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## **THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE CAREER PROGRESSION OF SERVICEMEN OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF UKRAINE**

*The article proves the relevance of studying the essence of career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine in the context of military service, identifying key aspects of a career in the security and defence sector, as well as analysing the factors influencing the career and professional development of servicemen. By analyzing the current state of manning, the authors have revealed the outdated system of career progression in the National Guard of Ukraine. Professional training and development have been identified as a key criterion for career progression, education being its basic component. It has been proven that professional military education requires continuous development and leadership competence taking into account specialisation and the level of management. A generalised description of the components of leadership qualities has been justified.*

**Keywords:** *career development and progression, servicemen, professional development, education, leadership, National Guard of Ukraine.*

**Statement of the problem.** The National Guard of Ukraine is a military formation with law enforcement functions that effectively and efficiently responds to threats to the state, public and military security of Ukraine, successfully interacts with other components of the security and defence sector based on interoperability, etc. [1]. Today, the units of the National Guard of Ukraine perform many important and complex service and combat missions. With the outbreak of a full-scale war, the National Guard of Ukraine, along with other components of the defence forces, stood up to defend the state and has been taking part in combat operations. An extremely important task is to use of human resources, in particular human potential, to ensure the state's security and defence. Therefore, the human resources policy is fundamental in determining the essence of the personnel's professional development within the National Guard of Ukraine.

Thus, it is becoming more relevant to address the essence of career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine in the context of military service, to identify key aspects of a career in the security and defence sector, as well as to analyse the factors influencing

the servicemen's career and professional development.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Nowadays, the issues of improving career progression are becoming very relevant due to innovative approaches and constant changes. Such and similar topics in relation to the Armed Forces of Ukraine have been thoroughly studied by a wide range of scholars. O. Koval researched the issue of improving the personnel policy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine [2]. I. Krasota, O. Trykaliuk, V. Shtanko [3] covered the experience of reforming the system of human resource (personnel) management in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. H. Hozuvatenko [4] raised the issue of improving the system of training and career development and progression of servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, taking into account the experience of the world-leading countries. Thus, the problem of career development and progression within the Armed Forces of Ukraine has been in the focus of attention, as evidenced by the adoption of the concept of military personnel policy in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine for the period up to 2028 [5]. However, almost no attention has been paid to the issue of servicemen's

career growth and development in the National Guard of Ukraine. Passports for military positions have not yet been developed, career progression algorithms have not been implemented, and conceptual legal acts on this issue have not been adopted.

Thus, the relevance of this research is defined by the following factors: insufficient theoretical and methodological development of the scientific task of career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine; inconsistency of the servicemen's career growth system of the National Guard of Ukraine with the requirements of the regulatory framework of Ukraine; lack of algorithms for servicemen's career progression within the National Guard of Ukraine; absence of a system of passports of military positions of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine; partial development of the professional activity standards for the servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine; irrational use of time and material resources for training and retraining in accordance with the professional activity standards; imperfect system of servicemen's motivation for career progression within the National Guard of Ukraine (the motivational mechanism needs regulations concerning the promotion with the increase of workload of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine); discrepancy of modern scientific approaches to establish a system of career progression of contract servicemen – enlisted personnel, non-commissioned officers, and commissioned officers of the National Guard of Ukraine with regard to the transition to NATO standards.

**The purpose of the article** is to study the theoretical foundations for improving the career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine and to formulate appropriate recommendations for improvement.

**Summary of the main material.** The process of career growth in the army involves a serviceman holding various positions from the moment of appointment to the initial position until dismissal from the last one. This process is a significant part of a military career.

A career is the advancement of a serviceman due to their abilities and desire to develop further, professionalism, important qualities that influence further development, acquisition of new knowledge, speciality and education. A professional career is characterised by the fact that a particular officer goes through various stages of development in the course of their professional activity: enlistment in the military service; periodic

training; career growth based on the constant maintenance and improvement of individual professional abilities [6].

The analysis of the personnel human resource support over the past few years has revealed an outdated system of servicemen's career development and progression. The career growth system has not been properly developed. The lack of career algorithms and planning makes it difficult for servicemen to define their goals. Each serviceman has a unique set of skills, experience and ambitions, so it is essential to establish a system that works and allows for tailoring career development plans to the individual needs of each serviceman. Given the role of the National Guard of Ukraine as one of the main instruments for ensuring state security and law and order, this issue is of particular relevance. The term "career development and progression" encompasses various areas and criteria.

