APPROACH TO COMBINED EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SECURITY AND DEFENSE

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Abstract: *The author presents the abstract idea of creating modularity in the subjects studied for acquiring educational degrees and the knowledge necessary for the improvement of the qualification, creating parallelism and complementarity between the education and the training. The presented ideas exist in the system of higher education but they have not been applied so far in the improvement of qualification.*

Keywords: continuous education, training in educational degree, modularity, combination

1. Introduction

The aims of education are created by the interests of the state, society and the immediate participants in the educational process. The state objectives are defined in normative documents and adopted standards of education. Military educational objectives reflect the needs of different types and branches of armed forces, answering their needs, values, interests, and demands for professional training. The objectives of the immediate participants in the military education process are those developed by the lecturers and trainees themselves, taking into account the type of the educational institution, the profile of the specialization and the subject of study. Goals, intentions, and expectations for each of the specializations are coordinated with the users of the cadre [1].

In Bulgaria, the training takes place at military academies, Rakovski National Defence College, and vocational colleges and in training centers. For officers, education takes place only in the military

universities (academies) and Rakovski National Defence College (RNDC). Each of these institutions, as well as RNDC, is a legal entity with a field of activity: [2]

1. The training of specialists capable of developing and applying scientific knowledge in the various fields of human activity; (for the military education system this is in the field of security and defense).

2. Improving the qualifications of specialists. The former activity is focused on education, which as a process is a purposeful activity of acquisition of knowledge, in harmony with self-education, ensuring the development of skills, and competencies at a level not lower than the state (or European) requirements (the so-called qualifications frameworks). The latter main activity focuses on training to improve the qualification, which in turn provides “product” (service) - knowledge (theoretical and/or factual), skills (cognitive and practical) and competencies (autonomy and responsibility, cognitive, communicative and social; professional).

2. The situation

The military education system, [3] as part of the individual training of the personnel, focuses on two components - education and qualification, which complement each other. In both cases, however, attention is focused on the training that takes place in military universities (academies) and RNDC and professional colleges as follows:

- Educational degree “professional bachelor, in ...” which provides specialized vocational training in certain professional fields and specialties;
- Bachelor’s degree, which provides broad-based training or specialized vocational training in professional fields and specialties;
- Master's degree, which provides in-depth fundamental training, combined with profiling in a particular specialty.

Enhancement of qualification is the training to maintain and improve the professional knowledge and skills of military and civilian personnel throughout the term of their service in accordance with their job description, current and future tasks of the Armed Forces, achievements of military science and the development in armament and combat vehicles.

In Bulgaria, qualification is acquired, enhanced and improved through training in further education and retraining [4]. Job training is the training to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to hold specific positions, while the additional qualification is the training to obtain additional knowledge and skills needed in the field of professional activity.

Curricula and programs are prepared for each type of training. For the Rakovski National Defense College the curricula are coordinated with the users of the cadre (for the Land Force Specialization, this is the commander of the Land Forces), with the Chief of Defence, the Deputy Minister of Defence and the Minister of Education and are approved by the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria. The programs are prepared by the departments, coordinated

with the Dean of the faculty, and approved by the Commandant of RNDC.

It should be mentioned that the training for the enhancement of the qualification is conducted according to the educational documentation, the requirements of which are determined only in the regulations of the higher school. It is natural to comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Act but the training for the enhancement of the qualification is not a prerequisite for the acquisition of a degree or a specialty.

Currently, there are no legal barriers to combining training related to education and enhancement of qualification.

It is necessary to introduce a procedure to fulfil the requirements of users of cadre as follows:

- What - in terms of content and volume,
- How much - as a time limit for acquiring the knowledge and skills,
- How - as a way to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.

In accordance with the legal requirements of the procedure in question, the users of cadre will require the relevant documents concerning facts and circumstances and the relevant information will be provided. This information may relate to the number of learners [5] that can be further trained in a certain module, the resources that can be allocated, and what personnel (experts and instructors) can contribute to improving the quality of the training.

3. The idea of the approach

The idea underpinning the approach to reconcile training related to education and upgrading skills is relatively simple, yet flexible and versatile. In general, this would require that training take place under the training curriculum for a particular subject, which however requires that the structure of the curricula and programs of the subjects studied be structured to provide for modularity.

The modularity of a given discipline (depending on its duration) is the organization of relatively equal parts,

corresponding to the volume and content of the theoretical knowledge necessary to receive and apply in order to improve qualification. In other words, each of the modules should contain such a number of lectures and practical workshops that both provide sufficient time resources for acquiring the necessary knowledge and the necessary skills.

The learning process will be carried out according to the educational documentation for each specialty and specialization. The program of courses will be precisely defined in terms of volume and sequence as

part of the study in a subject or a module of the curriculum for the specialization.

The courses will be included in the annual schedule of the learning process, which will diminish the additional workload of the academic staff as the additional workload is not small for some of the specializations. In this way, uniformity, simultaneity, and efficiency will be achieved, which will help the heads of departments, who are even shorter of human resource in certain academic structures.(see figure 1)

Figure 1: Exemplary allocation of the training subjects in the Master's or Bachelor's degree

Military Academies (Universities and RNDC) will not change their requirements and will issue a diploma for higher education (for those who completed their master's or bachelor's studies) and a certificate for qualification (for those who completed the course of training). If we take the example of a study group with ten military students, and each module includes six extra trainees in the discipline in a certain field (according to the content or the

topics in the module), a total of sixteen students and trainees will receive education and training in a certain subject matter.

