

The recruitment system for the Armed Forces and the effectiveness of the state's military security system in relation to the experience of the Russian-Ukrainian war 2022-2023

Introduction and methodological assumptions

The military security system of the state is one of the key subsystems of the national security system⁴⁵². The primary objective of this system is to guarantee the survival and advancement of society in relation to present and future threats⁴⁵³. The military security system is aimed at countering military threats. In the 21st century, the so-called threats below the threshold of war have become increasingly common⁴⁵⁴. According to, among others with W. Gerasimov's concept, threats "below the threshold of war" mean waging war, but without an official declaration of its declaration, as well as the nature of such activities makes it impossible to clearly identify the aggressor⁴⁵⁵. Such activities may take various forms, such as information operations, economic, political, sociocultural impacts (e.g. targeted mass migration, inciting and directing riots, and finally carrying out a "grassroots" revolution in another country, etc.), as well as using military means devoid of identification marks⁴⁵⁶. In this case, these actions may look like military actions, but it will be impossible to officially link them to the aggressor state, which will also not officially admit to doing them. Russian

⁴⁵² R. Szpyra, *Bezpieczeństwo militarne państwa*, wyd. Akademia Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 2012.

⁴⁵³ W. Kitler, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe RP*, wyd. Akademia Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 2011.

⁴⁵⁴ D. Kilcullen, *The Evolution of Unconventional Warfare*, *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies* 2019, 2(1), p. 69.

⁴⁵⁵ *The 'Gerasimov Doctrine' and Russian Non-Linear War*, In *Moscow's Shadows* Wordpress, <https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/>, 01.08.2023.

⁴⁵⁶ J. Chambers, *Countering Gray-Zone Hybrid Threats. An Analysis of Russia's 'New Generation Warfare' and implications for the US Army*, Modern War Institute at West Point, <https://mwi.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Countering-Gray-Zone-Hybrid-Threats.pdf>, 01.08.2023.

aggression against Crimea with the use of unmarked military and paramilitary units (the so-called human green) is an example⁴⁵⁷. Another instance of this could be the Russian operation to regain control of the Donbas, wherein during the initial phase, an armed revolution that primarily involved the citizens of a particular country was formally aided by conventional military means (such as weapons, equipment, and soldiers) At a later stage of the operation, Russia "supported the separatists" also with the command staff responsible for leading the "revolution" so that it was successful, i.e. taking over the designated area and defending the country attacked in this way against the armed forces⁴⁵⁸. In the final phase, the operation was supported by soldiers who formally resigned from service in the Russian army and joined the service of the separatists. Later, regular units of the Russian army under Russian command were stationed in the Donetsk and Luhansk republics on a rotational basis. The last example of activities "below the threshold of war" is the successful revolution in Niger (2023), which ended with the seizure of power by a military junta favorable to Moscow, and the removal of pro-French and pro-American politicians from power⁴⁵⁹.

The military security system is aimed at detecting and neutralizing such threats, regardless of whether the threat was caused by formal military aggression (war) or informal use of military means (operations below the threshold of war). In each of these two cases, when the territorial integrity, sovereignty or independence of the state is threatened as a result of the formal or informal use of military means, the military security system should counteract such threats. The effectiveness of the military system depends on many variables, including, in particular, on human resources, which are currently the basis of all the armed forces in the world. The level of training, experience and, what is equally important, the internal motivation of soldiers to fight affects the effectiveness of the armed forces in neutralizing the threats described above. Therefore, the subject of research is the effectiveness of human resources of the armed forces, and the problematic situation concerns the variables affecting this effectiveness. As part of this, the main problem question was identified regarding the identification of the relationship between the recruitment system for the Armed Forces and the effectiveness of the

⁴⁵⁷ M. Kofman, K. Migacheva, B. Nichiporuk, A. Radin, O. Tkacheva, J. Oberholtzer, *Lessons from Russia's Operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine*, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1498.html, 01.08.2023.

⁴⁵⁸ A. Matveeva, *Donbas: the post-Soviet conflict that changed Europe*, *European Politics and Society*, Volume 23, 2022 - Issue 3, p. 410-441.

⁴⁵⁹ Ch. Putsch, *Właśnie upadł ostatni bastion Europy w Afryce. Putin może zacierać ręce*, onet (za: Welt), <https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/swiat/zamach-stanu-w-nigrze-europa-stracila-swojego-ostatniego-partnera-w-afryce/t9mw60y>, 28.07.2023.

military security system of the state, which was formulated as follows: ***Does the recruitment system for the Armed Forces really affect the effectiveness of the military security system?***

It seems that the answer to this question should be affirmative, but in order to positively verify such a hypothesis developed on the basis of the experience of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it was decided to carry out a review of selected wars conducted in the 21st century. Given that the "product" of the recruitment system are candidates representing a certain level of suitability for the armed forces, it can be assumed that the impact of the human factor on the effectiveness of military operations should be examined. Especially in view of the rapidly progressing technology of the battlefield, where the war can be waged by armies with varying degrees of technological advancement. For this purpose, the aforementioned literature review was selected from the empirical methods, and the methods of analysis, comparison and inference were selected from the theoretical methods in order to process the collected empirical material and develop conclusions to answer the problem question thus posed.