Professional training is a key criterion for career growth. To increase their qualification level, servicemen must constantly maintain and improve their skills, undergo training and receive certificates. Professional development in various sources is interpreted as the acquisition of new competencies that a person will need in the future in this or another job that they may potentially take.

Personnel development is not limited to improving a person's performance in their current position. Unlike training, which is more focused on filling the shortfall in the professional knowledge and skills required at the moment, development is aimed at the long-term perspective. Its purpose is to help a person prepare for future job requirements or achieve certain career goals. In general, professional development should be viewed as a comprehensive process of preparing a serviceman to perform various functions, take up new positions, and solve various tasks. Personnel development is understood as the process of accumulating human capital through the direct transfer of professional knowledge and skills.

Section 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On Professional Development" defines this concept and the main areas of development activities. Vocational training of employees is a process of targeted formation of special knowledge among employees, development of necessary skills and abilities that allow to increase labour productivity, perform functional duties to the highest possible quality, and master new types of professional activities, including initial vocational training, retraining and advanced training of employees under the needs of production [7].

Scientific thought recognises that professional development should be viewed through a different projection of the laws of dialectics, as a manifestation of objective and natural processes of the general development of society and the individual. In this regard, military science uses the achievements and knowledge of a wide range of sciences [8].

It is certainly true that the process of forming the structure and content of military training should be aimed at developing professional consciousness, meeting the principles of sufficiency, systematic formation of competencies, and areas of their activities according to their official assignment, including in joint actions with units and formations of the armed forces of NATO member states [9].

The professional development of servicemen involves the creation of a flexible, specific system of professional training focused on solving service and combat tasks. Education, training, preparation, and self-training play a unifying role in achieving the goals. There is no coincidence that professional development management occupies a significant place in the work of chiefs and commanders, as they are well aware of the level of knowledge, abilities, and skills of their subordinates [10].

Based on the conducted comprehensive research of scientific papers and literature devoted to the career growth of servicemen in the security and defence sector, it can be concluded that in most studies, the main factor is the professional development of the servicemen's personality, which is a long process of mastering the profession and acquiring a new level of knowledge. According to the results of modern scientific research in the military sphere, career development should be considered in different stages of human development, and it should be divided into three different stages: early, middle and mature.

The first (early) career stage is the person's first step in acquiring professional abilities. At this time, a person needs to show a desire to acquire skills and be motivated and ready to develop their abilities. During the second (middle) career stage, the person realises themselves as a specialist, possessing a certain set of skills and professional qualities acquired during the first stage, and continues to learn and increase their level of knowledge and potential. The third (mature) career stage involves the person's achieving maximum results, experience, and mastery in their field.

The study of the current state of career development of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine allows to define that, in general, the essence and content of career growth as a process

is an important prerequisite for successful activity having many criteria.

It is suggested to consider the basic component of servicemen's career development and progression – education as a process and a result of acquiring systematic knowledge, skills and abilities, a necessary condition for preparing a person for life and work. Different sciences study education from different perspectives. In the pedagogical literature, the term "education" means, first of all, the process of transferring and mastering knowledge, skills and abilities, forming cognitive interests and abilities, and special training for professional activities.

The main task of education at the present stage is to educate and train a qualified, competitive, competent, responsible specialist who is fluent in their profession, well-informed in related fields of activity, able to work effectively in the profession at the level of world standards, ready for continuous professional growth, social and professional mobility. Nowadays, an effective professional is one who adequately responds to new social expectations, is capable of creative growth and professional self-improvement, and of constantly updating their personal qualities [11].

Education is a purposeful, pre-designed didactic interaction in which education, upbringing and development of a person are carried out, and certain aspects of social experience, including professional experience and scientific knowledge, are mastered. It is characterised by the joint activity of a teacher and a student, the purpose of which is to develop the latter's personality, assimilate knowledge, and form skills and abilities, i.e. the general orientation basis of the specific professional activity of a future specialist.

The Law of Ukraine "On Education" defines the term "professional military education" as specialised military education, which is obtained under educational programmes/curricula at the appropriate levels of military education to improve the professional level of a military specialist and acquire professional competencies that ensure the performance of service (combat) functions [12].

