by the author’s study, as well as his many years of experience in military structures related to commanding soldiers, primarily during the initial period of their military service. The results gathered are a comparison of two surveys conducted among newly drafted soldiers, but at different times. As mentioned in the introduction, the main research problem is to answer the question of whether the type of military service has changed the perception of this difficult period for young people entering the ranks of the army, and therefore whether the changing circumstances of military service, as well as changes in society, affect the process of adaptation to military service. The first survey was conducted on soldiers in recruit military service (RMS) in late August and early September 1998 in one of the military units of the Kraków Military District, in a city of about 100,000 residents, to be exact – in the 21st Podhale Rifle Brigade. There were several other military units in the garrison, as well as two universities, the Polytechnic and the Pedagogical University. The city had a widely developed cultural infrastructure. There were cinemas, theaters, museums. The respondents were soldiers doing recruit military service at the time, whose ages ranged from 19-22. The vast majority of respondents were of worker-peasant origin and had vocational education. At the time, they were housed in subdivisions, within which they accounted for 40% of the subdivision’s total personnel. Their location included a soldier’s canteen, a club and a library. Considering the length of service of the respondents, the largest group was made up of soldiers after 1.5 months of service (68%), 2 months of service (4%), after 4 months (4%), and after 6 months (24%).

The vast majority of the surveyed population came from the countryside, which accounted for 64% of the total. The rest of the respondents were from cities with up to 50,000 residents, accounting for 24% of those surveyed, and from cities with

up to 100,000 residents, accounting for 12%. An important factor characterizing the study group was the education of the soldiers. The analysis of the respondents' education included the following categories: primary, vocational, incomplete secondary, secondary and post-secondary. Soldiers with vocational education predominated and accounted for 44% of those surveyed. In second place was a group of people with secondary education, with 24% of respondents. In contrast, soldiers with primary education accounted for 20%. In contrast, soldiers with incomplete secondary education accounted for 8%, and with post-secondary education – for 4% of the respondents.

Another survey was conducted in December 2022/January 2023 at the Military University of Technology, in a city of nearly two million people. The respondents were soldiers doing Voluntary Recruit Military Service (VRMS) who were in their first year of technical studies. The age of the respondents – as it was 25 years ago – ranged from 18-21. Here – different from 1998 – the respondents came from the middle social class and, of course, all had a high school education, since one of the conditions for university admission is to have a successfully passed high school diploma. Currently, soldiers studying at a military university are also housed in subdivisions. However, it is different than in the regular service. At the time, there were soldiers of different periods of appointment in one subdivision. Currently, all the accommodated soldiers have been drafted at the same time. The place of service and study, just as it was a quarter of a century ago, has stores, the University's club and a library. All respondents have been on duty at the University for nearly four months. The majority of respondents, 54%, said they were from cities with populations of more than 300,000. Another large group of respondents came from towns with up to 200,000 residents (about 21%), and only 20% of respondents came from towns with fewer than 50,000 residents. The remaining 5% resided in towns with a population of less than 100,000. Each group was asked questions about their process of adaptation to military service. The results of the research conducted are presented below.

### **Empirical assessment of the causes of difficulties in adaptation to military service**

The first problem concerning the emergence of adaptation difficulties to military service appeared as early as the examination by the Conscription Commission. Soldiers drafted to the RMS in 1998 deemed that they were treated improperly. When asked the question "How did the members of the Conscription Commission treat you during the examination," the majority of people, i.e. 56%, answered that they were treated well. The remaining 44% of respondents said they were treated poorly.

VRMS soldiers from the Military University of Technology also answered the same question 25 years later. More than 86% said that the Conscription Commission treated them well, only 12% responded that they were treated badly. It can therefore be seen that there has been an improvement in this area.

The fact that just over half of the RMS respondents were treated well by the commissions was probably due to the fact that at the time only men appeared before the commissions, and that recruit military service was mandatory. Only a negative medical opinion exempted those with an elementary education from military service. Thus, there were various forms of attempts to deceive the medical commission, which translated into unfavorable relations, and therefore conscripts evaluated such a commission very negatively.

