

NAUKI O BEZPIECZEŃSTWIE / SECURITY STUDIES

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THE MODEL OF THE ADAPTATION MECHANISM OF THE DISCHARGED MILITARY FROM THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Introduction

The dynamic changes in the security environment expose the former servicemen and their family members to severe tests irrespective of different reasons. The transition from the military social environment to the civilian social environment significantly changes their living conditions, affects various aspects of their lives, on the basis of which the mentality and personality of each person changes, leaving the usual social environment and entering an unfamiliar environment. Undoubtedly, in such a difficult process, it is inevitable that a number of problems arise and the scale and degree of these problems are different from country to country. For example, in countries with weak economy and defence potential, discharged military face very serious problems, while in some developed countries, this problem does not even exist. From this point of view, the problem has been more broadly studied in European countries and the United States and in those researches, strong proposals and recommendations to facilitate the adaptation process have been reflected. The research by Kim Gordon, Karen Burnell and Clare Wilson explores and presents the experiences regarding the impact of military service, mental health and transition period on the families of discharged military in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 30 discharged military (27 men, 3 women) were interviewed for the research work. Participants ranged in age from 26 to 92 (Average age = 53.33) with various

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war experiences (from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan)¹. The main topics were reasons for leaving the Armed Forces, life outside the military and mental health problems after service. Additionally, ancillary themes for the assessment of personality and mental health conditions were identified. Dave Blackburn has tried to justify the recent period of military service in the Canadian Army as an element of the adaptation process. The report prepared by Thompson inform ways to support and communicate with the discharged military and shape civilian societal attitudes toward them². Mary Keeling's research provides an in-depth understanding of the integration of discharged military into civilian life in the United States, the challenges they face and the adaptive and maladaptive ways in which they manage them³. Factors affecting integration such as employment, living conditions and health were considered in the study. It is noted in the research work that the different social and cultural norms of military personnel, the time spent in combat zones and the time spent away from family, friends and civilian society during service make the integration into the civilian life a complex process. As a result of the survey conducted with the discharged military, it was found that before the events of September 11, 33.3% of military personnel stated that they had difficulty in adapting to civilian life, but after that event, 60.5% of them stated that they had difficulty in adapting to civilian life. T.A. Chertushkina have studied the issue of socio-professional adaptation of discharged military in Russia and scientifically and theoretically substantiated the need to develop a new mechanism in this direction⁴. The authors also presented the psychological resources and qualities necessary in the process of adaptation of each individual. James McDermott's doctoral dissertation was also devoted to an analysis of the experience of military servicemen who were discharged from the Royal Army of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland⁵. The author tried to reveal the differences between the two lifestyles. Kintzle

¹ K. Gordon, K. Burnell, C. Wilson, *Outside the Military "Bubble": Life After Service for UK Ex-armed Forces Personnel*, in: *Front Public Health*, 2020. DOI: 10.3389/fpubh.2020.00050 (Accessed: 26.04.2023).

² J.M. Thompson, W. Lockhart, M.B. Roach, H. Atuel, S. Bélanger, T. Black, C.A. Castro, D. Cox, A. Cooper, C. de Boer, S. Dentry, K. Hamner, D. Shields, T.T. Truusa, *Veterans' Identities and Well-being in Transition to Civilian Life – A Resource for Policy Analysts, Program Designers, Service Providers and Researchers. Report of the Veterans' Identities Research Theme Working Group, Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research Forum 2016*, Charlottetown PE: Research Directorate, Veterans Affairs Canada. Research Directorate Technical Report 2017.

³ M. Keeling, *Stories of transition: US Veterans' narratives of transition to civilian life and the important role of identity*, "Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health" 2018, vol. 4, pp. 28–36, 2018. Available at: <https://jmvfh.utpjournals.press/doi/10.3138/jmvfh.2017-0009> (Accessed: 11.01.2023).

⁴ T.A. Chertushkina, N.B. Shmeleva, O.V. Shabanova, M.V. Shmeleva, *Socio-Professional Adaptation of the Military Personnel Transferred to the Reserve (Research Made in the Ulyanovsk Region, Russia)*, "Review of European Studies" 2015, no. 7(11). DOI:10.5539/res.v7n11p132 (Accessed: 19.03.2023).