Professional Military Education is a NATO standard term used in the system of military education and training of military specialists in the NATO member states, i.e. a similar vertical of L-courses is built and operates in the educational institutions of NATO and its member states. Based on their experience, Ukraine has introduced a new algorithm for obtaining military education based on the continuity of the educational process and close

connection with career development and progression. Military education can be acquired simultaneously with specialised secondary, vocational, professional pre-higher or higher education, i.e. it is a formal type of education that provides for the learner's achievement of learning outcomes of the relevant level of education as defined by the education standards, and qualifications recognised by the state [13].

Professional military education should ensure that servicemen not only form the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for the successful performance of service duties in different conditions but also value orientations, patriotic feelings, moral and ethical qualities, and physical and psychological readiness to defend the Motherland. Professional military education at all levels of training should also provide for the continuous development and professional improvement of servicemen, their adaptation to changing conditions and challenges, and leadership competence taking into account their specialisation and level of command and control [14].

A leader is a group member who plays a key role in directing, controlling and changing the activities of other group members to achieve group goals, and who is recognised by the group as having superior status and the right to make decisions in situations that are important to them. The main scientific approaches to characterising the concept of leadership are distinguished by a combination of three basic variables: leadership qualities, leadership behaviour and the situation that prompts the leader's actions [15].

Thus, a person's leadership qualities are the traits that ensure effective team management, i.e. the ability to lead in a particular case and make responsible decisions in emergencies and everyday activities, apply the latest approaches to problem-solving and task accomplishment, support and influence the team to achieve common goals, and create a positive atmosphere in the team.

The Doctrine on Military Leadership in the Armed Forces of Ukraine confirms the importance of these criteria and their direct impact on career progression. In the Armed Forces of Ukraine, military leadership is based on the principles and approaches adopted by leading NATO member states and fully ensures the successful performance of assigned tasks by servicemen in the face of future challenges and threats. A multi-level system of training military leaders ensures the development of the necessary leadership qualities of officers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and enlisted personnel [16].

The values of a military leader are the criteria for making personal decisions, internal requirements, incentives, motives for behaviour and manifestation of a serviceman's culture in society and during the performance of professional duties, characterising the integrity and harmony of their personality, perseverance in achieving self-realisation, self-improvement, spiritual and creative self-development in the military environment, which makes it possible to assess reality and navigate it.

The Doctrine on Military Leadership in the National Guard of Ukraine defines the term "military leadership" as movement forward and development. Military leadership shapes and integrates the other elements of combat power, giving them an impetus and a vector to accomplish their tasks during operations (combat actions) and in everyday activities. It is a key component of the professional activities of individual servicemen of various categories. Military leadership stimulates positive changes in the activities of troops (forces), focusing on motivation and interaction with personnel and is one of the components of achieving effective command and control in the National Guard of Ukraine. Military leadership is the purposeful influence of servicemen of different categories on the personnel in everyday, service, training and combat activities, as well as in non-standard, critical situations by setting a goal, directing them to achieve it, ensuring discipline and motivation to perform assigned tasks, maintaining trust and respect and improving the National Guard of Ukraine as a public institution [17].

Thus, it can be argued that the purpose of military leadership at any level of command and control is to ensure that servicemen professionally perform their duties and tasks related to the defence of Ukraine. The following is a generalised description of the components of leadership qualities:

- to set a goal(s) and determine ways to achieve them, to perform tasks professionally, to know everything about the work of their subordinates, to apply effective methods of internal communication, to ensure integral development, team building and cohesion of personnel;
- to affirm the commitment of servicemen to the national traditions of the military ethos, to promote personal and team (collective) compliance with international principles of military leadership;
- to create a positive moral and psychological climate, to exert effective influence on personnel

and inform them of what is happening, to predict further developments, to motivate and inspire personnel by example to make decisions and actions in the preparation and execution of assigned tasks;

– to form and develop the cohesion of personnel in a combat-ready team and ensure the coherence of their actions, know their subordinates perfectly, be able to hear them, meet their needs and provide assistance;

– to share all difficulties and risks with their subordinates, apply for rewards for the best servicemen, and take measures against violators of military discipline;

– to work constantly on their professional growth and development of personnel, etc., be able to manage conflicts, have the skills to prevent them, and, if they arise, solve them constructively;

– to contribute to ensuring the implementation of a unified state policy aimed at achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men within their authority in the unit, comply with the requirements of governing documents on the observance of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, prevention and counteraction to gender discrimination and sexual harassment;

– demonstrate self-confidence, and respect for subordinates, adhere to the principles of social justice in their activities, be able to admit mistakes and take responsibility for miscalculations, be able to make appropriate and complex decisions, and be ready to take responsibility for them.

