

American University Kyiv

A Capstone Project

ENHANCING THE LEVEL OF MOTIVATION AMONG MILITARY
PERSONNEL IN ORDER TO IMPROVE TASKS FULFILLMENT
EFFICIENCY

ПІДВИЩЕННЯ РІВНЯ МОТИВАЦІЇ СЕРЕД ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВЦІВ
З МЕТОЮ ПОКРАЩЕННЯ РЕЗУЛЬТАТИВНОСТІ ВИКОНАННЯ
ЗАВДАНЬ

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ABSTRACT

Motivation of military personnel is a key factor in ensuring the effectiveness and combat readiness of a modern army. It has a direct impact on morale, commitment and performance, determining their ability to perform effectively in challenging environments. Understanding the motivational factors that drive military personnel to join the army, continue their service, or achieve high performance is important for strategic planning and maintaining the effectiveness of defense structures.

Existing research on motivation in the military sphere is mainly focused on armies involved in conflicts on the territory of other states, such as peacekeeping missions or interventions abroad. However, such results often do not take into account the specifics of armies operating in the defense of their own territory, where the stakes are much higher both at the individual and collective level. This paper examines the impact of material and non-material incentives on military personnel motivation, with a focus on comparing the effectiveness of different types of incentives, such as cash bonuses, social benefits, medals, and career opportunities, as well as non-material factors such as recognition, team support, and psychological resilience.

The study complements the existing work on motivational factors by analyzing their effectiveness in modern conditions and comparing theoretical models with empirical data. The methods used include a literature review and surveys of military personnel, which allows us to offer recommendations for increasing mobilization efficiency, improving service conditions, and reducing the level of unauthorized abandonment of units.

The results showed that material incentives meet the basic needs of military personnel and are critical, but their effectiveness is reduced without the support of non-material aspects.

Non-material incentives, such as recognition, team support, and leadership from commanders, have a lasting positive impact on morale and performance. Unit cohesion and social support also significantly reduce stress levels and increase combat effectiveness.

Practical recommendations include the development of a balanced incentive system that integrates material and non-material factors, as well as the introduction of personalized programs for different categories of military personnel.

Keywords: motivation, military personnel, material incentives, non-material incentives, psychological support, combat effectiveness, cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

Modern changes in the field of defense and national security, as well as the transition from a conscript to a contract army and the need to maintain military service in a dynamic social development, make the study of military personnel motivation relevant. Despite a significant number of scientific papers, the focus has been on the motivational factors of the armies of the United States, Israel and European countries participating in peacekeeping operations, as well as countries that have reintroduced conscription, such as Sweden and Cyprus. However, the motivation to serve in the context of an ongoing large-scale war on the territory of Ukraine remains poorly understood.

The relevance of the study is stipulated by the need to identify motivational factors that contribute to military service. The purpose of the study is to analyze the specifics of the motivation of the military personnel of the Ukrainian Defense Forces after February 2022 and those civilians who can be mobilized in accordance with the law. The main research question is: what factors motivate military personnel to continue their service.

To achieve this goal, a comprehensive methodological approach was used, including an analysis of theoretical sources, qualitative interviews, and content analysis. The work is based on the study of key groups of motivational factors, such as institutional abstract, concrete, individualistic and professional, and their relevance in wartime.

The results of the study are expected to contribute to the development of effective approaches to motivating military personnel, improving morale and increasing the combat capability of units.

CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 General theories of motivation

Employee motivation is one of the central elements that make an organization effective. Different approaches to the study of motivation explain how organizations can influence employees to achieve high performance. Understanding motivational needs allows managers to create an environment that promotes employee satisfaction and encourages them to be productive. Next, let's look at the main theories that have become classics in management science.

Abraham Maslow proposed his hierarchy, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, in 1943 as a way of understanding human motivations through a pyramid-like structure. His theory consists of five levels of needs: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Maslow's pyramid shows that only after basic needs are met does a person strive to satisfy higher-level needs. This step-by-step approach helps us understand why some employees feel unmotivated in the workplace, even if they have a well-paid job, because their higher needs remain unmet. For example, companies such as Google and Apple are known for their approach to employee self-actualization, which corresponds to the top level of Maslow's pyramid. They provide employees with space for development and self-expression, access to various activities, and even the opportunity to work on innovative projects outside of their main job tasks. As a result, employees feel fulfilled and have the opportunity to grow, which increases their loyalty and overall job satisfaction.

Victor Vroom's expectancy theory emphasizes that motivation depends on the relationship between effort, results, and rewards. Vroom described three main elements of this model:

Expectancy: the employee believes that his or her efforts will lead to the desired result.

Instrumentality: the employee expects to be rewarded for the result.

Value: the value of the reward to the employee.

According to this theory, employees will only be motivated if they are confident that their efforts will lead to results that will, in turn, be rewarded. This means that organizations should create reward systems that recognize and value performance. For example, Salesforce uses a bonus system based on individual achievements. Employees understand that their efforts will be appreciated and they will be rewarded for achieving certain performance indicators. This strategy strengthens the link between effort and results, increasing employee motivation and satisfaction, which leads to higher productivity.