⁵ J. McDermott, *Old soldiers never die: they adapt their military skills and become successful civilians. What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work?* A Doctoral thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Social Sciences, Leicester 2007.

emphasize the importance of social communication in the adaptation process of the discharged military and justify the role of social relations in overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder⁶. C.L. Pedersen and C. Wieser have studied the existing mechanisms applied to the social adaptation of discharged military from the Danish Army⁷. Professor Venelin Terziyev tries to clarify the factors that affect the mental state of the Bulgarian Army soldiers, investigate the issues of their adaptation to new conditions and identify the problematic areas of their social protection, presents the competency model for social adaptation and the structure of the social adaptation program for the Bulgarian Army⁸. Taras Vdovichenko has studied the process of social and professional adaptation of personnel discharged from the Ukrainian Army, tried to clarify the structure of adaptation based on its main components and considered the financial aspect of the implementation of the process⁹. The author conventionally grouped four types of its financing according to the available financial sources: centralized (budget), decentralized-endogenous, decentralized-exogenous and integrative (mixed). The author also substantiated the fact that the decentralized-exogenous model of financing the social and professional adaptation of discharged military in Ukraine prevails and identified its features and shortcomings. Anna Artemenko and Ekaterina Bataeva present the classical and modern sociological approaches to the analysis of social adaptation and integration, examine the features of social adaptation of veterans of armed conflicts¹⁰. According to this study, the majority of Ukrainian veterans has the middle level of social adaptation (39%). 33% of veterans have not adapted to civilian life, such veterans usually do not have a job/housing/family/children. 28% of Ukrainian veterans have high level of social adaptability.

Most of the outcomes of the abovementioned researches were included in various state programs and systematically used in the process of adaptation of the discharged military. The purpose of the article is to identify all possible elements involved in the process of social adaptation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to prepare and present a structural scheme based on them. Mainly qualitative, namely comparative analysis and synthesis methods were used in the preparation of the research work.

⁶ S. Kintzle, N. Barr, G. Corletto, C.A. Castro, *PTSD in U.S. Veterans: The Role of Social Connectedness, Combat Experience and Discharge*, "Healthcare" 2018, no. 6(3); Available at: <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9032/6/3/102> (Accessed: 22.02.2023).

⁷ C.L. Pedersen, C. Wieser, *Veteran Transition from Military to Civilian Life: Towards a Sociocultural Framework for Social Support*, "Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies" 2021, no. 4(1), pp. 158–171.

⁸ V. Terziyev, *Complex model of social adaptation of servicemen, discharged from military service*, "IJASOS- International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences" 2019, vol. V, pp. 50–60; Idem, *Realities of implementing the social adaptation process of military personnel, discharged from service in Bulgaria*, "IJASOS- International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences" 2018, vol. IV, pp. 795–805.

⁹ Т. Вдовиченко, *Соціальна та професійна адаптація звільнених військовослужбовців як об'єкт фінансового забезпечення*, "Світ фінансів" 2017, vol. 1(50), с. 166–180.

¹⁰ A. Artemenko, E. Bataeva, *Methodological aspects of measuring levels of veterans' social adaptation*, "Technium Social Sciences Journal" 2020, vol. 14, pp. 655–660.

Structural scheme of the elements involved in the adaptation process of discharged military

The adaptation of the military personnel who are assigned to a new unit or position and their family members is undoubtedly supported by other military. When they are discharged from the ranks of the army, they in fact have no such opportunity. The discharged military and their family members are forced to find new ways to integrate into society. The discharged military may have never applied for or interviewed for a civilian job, especially if they had a successful career in the military. Therefore, in a new environment, these are considered new skills that he needs to learn and master. While applying for a job, the discharged military must adapt his military skills and abilities to civilian needs and form a new identity. This, in turn, is not something they can handle alone. The studied experiences show that the discharged military are most easily employed at their former units or any military establishment. However, it certainly does not seem realistic to employ all of them in military establishments, most importantly, most of them prefer to work in a different field (where there is less stress and tension).

Every year, hundreds of servicemen are discharged from the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan for various reasons. The issue of social adaptation of those discharged military personnel is of special importance in the Republic of Azerbaijan, as it is in all countries. People who have devoted themselves to military work from a young age find it difficult to adapt to new conditions. Socio-psychological adaptation is considered a rather complex process for them. Because for this, it is necessary to master a new social role, get used to a new environment, form a new identity, and as a result, master a new art. According to a 2011 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center with 1,853 discharged military, 72% of them said that integration into civilian life was easy and 27% said that it was difficult¹¹. However, there is no clear definition of the process in either the scientific or the military context and opinions about its normal duration and the main factors influencing it are different and most importantly, there is no generally accepted conceptual model for this process. All these mentioned challenges accompany discharged military throughout the entire process of social adaptation. From this point of view, the process of social adaptation of the discharged military is a dynamic process that requires the joint activity of governmental, non-governmental and private organizations. However, such a joint activity is realized very rarely in the world or practical work is being done in the direction of its realization. In our research, the following reasons for the discharged military have been considered: 1. End of the service. 2. Age. 3. Illness. 4. Dismissal. 5. Family problems. 6. Service due to non-compliance. 7. Criminal case. 8. Own desire.