The phenomenon of the emergence of difficulties in adaptation to military service is exacerbated by the problems faced by soldiers in the very first days after being called to military service. Then, many in the new environment need a conversation to function properly in the new place. In order to verify whether soldiers have such support, the question was asked, "If you encounter difficulties, can you count on friendly help from the listed people in the subdivision," 54% of the surveyed RMS soldiers responded that in the course of their military service, they can first count on the help of a teammate.

It is puzzling that in this difficult period of service, where a young soldier is looking for help, someone to talk to about their problems, as many as 32% of the surveyed RMS soldiers could not find such support from their squad leader, platoon leader or staff supporting the educational process in the military unit. Interestingly, a large percentage of those surveyed had no opinion on the matter, 16%.

Today, almost 90% of the VRMS cadets say that in their first days of service they could count most on the help of their teammates and platoon mates. The second group consisted of a squad leader and an assistant platoon leader. Here the responses were: 72% and 76% of respondents. In contrast, 49% of respondents could count on the assistance of a platoon commander. Details are presented in Figure 1. It is interesting to note that almost 66% of respondents value the assistance of the company's chief. The company chief is often colloquially referred to in the subdivision as the "mother of the subdivision," i.e. the person who takes care of proper social and living conditions, which is consistent with the results obtained

In Fig. 1, one can clearly see an increase in the interest of direct supervisors in the problems that occur in the first days of service. This is because the instruction-methodology courses include classes with psychologists who pay special attention to such issues. In addition, the entire command staff is currently participating in various classes where the problems of the newly appointed soldiers are discussed. It should be noted that squad leaders and assistant platoon leaders in basic training are senior cadets, and platoon and company commanders are aware that this is not a forced or compulsory service, but a voluntary one. They also have adequate knowledge of disciplinary and criminal liability for bullying or exceeding their authority.

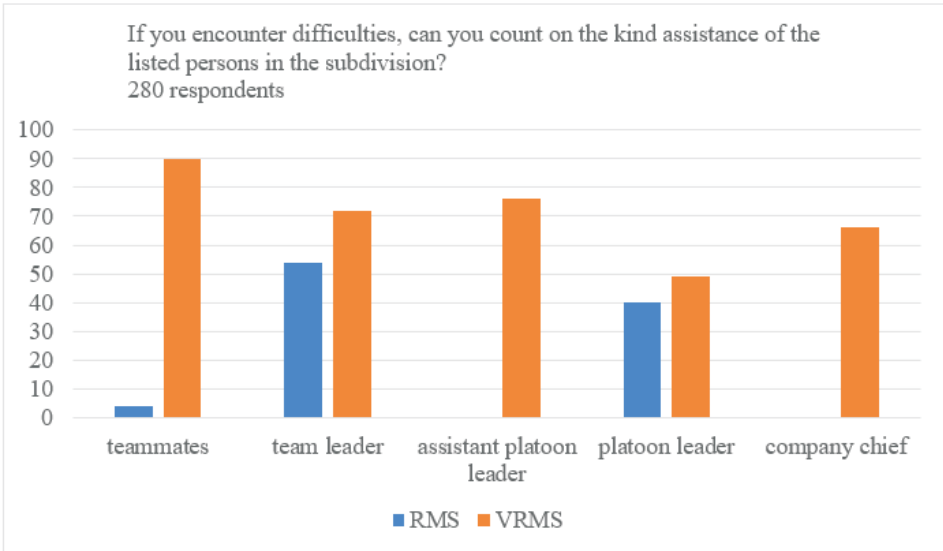


Fig. 1. Assistance provided by persons in the subdivision during the first days of military service  
Source: Author's own study