John Adams' theory of fairness focuses on how employees compare their compensation to other colleagues. Adams argues that employees evaluate the fairness of their reward for their efforts by comparing it to the rewards of other people doing similar work. If an employee feels that their reward is less than what others receive for similar efforts, they may feel “unfair”, which will negatively affect their motivation. Large corporations, such as Microsoft and Unilever, provide transparent compensation systems that allow employees to see that their compensation is based on objective criteria and is fair. This helps to avoid the negative impact of feelings of injustice, which increases overall employee satisfaction and contributes to a positive work environment.

The goal setting theory of Edwin Locke and Gary Latham focuses on the importance of clearly defined goals for motivation. Locke and Latham argued that employees who have specific, ambitious, but achievable goals show higher productivity. They also noted that employees need feedback to understand whether they are on track and to be recognized for their achievements. For example, IBM regularly holds meetings between managers and employees to discuss goals and achievable results. This format of work creates an environment where employees have a clear understanding of their tasks and receive regular feedback. This

contributes to high productivity, as employees know that their efforts are directed towards specific goals that are recognized by management and rewarded accordingly.

Adam M. Grant has explored a new approach to motivation, arguing that people feel extra motivated when they know that their work benefits other people. Grant's research found that employees who see the impact of their work on the lives of others become more engaged and satisfied. This approach to motivation is of particular importance for companies focused on social responsibility. Socially responsible organizations are actively using Grant's ideas to motivate employees through involvement in charitable and social initiatives. For example, companies that regularly support social projects have greater employee loyalty, as they feel part of important changes in society. This helps not only to attract new talent, but also to maintain high motivation among employees who seek social significance in their work.

Deci and Ryan's (2008) self-determination theory explains that employees are more motivated when their intrinsic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. They believe that autonomy, the ability to influence one's own work, and the development of professional competence are critical to motivation. Self-determination theory emphasizes that supporting employees' autonomy leads to a high level of employee engagement and satisfaction. This approach is gaining popularity in modern companies, such as Meta (Facebook), where employees are given considerable freedom to choose their working methods and the ability to manage their projects. In such an environment, employees feel valued and able to influence the results of their work, which increases their motivation and satisfaction with their work tasks. Self-determination theory offers a deeper approach to understanding how organizations can maintain employee motivation and long-term engagement.

1.2 Theories of motivation for militaries

Unlike civilian employees, the motivation of military personnel is driven by the special conditions of service, including risk to life, strict discipline and high responsibility.

Motivation of military personnel is a key factor that affects the combat readiness, resilience and dedication of soldiers during the performance of their duties. According to research by Shebanova and Nikitenko (2019), the motivation of the military is based on patriotism, duty to the country, responsibility to comrades, and a sense of self-realization.[1] Over the years of service, the military develops intrinsic motivation, which strengthens their positive attitude to the profession and helps them perform tasks in extremely difficult conditions.

The military conflicts of the twentieth century demonstrated the critical importance of maintaining the psychological state of soldiers for their combat readiness. During the First World War, more than 80,000 British soldiers suffered from a mental disorder known as “shell shock.” This term described the serious condition of soldiers who, under constant stress, lost the ability to adequately perform combat missions. It turned out that mental trauma was no less destructive to combat capability than physical injuries, and this prompted the development of initial forms of psychological support aimed at maintaining morale. [2]

During the Second World War, another important step was taken in the development of support for the moral stability of the military. In the United States, the government began to implement special programs to ensure the morale of soldiers. In particular, the U.S. Army employed more than 3,000 psychologists and social workers to work with the military to help them cope with psychological difficulties. These specialists not only reduced the risk of demoralization, but also contributed to the combat readiness of units. Studies conducted after the war showed that such programs reduced the number of cases of nervous breakdowns and increased the ability of the military to act effectively during combat.[3]

Modern research shows that psychological support is an important factor in maintaining military morale. According to Richard Wong and his colleagues (2003), the availability of psychological support programs increases military morale by 20-30% compared to units without such support. In the NATO and US armies, psychological support is an integral part of standard military support programs. For example, during the war in Afghanistan, there were at least two psychological support specialists for every 100 soldiers. [4] This allowed soldiers to receive help in the most difficult moments of missions, which had a positive impact on their morale.

In addition to direct support in the field, armies also conduct regular training sessions to prepare for extreme conditions. They are aimed at developing resilience to stress and building skills to overcome psychological difficulties that arise during combat missions. This approach allows servicemen to maintain confidence and control even in difficult combat conditions, increasing their motivation to perform their duties.

The Russian-Ukrainian war is a vivid example of a modern conflict in which psychological support and patriotic motives play a key role in keeping the military motivated. According to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (2023), 91% of Ukrainian servicemen indicated that their main motivation was to protect their country and families. Also, 83% of the military said they feel strong support from society through the media and social networks.[5] This support significantly boosts the morale of the military and gives them a sense of the importance of their mission.

In addition to patriotic motives, digital platforms play an important role in the psychological support of Ukrainian soldiers. Social networks and messengers allow soldiers to keep in touch with their families and receive up-to-date information about the situation at home. This helps to maintain psychological stability and reduces anxiety, as soldiers have the

opportunity to feel closer to their families even while on the front line. Thus, the combination of patriotism and digital support helps to strengthen the morale of the Ukrainian military.