¹¹ D. Blackburn, *Out of uniform: psychosocial issues experienced, and coping mechanisms used by Veterans during the military-civilian transition*, "Journal of military, veteran and family health" 2017, vol. 3, pp. 62–69.

It is necessary to create and develop a mechanism of social adaptation for effective use of discharged military. The process of social adaptation of discharged military is the process of their adaptation to a new environment in society in a short time. The positive outcome of this process depends primarily on the socio-psychological qualities of discharged military, as well as their ability to overcome difficulties. In this regard, the issue of social adaptation of discharged military should be one of the main directions in the state's social policy and special mechanisms should be developed and presented for the organization of social protection of former military personnel facing socio-economic difficulties. It should also be noted that since many of the programs intended for discharged military focus on mental and physical health issues, there is only a limited number of studies in the scientific literature that entail the factors such as employment and living conditions that affect the integration process.

Social work in itself reflects a pedagogical component in the process of social adaptation of former military personnel and their families to civilian life. Its content is formed by socio-pedagogical activity of the former military serviceman's adaptation potential aimed at maximum implementation of his knowledge, habits, skills and experience in new social conditions while maintaining his previous social status. Socio-pedagogical activity is carried out against the background of social education of discharged military and their entry into a new social environment, reconstruction of their micro-social environment. This allows for the unity and interaction of the objects, subjects and principles of social adaptation of ex-servicemen and their family members, its general and specific technologies, conditions, the adaptation potential of ex-servicemen (together with their families), as well as implies the implementation of a comprehensive social adaptation model that defines the potential of the social environment they are forced to enter. In this paragraph, an attempt was made to determine the following main indicators of the socio-pedagogical features of the adaptation process of the discharged personnel from the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- the status of different categories of discharged military that require more attention of the state and society (these categories have already been considered in a number of research studies as a separate group¹²;
- correlation between the attitude of the state and society towards that group;
- having mechanisms for studying the social status of discharged military and conducting practical work personally with each of them (including family members);
- the degree of importance of the intellectual and physical potential of discharged military for the state and society;
- level of readiness of state institutions to implement social policy priorities, purposeful and systematic social work with discharged military;
- existence of NGOs operating in the field of social work with discharged military;

¹² R. İbrahimov, *Azərbaycan Ordusundan tərxis olunan hərbi qulluqçuların sosial adaptasiyası prosesində riskli qrupların tədqiqi*, "Hərbi İcmal" 2021, no. 2, pp. 52–56; İdem, *Tərxis olunan hərbi qulluqçuların sosial adaptasiya problemləri*, "Milli təhlükəsizlik və hərbi elmlər" 2021, no. 2, pp. 34–39.

- degree of practical involvement of public and civil organizations in social work with discharged military;
- the degree of cooperation of these organizations with state institutions and business subjects in social work with discharged military;
- the level of financial potential of social-military oriented public organization or civil association.

In fact, it is possible to expand this list quite a bit, but considering the current economic, social and military potential, it is necessary to have at least these indicators for the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The basis of social adaptation of discharged military is providing them is comprised of the professional advice, psychological rehabilitation (providing psychological assistance); socio-psychological adaptation, their involvement in small entrepreneurship, creation of support structures for small entrepreneurship, and, if necessary, implementation of their vocational training (re-qualification). As it can be seen, the realization of all these activities in itself requires the participation of many institutions. In this regard, social adaptation is generally a process involving the state, public organizations and NGOs, business structures, as well as former military personnel and their family members¹³. In some countries, each of these elements manifests itself in the process of social adaptation, in some, the state and NGOs are represented, and in others, NGOs are left alone with their own problems. From this point of view, in order to contribute to the effectiveness of the process, the issue of developing a structural scheme of the adaptation mechanism of discharged military and involving many elements in the process at the same time on the basis of that scheme is of particular relevance. As can be seen from the definition itself, active cooperation with specialists in specific services determines the individual profile of the integration into civilian life, taking into account the economic processes occurring in the region where they live with their families and the activities of modern civil society. Considering that the structural scheme is a simplified model of a real process, the structural scheme of the elements involved in the social adaptation of discharged military should be viewed from two aspects: structural-component (organization-subjects) and structural-functional (main functions, areas of social adaptation). This research is limited to the first aspect, i.e. functions are not considered. The structural component is simply a list of elements that are likely to be involved in the process of social adaptation. Finance is considered the main factor for the realization of any model. However, determining which of these elements provide financial support to the overall process is also one of the main issues. Consequently, the solution of such issues should be considered in the second aspect (structural-functional).