Another question the respondents were asked was, “Which of the given characteristics is most conducive to adaptation to military service?” In the group of RMS soldiers, more than half, or 60%, responded that the ability to coexist with colleagues. Also, the majority of respondents, 64%, answered that adaptation to the service is facilitated by honesty, as well as the ability to adapt to the requirements of superiors. Very important and noteworthy is the fact that 68% of respondents say that being sly is not conducive to adaptation to the conditions of military service. To this question, 96% of VRMS respondents answered that discipline and physical fitness are conducive to meeting the requirements of military service. Similarly, a significant number of respondents, almost 90%, indicated that the ability to coexist with colleagues, as well as to adapt to the requirements of superiors, helps in the first days of service. Also, 48% of those surveyed say that slyness does not help them function properly in military service. What is puzzling and worth noting is just why as many as 56% of those surveyed say that honesty does not help in military service. This is a topic that should be analyzed in detail as part of further research. In this question posed, both groups surveyed unanimously stated such qualities as discipline, the ability to adapt to life with new roommates in a small space, and adaptation to the demands of superiors at all times is conducive to proper functioning in a new environment. This is very important, especially in combat operations, where proper cooperation and mutual trust promotes proper execution of tasks. Detailed responses in both groups are presented in Fig. 2.



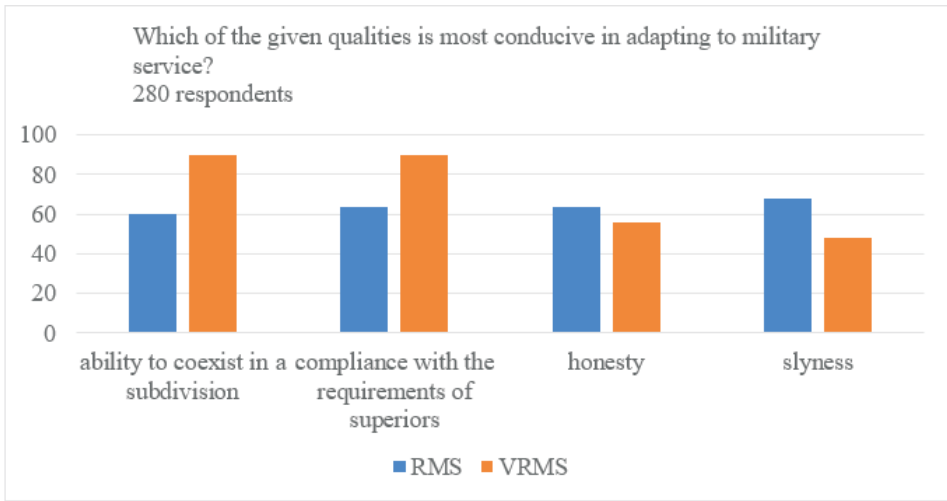


Fig. 2. Qualities conducive to adaptation to military service  
Source: Author's own study

In the adaptation process, it is very important to verify that the process is going properly and determine how the soldier feels about it. Therefore, the question “How do you feel about military service in the current period” was asked, the answers to which are shown in Fig. 3.