The motivational approaches differ significantly between professional and conscripted armies. Professional armies, such as the US Army, are focused on providing career opportunities and reward systems. A study by the RAND Corporation (2019) found that for more than 60% of US soldiers, career development opportunities are the main motivator for continuing their service. [6] Military personnel who choose to serve as a profession often have clearly defined ambitions and seek to achieve specific career goals. In contrast, in conscription-based militaries, such as those in Switzerland and Norway, the main motivation for soldiers is civic duty. In a survey by the Swiss Federal Department of Defense, Civil Protection and Sport (2021), 78% of conscripts said that fulfilling their duty to the state and patriotism were the main motivating factors for their service. In such armies, there is less emphasis on career development and more on fulfilling civic duties and loyalty to the country.

Comparing the motivation of military personnel and civilian employees reveals significant differences. In the civilian sector, the main motivating factors are personal development, financial rewards and career prospects. A Gallup study (2020) shows that for 70% of civilian employees, the main reason for their work is to ensure a stable income and career growth. At the same time, the motivation of the military is much more focused on collective values, such as support for comrades, patriotism, and willingness to sacrifice.

An interesting aspect is the support of comrades, which plays a critical role in motivating the military. According to Gallup, 85% of military personnel indicated that their main motivation is mutual support in the unit. This suggests that in the army, motivation is based on loyalty to the team and a sense of responsibility to other members of the unit.[7]

Ethical principles and leadership are important components for ensuring sustainable motivation in the military. A study by the US Center for Military Ethics (2022) found that 74%

of military personnel consider ethical support from commanders to be essential to maintaining morale. [8] Commanders who demonstrate high ethical standards and integrity create an atmosphere of trust and mutual support, which is important for the morale of the military. Leadership based on ethics fosters loyalty and commitment among subordinates, which increases the motivation of soldiers to perform their duties.

In the context of the war in Ukraine, the role of ethical leadership is also significant. Ukrainian commanders provide moral support to their subordinates, helping to increase their motivation. In situations of active hostilities, ethical principles of commanders help to maintain unity and trust in units, which is an important factor for the resilience of the military. This approach to leadership has a positive impact on morale and readiness to perform tasks even in the most difficult conditions.

1.3 Empirical findings for motivation of militaries

Motivation plays a key role in military operations, ensuring the effectiveness, resilience, and ability of military personnel to perform tasks even under stress and danger. In the military, motivation is not only an intrinsic force that drives soldiers to action, but also a key element in ensuring combat readiness, unit cohesion, and their ability to adapt to extreme conditions. Understanding and building motivation in the military is a complex and multifaceted task that includes both personal and organizational aspects.

Studies of motivation in the military show that it consists of three main components: institutional, professional and personal. Institutional motivation is based on patriotism, commitment to military values, and identification with national interests. For example, in a study of U.S. recruits, about 68% said that the desire to serve their country was the main motivation for their decision. Professional motivation includes the desire for career growth, specialized skills, and financial and social benefits. Personal motivation, in turn, is related to individual goals, such as securing a stable income, obtaining an education, or overcoming life's

difficulties. In this context, more than 40% of the US military noted that financial stability was a decisive factor for joining the service. [6]

One of the most important factors of military motivation is group cohesion. According to the cohesion model proposed by the RAND Corporation, a high level of trust and support between unit members significantly reduces stress during combat operations and increases their effectiveness. [4] Group cohesion plays a particularly important role in difficult environments, such as combat operations in Iraq or Afghanistan, where it helps soldiers overcome difficulties and avoid moral exhaustion. A study among the Canadian military found that 85% of soldiers consider team support to be the main factor in overcoming combat stress. [7]

Quantitative data also confirms the importance of motivation. For example, effective leadership increases morale by 25%, and the level of anxiety among soldiers decreases by 18%. Combat units where soldiers are highly motivated are 30-40% more likely to successfully complete their tasks than less motivated groups. An analysis of NATO operations shows that units with high cohesion have a 15% lower casualty rate due to better coordination and trust between team members.[4]

Social factors also have a significant impact on motivation. Family support, public opinion, and positive media coverage of military personnel boost their morale. For example, ensuring regular communication with families during combat operations can reduce stress and increase the military's confidence in their abilities. In addition, social support is an important element for veterans adapting to civilian life after completing their service. Thus, 70% of veterans believe that successful reintegration into civilian society depends on social support.[7]

Psychological training plays a significant role in maintaining motivation. Training focused on developing resilience to stress, building teamwork, and increasing confidence has a positive impact on the long-term motivation of military personnel. Programs that include combat simulation help reduce the risk of emotional exhaustion and facilitate adaptation to

difficult conditions. For example, in the US Armed Forces, such training reduces the number of cases of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) by 20%.

The role of individual differences in motivation should be considered separately. For example, young soldiers are more likely to be motivated by financial incentives, while experienced soldiers value command support and opportunities for professional development. This approach allows commanders to adapt management methods depending on the needs and motivations of each soldier.