According to Professor Terziyev, an important characteristic feature of the social situation in the field of work with discharged military is that the activity of existing social institutions in the complex solution of the problems of the process in the new conditions and involvement in active live in the period of the market

¹³ V. Terziyev, *Realities of implementing the social...*

economy is actually not satisfactory¹⁴. Undoubtedly, it is not correct to apply this to all countries. However, it is an undeniable fact that the same trend exists all over the world. Therefore, the process of social adaptation of discharged military is quite a topical issue, but it does not attract the attention of many institutions and organizations. A necessary condition for the successful organization of the social adaptation process is the personal participation of discharged military from the initial stage of the process. This means that the non-participation in the first stage of the process can definitely make it difficult or even impossible for the them to adapt to the next stages of the integration process. In other words, the social adaptation of ex-servicemen and their family members should be considered as a multifaceted process that takes place at different levels (conceptual and political, social and civil, legal, day to day and practical). Professor Terziyev identified the following main activities related to this process:

- 1) prediction of possible changes in the status of the main social groups represented by discharged military and their family members;
- 2) determining the goals of military and public work with them on behalf of state institutions, as well as on behalf of public and non-governmental organizations;
- 3) finding a balance between the social needs of the discharged military and their family members and the economic opportunities of the state and society at the transitional stage of their development;
- 4) formation of the image of discharged military as highly qualified specialists and the formation of an appropriate attitude towards them on behalf of the society¹⁵.

Undoubtedly, it is possible to expand the range of these activities. However, at the initial stage, implementation of at least these activities in the social adaptation process of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan may produce the desired result. The conceptual and political level of the socio-pedagogical set of activities and fields for solving the social problems of discharged military and their family members involves the development of social policy. In this case, social policy is defined as a specific activity carried out by state bodies in particular and society in general to meet the quality of the needs of discharged military. The normative-legal level for solving many issues related to the adaptation process includes the provision of social-legal protection of discharged military and their family members. Socio-legal protection is defined as a system of social security (and activities aimed at their development, legalization and implementation) that ensure minimum living conditions, advantages and privileges of different categories of discharged military and their family members. These social guarantees form the basis of the social law adopted at the national level. Professor Terziyev presented the following main features of such a law¹⁶:

¹⁴ Idem, *Complex model of social adaptation of servicemen...* .

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

- level of reflection of the social problems that arise during the integration of the discharged military into civilian life in legislative documents and normative acts;
- quality of legislative documents and normative legal acts prepared in the field of ensuring the social rights and guarantees of discharged military;
- degree of practical implementation of social law norms by state institutions at different levels (national level, ministry and military unit level) in relation to discharged military.