Discussion

Artykuł In the era of faster and faster technologicalization of the modern battlefield, increasingly determined by the developing systems of artificial intelligence, it might seem that the role of man in warfare will be gradually marginalized⁴⁶⁰. Nowadays, however, as the ongoing war in Ukraine shows, the level of training, experience and, above all, motivation to fight affects the achievement of military goals to a much greater extent than the quantitative advantage or the equipment used⁴⁶¹. The history of the 20th and the early decades of the 21st century is replete with instances of militaries that were significantly less powerful and engaged in equal battles against an adversary that was superior in terms of quantity and quality, and in some instances, prevailed. This was the case during the two wars in Vietnam, namely 1964-1975 during the Vietnam-American War and 1979 during the Vietnam-Chinese War.⁴⁶² In the case of the first war, the American armed forces had an overwhelming technological advantage, but they were conducting military operations in unfamiliar territory

⁴⁶⁰ *Future Warfare and Technology: Issues and Strategies* (ed. Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan), Global Policy ORF, Durham University, <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/GP-ORF-Future-Warfare-and-Technology-01.pdf>, 2022.

⁴⁶¹ M. Deliso, *Key lessons from the Ukraine conflict about conventional warfare*, ABC news, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/key-lessons-ukraine-conflict-conventional-warfare/story?id=83746590>, 01.04.2022.

⁴⁶² A. Daum, L. Gardner, W. Mausbach, *America, the Vietnam War, and the World: Comparative and International Perspectives*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 259–278.

of the enemy⁴⁶³. Not only were the Vietnamese characterized by an unimaginable motivation to fight, and thus to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of victory, but what is more, as a result of the prolonged and devastating Vietnam war, this motivation gradually grew over the years, contrary to the motivation of the Americans⁴⁶⁴. In the case of the second war, the Vietnamese did not have as many armed forces as the Chinese. The regular Chinese army of 200,000 soldiers, backed by 200 tanks and artillery units, faced 70,000 border guards, who were relatively well-equipped and had extensive knowledge from the war with the Americans⁴⁶⁵. The Chinese troops suffered such heavy losses that a decision was made to withdraw due to supply problems. The continuation of military operations would have threatened a complete defeat⁴⁶⁶. China's troops were able to temporarily occupy only one small city of Lang Son. This does not mean that China did not have the forces or the ability to continue the war while incurring much greater losses. However, the authorities in Beijing thought that prolonging the war was not only pointless, but would also hurt China's reputation in the region. It can be assumed that the Chinese leaders, famous for their pragmatism, drew the right conclusions much faster than the Russian decision-makers during the ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Training, experience and motivation were the factors that had the greatest impact on the success of military operations in both of these wars.

During the Second Gulf War (2003), American troops trained and motivated more than troops loyal to Saddam Hussein. Furthermore, the American triumph was largely attributed to the completely novel approach of conducting military operations aided by psychological operations (PSYOPS) at that time. Such coordinated action (kinetic-psychological) effectively led to the surrender of many units without engaging the advancing enemy⁴⁶⁷. As a result, only a part of the Iraqi troops took up the fight, putting up relative resistance (including the tank battle of Basra, the battles for Al-Hilli and Karbala) and relatively strong resistance during the fights for Baghdad⁴⁶⁸. The strongest motivation to fight

⁴⁶³ C. Currey, *Victory at Any Cost: The Genius of Viet Nam's Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap*, Potomac Books, 2005, Inc. p. 272.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶⁵ K. Chen, *China's War with Vietnam, 1979: Issues, Decisions, and Implications*, Hoover Press, 1987, p. 114.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶⁷ P. M. Taylor, *Psychological Operations In Operation Iraqi Freedom*, University of Leeds, <https://universityofleeds.github.io/philtaylorpapers/vp016d23.html>, 01.08.2023.