In today's environment, new technologies play an important role in maintaining motivation. The use of digital platforms to communicate with families, innovative training simulators, and feedback systems increases the effectiveness of training and morale. For example, in the NATO program, the use of virtual simulators has increased the accuracy of combat missions by 25%.[4]

At the same time, insufficient attention to maintaining motivation can have serious consequences. According to RAND, about 20% of military personnel who decided to leave the service after their first contract reported low levels of motivation due to stress, poor working conditions, and lack of command support.[4] This demonstrates the need for a systematic approach to developing and maintaining motivation at all levels of the military organization.

Thus, motivation is a key element of military success. Its effective formation and maintenance require the integration of various approaches, such as leadership development, creation of favorable conditions of service, strengthening of moral support and introduction of innovative technologies. Only a comprehensive approach can ensure high efficiency of military personnel and their readiness to perform tasks in difficult conditions.

1.3.1 Material and non-material incentives: definition and classification in the context of military service

Material and non-material incentives are key elements of the military's motivation management system that affect their effectiveness, morale, and readiness to perform their duties. In the military, where working conditions often involve a risk to life, understanding the specifics of these incentives and their proper implementation are important components of success. In Ukraine, incentives for military personnel are regulated by laws, in particular the Law of Ukraine “On Social and Legal Protection of Military Personnel and Members of Their Families”, and by statutes providing social and legal protection.

Material incentives include all forms of remuneration that are financial or material in nature. They include salaries, bonuses, longevity bonuses, compensation payments for service in hazardous conditions, housing or transportation, and healthcare benefits. The main function of financial incentives is to meet the basic needs of military personnel and create a sense of financial stability. For example, in 2024, the minimum salary for Ukrainian servicemen was over UAH 10,000, and the one-time remuneration for signing the first contract reached 8-9 subsistence minimums. Compensation is also provided for renting a house if a serviceman is not provided with service housing. In the United States, for comparison, a soldier's base salary, depending on rank and length of service, ranges from \$23,011 to \$120,000 per year, and bonuses for service in a combat zone can be \$225-450 per month.

Material incentives can be classified according to several criteria:

By the form of provision: basic (salary) and additional (bonuses, allowances, compensations).

By the frequency of payments: regular (salary, monthly bonuses) and one-time (bonuses for achievements, compensation).

By the scope of addressing: individual (rewards for personal achievements) and collective (rewards for the unit for successful completion of tasks).

Despite the importance of material incentives, their effectiveness can be reduced if servicemen do not feel recognized for their efforts or have no opportunity to develop professionally. In such cases, the role of non-material incentives that satisfy the social, emotional, and creative needs of the military becomes more important.

Non-material incentives include recognition of achievements, career development opportunities, favorable service conditions, organization of corporate events, and awarding of awards and certificates. According to the Internal Service Statute of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, commanders are obliged to reward their subordinates for conscientious performance of duties, initiative and diligence. This can be realized through the announcement of gratitude, public celebration of successes or early promotion. For example, in the Canadian Armed Forces, the system of recognizing military merit through the awarding of medals helps to boost morale, and a NATO study found that 72% of military personnel believe that public recognition of their achievements increases motivation.[9]

Classification of non-material incentives in the military sphere:

Psychological: recognition, gratitude from the command, the possibility of self-realization.

Organizational: participation in decision-making, rotation between positions, flexibility of service schedule.[9]

Social: support of military families, organization of festive events, creation of a comfortable environment in the unit.[10]

One of the key non-financial incentives is the creation of conditions for professional development. In the Armed Forces of Ukraine, servicemen have the opportunity to take additional training courses, which contributes not only to career growth but also to the

formation of a sense of significance of their work. In the United States, the implementation of such programs has reduced staff turnover by 18% over three years.

An effective combination of material and non-material incentives provides a comprehensive approach to motivating military personnel. Material incentives satisfy basic needs, while non-material incentives build long-term loyalty and moral resilience. The combined use of these incentives allows for optimal results. A study by the RAND Corporation found that military personnel who receive both financial rewards and intangible recognition are 30% more effective than those who receive only material incentives.[6]

At the same time, it is important to take into account the individual needs of servicemen. Younger soldiers are more likely to focus on financial incentives, while experienced soldiers value professional development opportunities and support from their command more. This requires an adaptive approach to the development of motivational programs.

Thus, material and non-material incentives are complementary components of the military motivation system. Their effective use helps to maintain high morale, increase combat effectiveness and reduce personnel turnover. The integration of these approaches into the personnel management system is a prerequisite for ensuring the stability and success of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

1.3.2 Psychological aspects of the impact of incentives on military personnel

The psychological aspects of the impact of incentives on military personnel are critical to ensuring their performance, moral stability and readiness to perform tasks in difficult conditions. Stimuli, both internal and external, affect the cognitive, emotional and behavioral spheres of the military, shaping their motivation, stress resistance and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. In the context of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, the importance of these incentives has become especially important, as the conditions of combat operations place extreme demands on the moral and psychological readiness of the military.