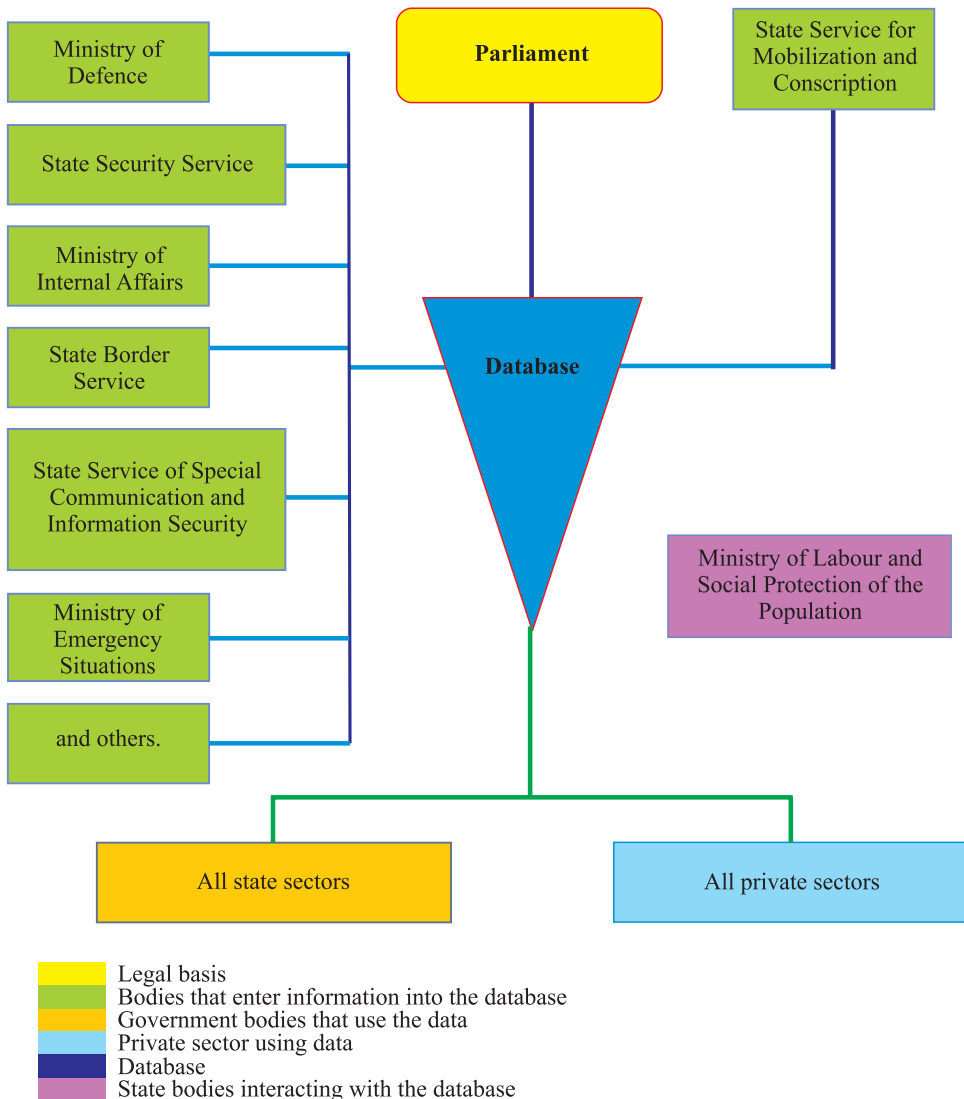


Fig. 1. The proposed scheme of the adaptation mechanism of the discharged military

The implementation of social policy related to the adaptation of discharged military also requires the participation of non-governmental and public organizations (parties, social movements, foundations, etc.) and business entities. Representatives of these organizations, taking into account their business interests, can make serious efforts for the development and operation of social infrastructure, in addition to influencing the priorities of social work with discharged military.

It should also be noted that the indicated activities reflect all possible indicators of the socio-pedagogical features of the adaptation process. If the implementation of some of the activities (for example, 2 and 3) necessarily requires the participation of public authorities, some (for example, 1 and 4) can be implemented by the private sector. At the initial stage of improving the social adaptation process, the participation of state authorities would be more effective. In this regard, the structural scheme proposed in the article reflects the main elements that can be involved in the social adaptation process of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Figure 1).

The first stage of the work is the adoption of the law by the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This project will form the legal basis for the social adaptation of the discharged military (drafting the content of the law is the subject of a separate research paper). In the next stages, actions should be taken in the direction of organizing or improving the work of state and non-state institutions, private sectors reflected in the law and as a result, a systematic approach to the process of social adaptation should be applied. As can be seen from the scheme, a database is formed based on the submissions of the Azerbaijan Army and other armed formations created in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the state bodies. As well as the private sector, in turn, get the opportunity to use this database.

Conclusion

Thus, the conducted analyzes show that the involvement of as many elements as possible in the process of social adaptation of the discharged military has a positive effect on the effectiveness of the overall process. The structural scheme proposed in the research can serve as a basis for the optimization of this process at the current stage. Undoubtedly, future revision and improvement of this model is not excluded. However, in the current situation, it has special practical importance in terms of solving existing problems and systematizing all activities. As presented in the article, the structural scheme can be considered as a model of a complex approach to solving the problems of the discharged military. The aim is to develop and build a mechanism for solving complex social problems of the mentioned category, to create a complex model (or several models) of organizing this process on the basis of self-sufficiency.

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THE MODEL OF THE ADAPTATION MECHANISM OF THE DISCHARGED MILITARY FROM THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

SUMMARY

A serviceman discharged from the Army faces various concerns and problems while integrating into civilian society. The integration of people belonging to this category into society and making their lives easier has become a priority. While the transition from military to civilian life works

out well for many, for some the transition is extremely difficult. The development of a complex model of the social adaptation process of personnel discharged from military is considered one of the most important issues in the process of integrating people who change their profession and lifestyle into a new environment. The article reviews all possible elements involved in the process of social adaptation of servicemen released from the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan and presents a structural scheme (model) for the development of the mechanism of this process.

KEYWORDS: social adaptation, discharge military, structural scheme, model, element