⁴⁶⁸ M. R. Gordon; B. E., *Trainor, Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion And Occupation of Iraq*, Vintage Books, 2007, pp. 378–410.

the coalition was mainly manifested by fedayeen and soldiers of the Republican Guard⁴⁶⁹. During the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the coalition quickly took control of the country, and until leaving the country, it struggled with a strong guerrilla movement of Islamist groups (mainly the Taliban) similar to the Soviet occupation of 1979-1989⁴⁷⁰. The coalition forces were unable to defeat the Afghan rebels, even though they had the best technology and numbers. This shows that it's very important to have a strong desire to fight. From the above examples, it appears that, regardless of the technological and quantitative advantage, the key is the level of training, experience, and motivation of soldiers to fight. The Taliban took control of Afghanistan already during the withdrawal of the support troops in 2021, despite leaving trained and well-equipped troops under the local authorities established thanks to the coalition, which confirms this regularity. The lack of motivation to fight, surrender, desertion, abandonment of weapons and equipment, and switching sides with the Taliban's advancing forces were typical⁴⁷¹. When it comes to the conflict in Ukraine, the disparity between the military capabilities of Russia and Ukraine at the time of the war's onset in February 2022 was enormously advantageous to Moscow.⁴⁷² Support from the Western countries began to gradually flow only after the Ukrainians took the first blow, survived and began to achieve their first modest successes⁴⁷³. The eight-year war in Donbass, despite the training and knowledge gained, as well as the immense motivation to fight for their country, the war would have ended much sooner.

Conclusions

Therefore, it is probable that the method of establishing the recruitment procedure for the armed forces is currently the basis for determining the effectiveness of the entire armed forces. The military security system relies on highly effective armed forces to counteract war

⁴⁶⁹ *Iraqi Perspectives Project Phase II Um Al-Ma'arik (The Mother of All Battles): Operational and Strategic Insights from an Iraqi Perspective*, Institute for Defense Analyses, 2008, p. 118.

⁴⁷⁰ *The Soviet Presence In Afghanistan: Implications For The Regional Powers And The United States*, CIA, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp87t00495r000800770004-5>, 01.08.2023.

⁴⁷¹ K. Schaeffer, *A year later, a look back at public opinion about the U.S. military exit from Afghanistan*, Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/08/17/a-year-later-a-look-back-at-public-opinion-about-the-u-s-military-exit-from-afghanistan/>, 22.08.2022.

⁴⁷² *Russia's war on Ukraine: Military balance of power*, European Parliamentary Research Centre, <https://epthinktank.eu/2022/03/04/russias-war-on-ukraine-military-balance-of-power/>, 04.03.2022.

⁴⁷³ *Ukraine war: A month-by-month timeline of the conflict so far*, Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/30/ukraine-war-a-month-by-month-timeline-of-the-conflict-in-2022>, 30.01.2023.

threats and threats resulting from activities below the threshold of war with the use of military means. People who will join the ranks of the army should therefore meet the criteria that will allow them to be shaped in such a way that in the later military service they will not only prove useful, but will drive further development of these armed forces with their own potential (intelligence, specific competences, sufficiently high physical fitness, resistance to stress, motivation to serve and fight, etc.). Psychological tests, fitness tests and an unblemished reputation are required for military service in the Polish armed forces. The scope of requirements may vary depending on the nature of the service and the types of armed forces, as well as the troops within them. The requirements for candidates for Special Forces are significantly more stringent than those for Land Forces. However, candidates are still not subject to a very detailed verification in terms of intellectual predispositions or competences, which is the norm, among others, in the American armed forces. The idea behind this approach is focused on the most effective use of the candidate in terms of usefulness for the armed forces, and on providing the candidate with further development opportunities in positions corresponding to individual needs. It can be observed that the trend in the Polish armed forces is changing in a direction similar to that in the American armed forces. Nevertheless, the size of the structure, which is the actively recruiting and constantly growing army, allows us to understand the gradual pace of changes being introduced. According to the review of the conflicts listed in the article, the key variable is motivation, thanks to which soldiers are willing to make sacrifices both for their own development (and thus strengthening the potential of comprehensively understood armed forces), as well as readiness to fight. It is imperative to derive inferences from the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and these should be implemented promptly in accordance with one's individual requirements. The recruitment system remains a key factor in determining the effectiveness of the state's military security system.

Streszczenie

Artykuł ma na celu wyjaśnienie, czy proces doboru do sił zbrojnych ma istotny wpływ na sprawność wojskowego aparatu bezpieczeństwa. W badaniu wykorzystano metodę przeglądu literatury, a następnie analizy i porównania. Do przetworzenia danych empirycznych i wyciągnięcia wniosków z badania wykorzystano technikę dedukcji. Zbadano wybrane konflikty zbrojne, w których w sposób istotny zaangażowane były zasoby ludzkie. Celem było ustalenie, czy w bieżących konfliktach przewaga wynika z zastosowania zaawansowanej technologii (ilość i skuteczność broni), czy też z ilości i efektywności

zasobów ludzkich. Ostatecznie zidentyfikowano wpływ systemu rekrutacji na potencjalną jakość zasobów ludzkich zaopatrujących siły zbrojne.

Słowa kluczowe:

System rekrutacji, siły zbrojne, system bezpieczeństwa wojskowego, wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska

Key words:

Recruitment system, armed forces, military security system, Russian-Ukrainian war

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