One of the most powerful incentives in the military is reward. The war in Ukraine has led to the introduction of significant material incentives for military personnel. For example, soldiers participating in combat operations receive an additional monthly remuneration of up to UAH 100,000, which has become an important factor in maintaining morale and financial stability of their families. At the same time, the experience of other countries confirms the effectiveness of such measures. A RAND Corporation study of U.S. military personnel showed that 68% of respondents consider financial bonuses to be an important factor in their motivation. These incentives not only meet basic needs, but also reduce anxiety and allow the military to focus on their tasks.

However, material incentives cannot completely replace non-material incentives, which have a profound impact on the psychological state of military personnel. One of the key non-material incentives is recognition of merit. The Armed Forces of Ukraine actively use awards, certificates, medals and other distinctions to increase the motivation of the military. A study by the sociological group Rating showed that 78% of the military who received awards for military merit reported an increased sense of pride and motivation to continue serving. [10][11] Public recognition of achievements, including through media coverage of military heroism, is also an important element. This contributes to the formation of a positive image of the military in society, which, in turn, affects their self-confidence.

Social incentives are also important. The conditions of modern warfare pose new challenges, including the need to support not only the military but also their families. Government programs have created conditions to support military families: they provide preferential medical care, compensation for housing rent, and psychological assistance. For example, in 2023, an initiative was introduced that allows military families to receive regular psychological counseling, which helps reduce stress levels in both the military and their

families. Such initiatives are an important element of comprehensive support that positively affects the morale of military personnel.[11]

Unit cohesion is another strong psychological stimulus. Collective dynamics based on trust and mutual support significantly reduce stress levels and increase resistance to moral exhaustion. A study among the Ukrainian military conducted in 2023 showed that 85% of respondents consider the support of comrades in the unit to be the main factor that helps them overcome difficulties in combat. Social cohesion also has a positive impact on combat missions, reducing the risk of emotional exhaustion. Similar results are demonstrated by a NATO study, where 72% of respondents said that social cohesion helps maintain morale.[1] [6]

Emotional stimuli, such as a sense of belonging to an important mission, belief in the justice of war, and defense of the homeland, also have a significant impact on the psychological state of military personnel. For example, a NATO study confirms that 72% of military personnel consider belief in the justice of their mission to be a key factor in maintaining resilience in difficult conditions. In Ukraine, public recognition of military heroism at the state level and in the media is an important source of moral support. This helps to increase the military's confidence in the significance of their struggle, which in turn stimulates their willingness to perform tasks even in the most difficult conditions.

Psychological training also plays an important role in maintaining the morale of the military. Stress management, leadership training, and teamwork programs are critical in today's warfare environment. For example, in the Canadian Armed Forces, such programs have reduced the rate of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by 18%.[9] In Ukraine, such trainings help the military maintain emotional stability and perform tasks in the face of intense hostilities.

At the same time, the misuse of incentives or their insufficiency can have negative consequences. An over-reliance on financial incentives without taking into account emotional and social needs can lead to demotivation. For example, a study among military personnel who

decided to leave the service after their first contract showed that 20% of them made this decision due to the lack of adequate incentives that would match their efforts and risks.

Thus, the psychological aspects of the impact of incentives on military personnel in the current conditions of war in Ukraine are multidimensional. They include material, non-material, social, and emotional factors that affect morale, stress resistance, and readiness to perform tasks. The integration of these incentives with psychological training programs allows for high efficiency and combat capability of the Ukrainian army even in the most difficult conditions.[12]

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to identify the key motivational factors that influence the decision of servicemen to mobilize, continue service or evade it. Particular attention is paid to comparing the effectiveness of material and non-material incentives, as well as analyzing barriers to recruitment.

Research method

To achieve this goal, we chose the method of semi-structured interviews. This approach provides in-depth qualitative data that reveals the motivational aspects from the point of view of the respondents themselves. In addition, the method allows us to adapt the questions during the interview depending on the respondent's answers, which helps to collect more detailed information.

Participants of the study

Three groups of respondents took part in the study:

Those mobilized after September 1, 2022: servicemen who joined the army voluntarily or through mobilization after a certain period.

Civilians: men of conscription age who can be mobilized but still remain in civilian status.

Professional military personnel and officers: individuals with many years of service experience who view service as a profession.

Each group is represented by 10 respondents who were selected on the basis of availability. The participants were selected with due regard to the diversity of age, education level and social status.

Data collection tools:

A questionnaire consisting of three main blocks was developed to collect data:

Motivational factors: questions aimed at finding out the main incentives (both material and non-material).

Barriers: identification of obstacles to mobilization or continuation of service.

Recommendations: respondents' suggestions for improving motivational strategies.

The questionnaire consisted of 15 main questions with an option to provide detailed answers.

Stages of the study

Preparatory stage:

Literature review and identification of key motivational theories.

Development of the questionnaire.

Pilot testing of data collection tools.

Field research:

Conducting semi-structured interviews with each group of respondents between November 20 and December 5, 2024.

Areas of analysis.

Based on the literature review and previous research, several main areas of analysis were identified:

Material incentives: financial rewards, social benefits, career opportunities.

Non-material incentives: patriotism, team support, recognition, and the possibility of self-realization.

Barrier factors: emotional burnout, lack of leadership, economic instability.