Thus, leadership in the National Guard of Ukraine should be regarded as a key component of the career development and progression of servicemen, and leadership qualities should be seen as an impetus for professional development, education and self-development. The personality of a military leader is primarily characterised by professionalism, what is known as a "military bearing". A military leader evaluates any case or situation as a professional and acts in a military manner with clarity, purposefulness and discipline. The essential personal qualities of a military leader are proper physical fitness, psychological resilience and balance. Awareness of their own qualities and advantages gives them self-confidence, which also has a positive impact on the subordinate's confidence in their commander (superior) and in the success of the team.

### **Conclusions**

1. The use of human resources, in particular human potential, to ensure the security and defence of

the state is an extremely important task, and therefore, personnel policy is the basic one in determining the essence of professional development of the personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine. Therefore, it is relevant to study the essence of career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine in the context of military service, as well as to identify key aspects of a career in the security and defence sector, and to analyse the factors that influence the career and professional development of servicemen.

2. Since the National Guard of Ukraine is one of the main instruments in ensuring state security and law and order, the issue of manning is of particular relevance. The concept of "career development and progression" includes different directions and criteria.

3. Professional training is a key criterion for career development and progression. To increase their qualification level, servicemen must constantly maintain and improve their skills, undergo training and obtain certificates.

4. Education is a basic component of the career development and progression of servicemen. Professional military education should develop not only servicemen's necessary knowledge, skills and competences for the successful performance of service duties in different conditions, but also their value orientations, patriotic feelings, moral and ethical qualities, etc. Professional military education involves continuous development and leadership competence with regard to specialisation and level of command and control.

5. Leadership in the National Guard of Ukraine should be regarded as a key component of the servicemen's career progression, and leadership qualities should be seen as an impetus for professional development, education and self-development.

Further research will be aimed at developing scientific and conceptual foundations for improving the career development and progression of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine.

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### **ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ ВДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ КАР'ЄРНОГО ЗРОСТАННЯ ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВЦІВ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ГВАРДІЇ УКРАЇНИ**

*Використання людських ресурсів, зокрема потенціалу людини, для забезпечення безпеки і оборони держави становить надзвичайно важливе завдання, а кадрова політика є базовою у визначенні сутності професійного розвитку особового складу Національної гвардії України. Тому актуалізуються вивчення сутності кар'єрного зростання військовослужбовців Національної гвардії України в контексті військової служби, а також визначення ключових аспектів кар'єри в секторі безпеки і оборони, аналіз чинників, що впливають на кар'єрний і професійний розвиток військовослужбовців.*

*Унаслідок аналізу стану кадрового забезпечення за останні декілька років виявлено застарілість системи кар'єрного зростання військовослужбовців. З огляду на роль Національної гвардії України як одного з головних інструментів у забезпеченні державної безпеки та правопорядку це питання набуває особливої актуальності.*

*Професійна підготовка становить ключовий критерій кар'єрного зростання. Для підвищення свого рівня кваліфікації військовослужбовці повинні постійно підтримувати й удосконалювати свої навички, проходити навчання та отримувати сертифікати. Базовим складником кар'єрного зростання військовослужбовців є освіта. Професійна військова освіта передбачає постійний розвиток, лідерську компетентність з урахуванням спеціалізації та рівня управління.*

*Неодмінними особистими якостями військового лідера є належна фізична підготовленість, психологічна стійкість та врівноваженість. Усвідомлення власних якостей і переваг додає військовому лідеру впевненості в собі, що так само позитивно впливає на впевненість підлеглих у своєму командирові (начальникові) та в успіху колективу.*

*Подальші наукові дослідження будуть спрямовані на розроблення науково-концептуальних засад удосконалення кар'єрного зростання військовослужбовців Національної гвардії України.*

***Ключові слова:** кар'єрне зростання, військовослужбовці, професійний розвиток, освіта, лідерство, Національна гвардія України.*

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