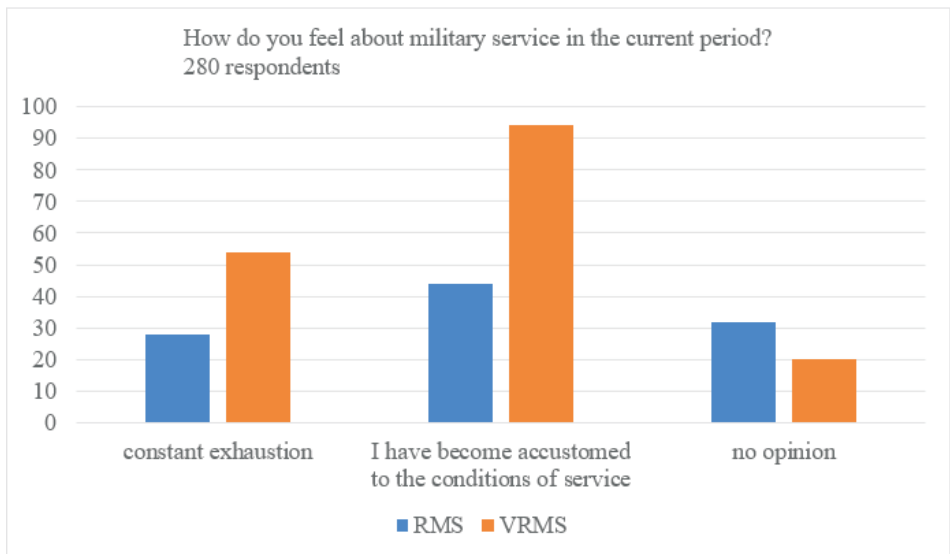


Fig. 3. Feelings about military service  
Source: Author's own study

The data obtained shows that 28% of the RMS survey participants in the 24th week of military service feel constant fatigue. Nearly 44% of respondents are accustomed to military conditions and lifestyles. More than one in three people (32%) found it difficult to comment on this issue. Nearly 94% of VRMS respondents say, like the regular service respondents, that they have become accustomed to the conditions of military life. On the other hand, 54% of respondents experience constant fatigue. Such a state of affairs is due to the fact that recruit service soldiers performed only the duties prescribed by the military training program and the order of the day. In addition to military training, respondents from the Military University of Technology have a great deal of polytechnic classes requiring continuous learning. In the initial period of service, this is an additional burden, where the beginning cadet is not used to classes scheduled from early morning to late evening.

Considering the question asked earlier, where it was pointed out that the ability to adapt to the requirements of superiors promotes adaptation to military service, it is worth mentioning one of the principles of soldierly behavior, which is mentioned in item 30 of the General Regulations, stating that “A soldier is bound by discipline and loyalty to other soldiers.” (Regulamin Ogólny SZ RP, 2014, p. 12). Therefore, the next question was related to the need for respondents to strive for discipline. The results of responses to this question are shown in Fig 4.

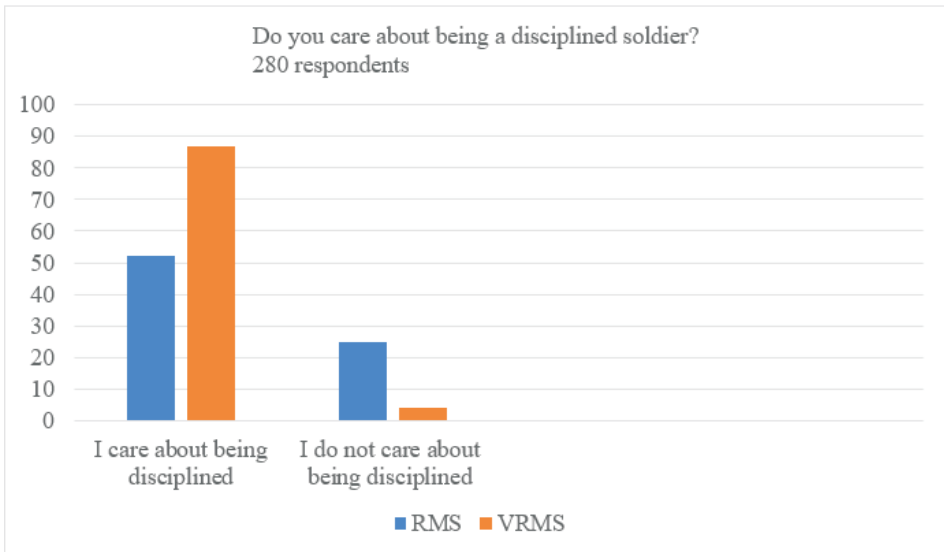


Fig. 4. Soldiers' discipline  
Source: Author's own study

More than half of the 52% of RMS respondents said they cared about being a disciplined soldier. A quarter of respondents said the opposite, and another 24% had no opinion on the subject. Confirmation that soldiers care about discipline is also provided by the results of VRMS soldiers. Positive responses accounted for 87%. Only 4% answered in the negative and 9% had no opinion. It is noteworthy that the number of soldiers who do not care about being disciplined is 6 times lower than that of the RMS. Cadets are in voluntary basic military service of their own volition. They want to gain knowledge and become officers of the Polish Army in the future.