If this happens in three consecutive modules in a given discipline, the ten students will receive complete training in the given discipline (i.e. "broad specialists") and eighteen trainees will acquire knowledge and skills in the particular modules of the discipline (i.e. "narrow specialists"). (See figure 2) The

training, organized in this way, will contribute to the upgrading of the qualifications of officers and/or civilians and, for a short period of time, to gain the necessary knowledge in a specific field. A limitation to participate in no more than two courses in an academic year may be applied for the trainees.

This approach is not applicable to any kind

of subjects in the field of higher education but can be applied successfully to disciplines that are mainly of a practical and applied nature. It can be used to increase the knowledge and skills acquired at an earlier stage in the upgrading of qualifications or the initial acquisition of practical skills in specific environments and circumstances.

Figure 2: Conceptual structure for reconciling education and training

In this way, the requirements for enhancing the knowledge of junior officers can be fulfilled, combining the training methods in the learning process through the consistent and parallel approach of cooperation. It will also meet the basic principles associated with the preparation set out in the doctrinal base of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria, namely:

- Purposefulness ;
- Compatibility ;
- Orderliness and consistency.

The requirement that the individual training is planned and conducted to upgrade the knowledge, skills, and habits of the staff in the interest of performing collective tasks linked to the opportunity of covering a module related to the upcoming tasks facing the headquarters at different levels.

Due to the reduced number of exercises with troops and forces to maintain the

ability to plan and manage the battle (operation), it is necessary to increase the number of staff training exercises with the staffs at the tactical level (brigade, regiment, and battalion). This fact further tips the scales in the direction of modularity, considering that each of the modules can end with practical exercises (military games, command and staff exercises, tactical command exercises, etc.) related to the subject matter of the module. The stages through which the process of combining education and the training can go through are the following:

- **Analysis.** This is the process for determining the requirements on the basis of which the specific training program is developed. It includes:
 - Study of the tasks to be carried out and the objectives to be achieved;

- Gathering the necessary information and data concerning the potential number of trainees;
- Gathering information on the topics that need to be covered and the relevant skills that need to be developed (it can be done by the training institution or provided by the user of cadre);

The product of the analysis leads to the determination of the desired end state in the training (whether they are only military, only civilians or a combination of both categories). The aim of this phase is to tie the necessary results of training and education with the main responsibilities in performing a certain type of activity within the framework of security and defense.

Here we have to answer the questions who, when, where, with what, why, and how to prepare. In order to perform an effective analysis, data from commanders, headquarters, end users of cadre, experts in specific areas, training and educational specialists are needed. The product of this phase will be the curricula and the training programs (for the higher education institution) and the operational (military) standards describing the training objectives;

- **The intent of the preparation.** The objectives of the training can be determined based on the individual mission, a specific task or certain activity carried out by organizations, departments, formations, military or civilian entities. They must be realistic in terms of efficiency and adequate use of resources. Incorrectly defined learning objectives lead to inefficient preparation and lack of skills. The scope of the preparation should predetermine the methods, forms, and resources to be used, the requirements for the different staff sections and the trainees, and instructions for developing the academic plans and programs in accordance with the intentions of the users of cadre and the military education system;

- **Organizing.** The primary objective is to develop (collect) learning materials that will lead to the implementation of the concept of preparation. The secondary

objective is to form a team of trainers (instructors) to be able to carry out the necessary training. The plans for preparation transform the commander's intentions into mutually related events and requirements to meet certain standards. Plans should include the frequency, duration, sequence of events and the necessary resources. The programs define the methodological guidelines, content, conditions, and standards to be achieved during preparation [7];

- **Conduct.** The aim of this phase is to enable the achievement of training objectives according to accepted standards;

- **Rating (internal).** The training institution does it. The aim of this phase is to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of training and education. An academic program is effective if the trainees achieve the learning objectives and are efficient when the methods, materials, and cost of resources for its implementation are optimized;

- **Verification (external).** The purpose of this phase is to confirm whether the training provided enables trainees to meet the qualification standards set in the analysis phase. The external evaluation performed by the user of cadre can identify not only insufficient but also redundant or irrelevant topics in a particular field of preparation. This sequence can be either supplemented or shortened depending on the available databases, performance cycles, and intensity.

It is not necessary to use only the military component as a basis for planning and use: it is also possible to train the trainees in case studies (practical actions in different situations)[6] in which, simultaneously, in succession or in combination, the goal is to achieve different effects from the training. Such a distribution provides an opportunity (especially for groups with a small number of trainees) to carry out two-stage training and, depending on the acquired knowledge of the trainees, they are placed in the role of a superior and the others in the role of subordinate headquarters (organizational structure). Naturally, this will also depend on the level of education and training, as

well as on the acquired (accumulated) practical experience of the trainees.

The distribution can also be carried out in entities of equal rank where the main objective is to ensure coordination and interaction between different functional organizational structures.

4. Conclusion

The emphasis on the improvement of the educational component lies in its further adaptation to the contemporary national requirements and to the pressing demands for compatibility with similar educational structures in NATO, the EU, and the allied

nations. In this way, the quality of the education offered will be increased in certain professional fields in the basic educational structures and/or the departments of the military academies and RNDC for all servicemen and for certain scientific fields of study.

Through the use of this simple approach, the skills and knowledge of students and trainees in various fields of military science and arts can be enhanced both in the main areas of warfare, counter and anti-terrorism, counter-insurgency and other modern security and defence challenges.

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