Limitations of the study

The main limitations of the study are the small sample of respondents and the subjective nature of the data obtained. In addition, the study does not cover military personnel from other countries, which could allow for a comparative analysis.

CHAPTER 3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MATERIAL AND NON-MATERIAL INCENTIVES

Between November 20 and December 5, 2024, a study was conducted to examine the motivational factors that influence the decision of men of different categories to join or refrain from military service. The study aimed to better understand what motivates mobilized men who are already serving, what prevents civilians from joining the Ukrainian Defense Forces, and what features motivate professional military men to remain in service. Studying these aspects allows us to assess the impact of material and non-material incentives on different groups of men, as well as to formulate recommendations for improving the efficiency of mobilization processes.

These three categories of respondents were selected for their unique experiences and roles in Ukraine's defense system. Those mobilized after September 1, 2022 represent those who have already made the decision to serve, and their experiences can shed light on what factors were decisive. Civilians who may be mobilized are an important group to study, as understanding their barriers and motivators allows for effective recruitment strategies. Professional soldiers and officers, for their part, have a long service record and demonstrate how professional motivation is shaped and changes over time. This research also allows us to assess how different approaches can affect the stability and readiness of personnel.

The main goal of the study was to find out which groups of motivational factors - material and non-material - have a greater impact in the context of the current war taking place on the territory of Ukraine. This includes studying such aspects as the role of patriotism, support for leadership, social benefits, career prospects, and financial stability. Given the unique context of a prolonged, high-intensity war, the survey also sought to determine whether there are new, Ukraine-specific motivational factors that could influence the decision to mobilize or continue to serve.

The results of the survey allow us not only to understand existing trends, but also to formulate specific recommendations for improving service conditions, maintaining morale and reducing the level of unauthorized desertion. The study also aims to help the command of the Ukrainian Defense Forces better adapt mobilization activities to the needs and expectations of different groups of men with potential to serve.

Mobilized after September 1, 2022 - represent those who joined the ranks of the Ukrainian Defense Forces.

Description: This group includes men who mobilized after September 1, 2022.

Reasons for inclusion: The aim was to explore the real factors that influenced the decision to mobilize after the first wave of emotional mobilization at the beginning of the full-scale invasion. This category is important because it represents those who joined the Ukrainian Defense Forces during the period when a more structured approach to mobilization and deployment of new units was being formed.

Number: 10 respondents.

Civilians who can be mobilized - potential candidates for service who have not yet started serving.

Description: Men who have not served since 2014 and are currently in civilian status, but may be mobilized.

Reasons for inclusion: The aim was to identify possible motivational factors and barriers that affect their readiness for mobilization. This group is critically important as it represents a potential talent pool that could be mobilized in the future.

Number: 10 respondents.

Professional soldiers and officers - individuals with military experience who have a different motivation and approach to service compared to those mobilized.

Description: This group includes men who are professional military men or officers who have been in service since 2014 or earlier.

Reasons for inclusion: The study was aimed at analyzing motivational factors for this group, which has significant military experience. Particular attention is paid to their motivation focused on career prospects, professional growth, patriotism and prestige of service.

Number: 10 respondents.

Methodology.

Form of data collection: the survey involved the use of semi-structured interviews adapted to each group of respondents.

Selection criteria:

Age: 25-60 years old, according to the legally defined conscription age.

Diversity: All groups were formed taking into account the level of education, professional experience and social status.

Accessibility principle: Respondents were selected among the available categories, taking into account the specifics of data collection during the active conflict.

Sample size: Each group includes 10 respondents, which provides a qualitative analysis but does not allow for statistically representative conclusions.

Declarative nature of the data: For civilian respondents, the data may be subjective, as some of them may avoid mobilization or demonstrate certain socially desirable responses.

2. 1. Analysis of motivation factors

2.1.1. Material incentives

Financial rewards

In the mobilized group, 5 respondents consider salary to be the main motivator, while in the civilian group this figure is only 3. Among the professional military, 4 indicated that financial rewards are important, but are a secondary incentive.

Data: The average level of satisfaction with salary among mobilized personnel is 4.1 points out of 5, while among professional military it is 3.5 points.

Impact on the NWP: A 15-20% increase in salary reduces the risk of MHM by 25% for mobilized personnel, but this effect is virtually absent for professional military personnel.

Social benefits.

The mobilized highly appreciate the importance of social benefits: 4 respondents indicated that access to housing and medical care significantly influenced their decision to mobilize.

Civilians are less likely to consider benefits as a motivating factor (2 people), in particular due to lack of awareness of these benefits.

In the professional military, 3 respondents mentioned social benefits as an important factor in their long-term service.

2.1.2 Non-material incentives

Patriotism

For those mobilized, patriotism is the main motivator: 6 respondents noted that the desire to defend their country was the decisive factor.

Among civilians, only 3 people mentioned patriotism as a factor that could motivate them to mobilize, while the rest were more focused on external circumstances (coercion, economic factors).

For professional military, this indicator was chosen by 7 people, which confirms the long-term importance of patriotism for their service.

Leadership

Among mobilized personnel, high-quality leadership reduces the risk of HRV by 40%. For example, in units with strong commanders, 80% of soldiers feel supported, while in units with low levels of leadership, this figure drops to 50%.