The next question was related to the factors that most impeded or hindered proper adaptation to the conditions of military service. The main factor that most impeded proper adaptation to the conditions of military service turned out to be the need to stay in barracks all the time. 92% of RMS respondents said so. Other factors hindering adaptation were restriction of freedom which was indicated by 84% of respondents, separation from family – 76% of respondents, and a very important factor that determines the proper functioning of a soldier, i.e. deficiency of proper rest – this was indicated by 54% of respondents.

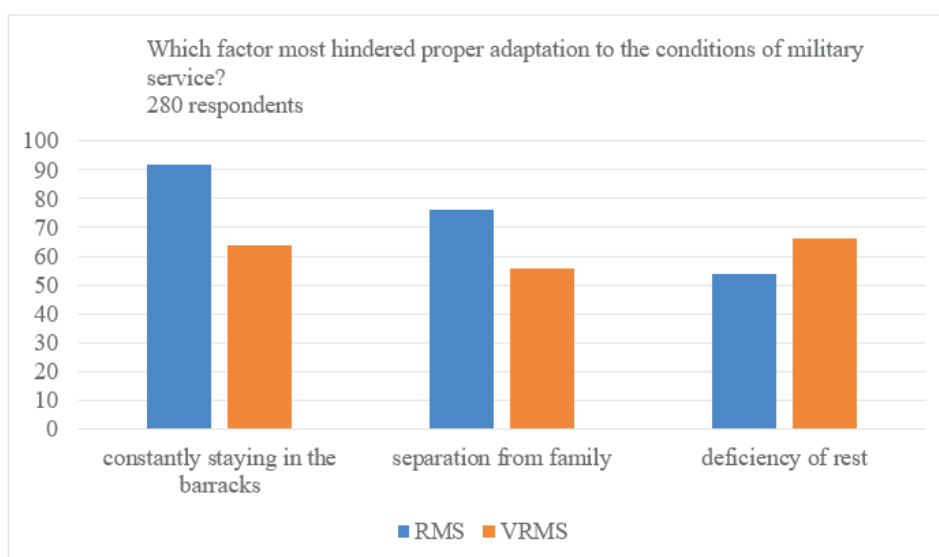


Fig. 5. Factors hindering adaptation to military service

Source: Author's own study

Among RSW soldiers, on the other hand, the predominant response was that of a deficiency of rest, 66% of respondents said so. Restriction in staying on furloughs was indicated by 64%, and separation from family by 56% of people. Satisfactorily, only 35% point to a lot of grueling classes and hard work, and 28% to learning

difficult things and collective housing 22% as factors that do not promote adaptation. In a military university, for a period of 5 years of study, a soldier will face these conditions all the time. This means that everyone who starts learning is aware of the challenges they face. For young people confronted with new operating conditions, the feeling that they can only leave their accommodations with the permission of their superiors in the initial period poses many difficulties. Nevertheless, this is becoming normal over time. This teaches how to function in different situations, raises the level of discipline, integrity and trust, which promotes the execution of combat tasks at the right level at the right time, and results in the success of the entire battlefield operation. The above description of results is presented in Fig. 5.

To perform military service is to prepare the soldier to carry out tasks in the event of a threat to state security, as well as to “support public administration and society in emergency situations” ([https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/misja\\_wizja](https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/misja_wizja), 2023). In order to properly prepare for this, a soldier trains according to specific training programs, where topics are selected according to the purpose of the military unit. To this end, they improve their physical fitness, perform shift duty or guard duty, maintain military discipline at an appropriate level, observe the rules and norms of coexistence in the subdivision. With so many responsibilities, problems may arise involving any of the tasks’ impact on the difficulty of adjusting to military service. Therefore, it was reasonable to ask the question: “In what areas of the military service did you have the greatest difficulty adapting?” This is illustrated in Fig. 6.

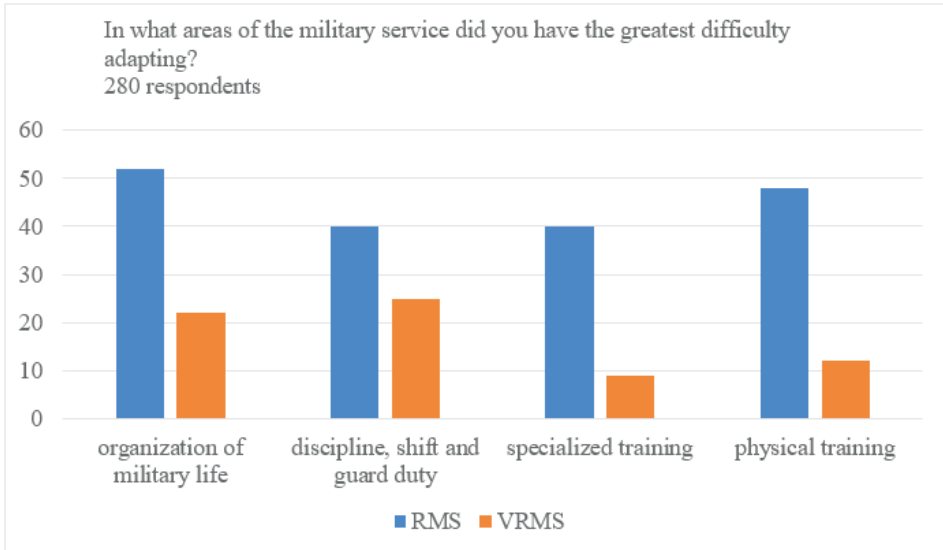


Fig. 6. Areas of military service where there have been difficulties adapting  
Source: Author’s own study

52% of RMS respondents said that the greatest difficulty in adjusting to military service was the organization of military life, i.e. the order of the day, service subordination, and uniforms. Both discipline, shift and guard duty made it difficult for 40% of respondents to adapt. Physical training was not difficult for 48% of respondents. In terms of specialized training, 40% of respondents thought it made it difficult for them to adapt, while another 40% thought the opposite. The opinion of respondents from the VRMS did not confirm past opinions. Only 22% of respondents said that the organization of military life caused them difficulties. Similarly, with regard to specialized training and physical training, 9% and 12%, respectively, indicated that this was a problem for them. So, by analogy, this can be seen as confirmation that soldiers come to the university prepared to acquire knowledge through hard study and physical effort.

Military service requires facing many strenuous activities and demands. Therefore, respondents were asked, "Which of the listed factors do you consider the most burdensome in your military service?" Prevalent among the RMS was the inability to go on leave frequently, which was a nuisance for 64% of respondents. Worryingly, as many as 64% of those surveyed said they had no opportunity to pursue personal interests and tastes. And, after all, military service is not only about following orders, shift duty and guard duty, but it is a time to develop yourself, to discover new interests. Poor food is another bothersome factor in military service, 48% of respondents said.