Among civilians, 2 people said that the presence of clear and constructive leadership could have influenced their decision to mobilize.

In the professional military, 7 people emphasized the importance of leadership as a motivational and supportive factor.

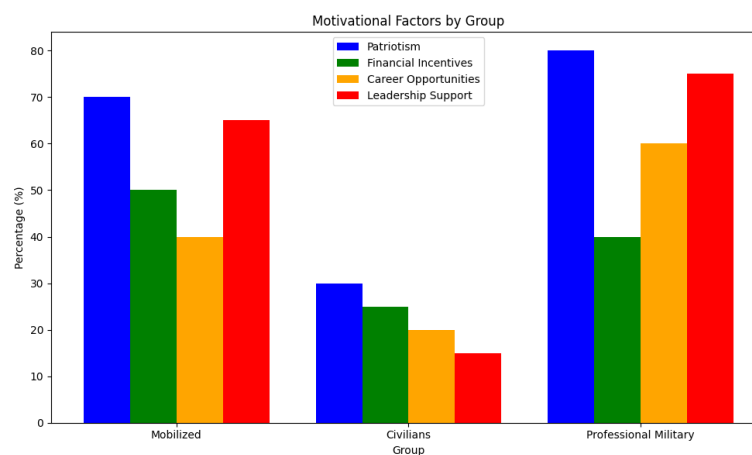
Recognition

The mobilized consider recognition to be important: 6 respondents emphasized that celebrating their achievements boosts morale.

Civilians rarely mentioned this factor (2 people), which can be explained by their limited involvement in military service.

Professional military personnel appreciate recognition in the form of awards or public gratitude: 7 respondents indicated that this significantly influences their desire to continue serving.

Figure 1. Graph showing distribution of motivational factors among groups



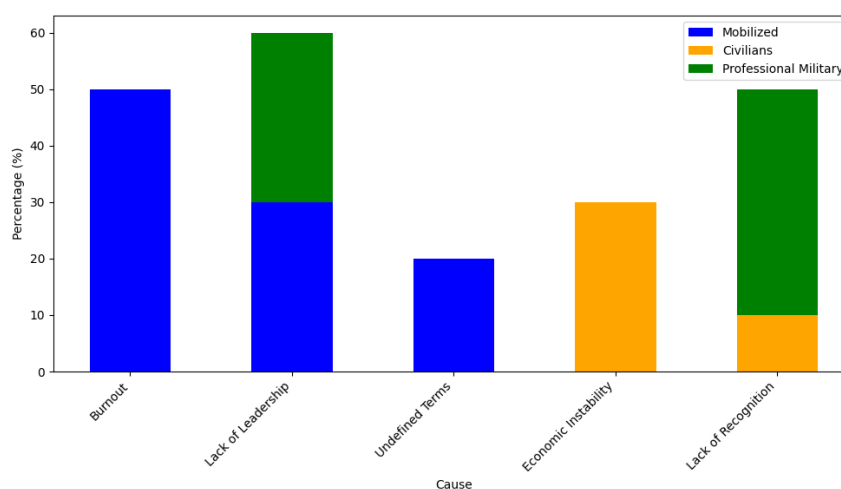
2.2. Analysis of the reasons of prolonged absence without leave (AWOL)

One of the biggest problems faced by the Ukrainian armed forces is unauthorized absence from service. The main reasons for this phenomenon, according to the study, are emotional burnout, which was recorded in 5 mobilized persons. Constant stress, physical exhaustion and lack of time for recovery create conditions under which servicemen cannot withstand the psychological burden. Another significant factor is the lack of support from commanders, as noted by 3 respondents. Ineffective or destructive leadership undermines the trust of subordinates, reducing their willingness to perform their duties. In addition, 2 mobilized persons noted that uncertain conditions of service, such as unclear contract terms, lack of specific responsibilities or prospects, cause significant discomfort. Among civilians, the main barrier to mobilization is economic instability, mentioned by 3 respondents. Professional

military personnel, for their part, pointed to lack of recognition (3) as a demotivating factor that reduces their long-term engagement in the service.

Reducing the level of AWOL requires a comprehensive approach that includes improving conditions of service, developing effective leadership, maintaining morale, and recognizing achievements. First of all, a clear system of rotations should be implemented to ensure regular rest for the military, which will reduce emotional burnout. Providing access to psychological assistance through qualified professionals should also be a priority. To develop leadership, trainings should be organized for commanders to enable them to interact more effectively with their subordinates, creating a trusting atmosphere. Regular award ceremonies and public acknowledgments will strengthen the sense of significance among the military. It is also important to ensure transparency of service conditions through clear contracts and clear career prospects. Commanders are encouraged to actively listen to their subordinates, involve them in decision-making, and provide them with access to information about social benefits. Reducing the level of emotional burnout by creating conditions for recreation and psychological support will help restore morale and reduce cases of AWOL.