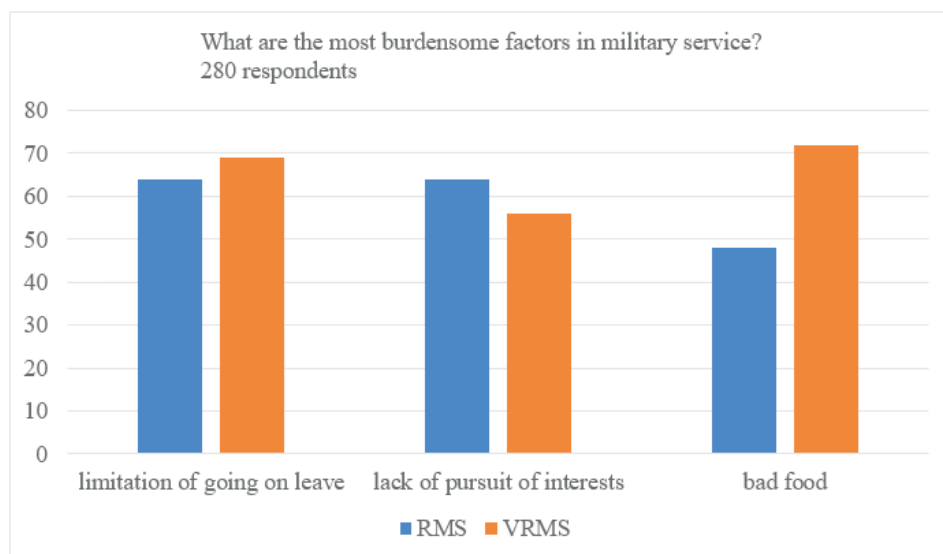


Fig. 7. The most burdensome factors in military service

Source: Author's own study

The answers obtained years ago are fully in line with the current state. Still, almost 69% of respondents indicate that the restriction of going on leave is the factor that is most troublesome in adjusting to military service. A similar situation applies to developing one's interests, with as many as 56% of respondents indicating this factor, which is quite surprising given the many opportunities the university offers. Another bothersome factor cited by respondents (72%) is poor food. The following analysis is presented in Fig. 7.

## Conclusions

Summarizing the above research results, the following conclusions can be made about the difficulties of soldiers' adaptation to military service occurring during the analyzed period of military service:

- 1) Soldiers in recruit military service believe that the main difficulties of adaptation to service are as follows:
  - a) mistreatment by superiors – intimidation,
  - b) lack of support from the platoon commander – direct supervisor-educator – in difficult situations,
  - c) the need to stay in the barracks at all times, and the “restriction of personal freedom” associated with obtaining permission from superiors to leave the barracks.
- 2) Soldiers in voluntary recruit military service, on the other hand, believe that the main difficulties in adapting to service are:
  - a) shortage of proper rest, which is due to the need to combine work duties with study,
  - b) no possibility of leaving the accommodation without permission from superiors,
  - c) need to eat the food issued at military canteens.
- 3) It was found that in the first days of military service, young people have the most trouble adjusting to such elements of life as:
  - a) for RMS soldiers:
    - limitation of personal time,
    - performing activities and undertakings that require increased physical exertion,
    - submission to a regulated course of daily activities, defined by the order of the day,
    - a designated and limited time to eat meals of strictly defined quality and quantity,
    - specified time to go to rest, the duration of which is also specified,
    - staying in collective housing, limited freedom, intimacy and opportunities for physical and mental rest.

b) for VRMS soldiers:

- **interpersonal relations (relationships) with** superiors and the need to behave and follow orders in a certain way,
- performing on-call duty, maintaining readiness for 24 hours causing fatigue,
- -social and living conditions in collective housing,
- to conform to the daily organization of life in the military unit, observing the hours of getting up, eating and completing training, and limited opportunities to go on leave.

The suddenness of the change in conditions and the need to abandon one's habits in favor of strictly carrying out prescribed activities (and within a certain, often very limited, time) creates incompatibilities, rifts between what one has done before and the new requirements. Many existing habits, behaviors and skills are proving to be non-functional, and the requirements and conditions of service indicate the need for rapid changes so that inappropriate or unskillful behavior or actions do not cause conflict situations.

Difficulties arising from accommodation, obeying orders, and remaining in the subdivision in constant readiness are aimed at developing habits necessary for group interaction, which in the future will translate into the quality and timeliness of combat task performance by the team, platoon or in the line-ups of tactical formations.

A survey conducted 25 years ago found that only 14.2% of young people drafted into the military had no difficulty adapting to their new living conditions. The group of people best able to withstand the new conditions were mostly young people who had worked professionally and stayed away from the family home before being drafted (boarding schools, workers' hotels, orphanages, etc.) and rural youth. Difficult living conditions, professional work, the necessity to decide personally and independently about one's life, without the possibility of constant (often overprotective) help from parents and others, were a better way of preparation for finding oneself individually and socially in organized groups, as well as for submission to the requirements and restrictions of collective life, and obedience to superiors.

Currently, more than 56% of soldiers in voluntary recruit military service indicate that they have had no difficulty adapting to military service. This is due, firstly, to the fact that they came to the army on their own initiative, secondly, soldiers receive a high salary (currently in the amount of more than 4,500 PLN per month), which is often the source of support for their families. And thirdly, they earn a master's degree in a uniform five-year course of study at a prestigious military university in Poland, with no cost of study.

The survey shows that invariably for many years adaptation to military service has been a difficult process, the problems associated with it have remained the same despite the fact that it used to be professional military service and is now voluntary military service.

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