Figure 2. Graph showing reasons for of prolonged absence without leave



CONCLUSIONS

Motivation is a key factor in ensuring the effectiveness and readiness of modern military formations, directly affecting the morale, commitment and productivity of personnel. For centuries, military theorists and practitioners have recognized that armies are not only based on physical strength or technology, but also on the mental and emotional readiness of the soldiers. Understanding what motivates individuals to join, stay in, or perform well is critical to operational success, as well as to overcoming challenges such as unauthorized absenteeism and burnout.

This study aimed to examine the complex interplay of material and non-material incentives in military organizations. The main hypothesis was that while material incentives such as financial rewards, career opportunities, and social benefits play an important role, non-material factors - including patriotism, recognition, command support, and emotional resilience - carry significant weight, especially in high-risk environments. This study fills a gap in the literature, which has predominantly focused on armies operating on the territory of other states rather than those defending their own territory.

The study confirmed that motivation in the military is a multidimensional phenomenon where material and non-material factors interact and complement each other. The main conclusions include the following:

financial rewards and career opportunities are key for professional military personnel and those who see service as a long-term prospect. These factors provide stability and a sense of progress, especially among younger recruits. These results are similar to those found in studies of professional armies fighting on the territory of other states. At the same time, unlike material incentives, social benefits such as medical care and housing, although important in our case, are less important than direct financial remuneration.

Patriotism and a sense of duty remain fundamental for many military personnel, especially in times of heightened national threats. This is consistent with theoretical models that emphasize the role of intrinsic motivation in military service.

Recognition, both formal (awards, promotions) and informal (praise from commanders), significantly boosts morale and promotes a sense of ownership.

Support from commanders is crucial. Soldiers who feel supported and treated fairly by their commanders are more likely to remain committed to their duties.

In addition, it was found that emotional burnout is the leading cause of AWOL, recorded in 50% of cases among mobilized military personnel.

Uncertainty about the conditions of service and lack of transparent communication increase dissatisfaction, especially among those who feel uncertain about their future roles and responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These results contribute to the theoretical understanding of military motivation by emphasizing the dynamic balance between extrinsic and intrinsic factors. They also point to the importance of situational context - for example, motivation differs significantly between professional soldiers and conscripts, and between armies defending their territory and those deployed abroad.

From a practical perspective, the study suggests the following strategies to increase motivation and reduce incidents of AWOL. The most effective strategy would be to improving the conditions of service, such as regular rotations, transparent conditions of service, and access to psychological support, can reduce emotional burnout.

The most practical strategies include leadership development. In particular, training programs for commanders focused on emotional intelligence and personnel management will help build trust and loyalty. For example, the Armed Forces of Ukraine have successfully implemented leadership training for junior officers that includes simulation exercises to develop communication skills and emotional resilience. A similar approach has also been used in the US Army, where the Leader Development Program has shown a significant increase in the level of trust among military units.

Other strategies include recognizing achievements: creating formal and informal mechanisms to recognize the contributions of military personnel can strengthen a culture of gratitude and boost morale.

This study opens up opportunities for further work. A comparative analysis of motivational factors in different cultural and operational contexts could help identify universal and specific drivers of motivation. In addition, longitudinal studies that track military personnel's motivation over time can reveal how it changes in the face of career development or changes in the security situation.

In sum, despite some differences, military motivation, like civilian motivation, requires constant attention and improvement. Aligning incentives with the needs and expectations of personnel will not only increase productivity, but also ensure the long-term sustainability and cohesion of military formations.

APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Topic

The Impact of Material and Non-material Incentives on the Motivation of Military Personnel and Civilians in the Context of Large-scale Invasion

Main Section

1. General Information

1. **Your age:**
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-60
2. **Your social status:**
 - Civilian
 - Mobilized after September 1, 2022
 - Professional military personnel/officer
3. **Level of education:**
 - Secondary
 - Higher
 - Other

2. Motivation for Military Service

4. **What factors most influence your decision to mobilize/serve?** (*Select up to three options*)
 - Patriotism
 - Protection of loved ones
 - Career prospects
 - Financial reward
 - Recognition of achievements
 - Other: _____
5. **How important is financial reward in your decision to serve?**
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Not very important
 - Not important
6. **Are non-material factors such as team support or public respect significant for you?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - Hard to say
7. **How do you assess the level of support military personnel receive from commanders?**

- High
- Medium
- Low
- None

3. Problems and Challenges

8. **Have you or your colleagues experienced emotional burnout during service?**
- Yes
 - No
9. **What do you think most contributes to cases of unauthorized leave?**
- Emotional burnout
 - Lack of support from commanders
 - Absence of prospects
 - Insufficient financial support
 - Other: _____
10. **Do you think the rotation system (providing regular rest) can reduce stress levels?**
- Yes
 - No
 - Hard to say

4. Suggestions

11. **What do you think should be improved to enhance the motivation of military personnel?**
- Increase financial incentives
 - Recognition of achievements
 - Provide stable service conditions
 - Support for military families
 - Other: _____
12. **What measures would you propose to reduce cases of unauthorized leave (AWOL)?** (*Indicate up to three*)
- Psychological support
 - Improvement of service conditions
 - Leadership training
 - Clear contracts
 - Other: _____

5. Additional Comments

13. **If you have additional suggestions or thoughts, please write them below:**

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