

A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN JOINING THE MILITARY: TAKE FEMALE MILITARY POSITIONS IN HUALIEN AND TAITUNG AS AN EXAMPLE

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Abstract

The gender workforce statistics of Taiwan's Ministry of Labor indicate that Taiwan's male and female labor force participation rates in 2021 are 66.9% and 51.5% respectively. However, the proportion of women joining the Taiwanese army merely accounts for 13.57% of the total number of soldiers. It can be seen that there is still considerable room for women to join the Taiwanese military. At present, when the number of military personnel cannot be increased, retaining female professionals is particularly important. However, the lack of follow-up professional training and regular assessment after entering the workplace will not only weaken the professional capabilities of military personnel, but may even lead to the inability to retain talents. Women join the military because they have family support or because they are very interested and have strong beliefs. In particular, the significance (0.015) of the female air force relative to the female army is very obvious; similarly, the significance (0.044) of female officers relative to female non-commissioned officers is also obvious. Key factors that influence a woman's decision to join the military are family support or personal interests and ideas.

Key words: national army recruitment, female military service, retention rate.

Introduction

Since the outbreak of the Russo-Ukrainian War on February 24, 2022, various areas have launched a debate on "Today's Ukraine, tomorrow's Taiwan", which has attracted the attention of various countries to Taiwan (Hsieh, 2022).

Then, Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen announced on December 27, 2022 that military service would be extended to one year from 2024. Chiu Kuo-Cheng, Minister of National Defense, R.O.C. also stated that the Taiwan government will gradually begin to promote the development of various policies such as

men and women joining the military (Cui *et al.*, 2022). In addition, on August 13, 2021, there was a proposal on Public Policy Online Participation Network Platform to amend the provisions of the Military Service Law, which suggests that women should also participate in four-month military training and substitute service in the armed forces regular force. Although the number of people supporting the proposal is 118 (4,882 more are needed), these issues have gradually attracted people's attention as Chinese military aircraft have continued to cross the central line of the Taiwan Strait in the past two years. Afterwards, the Executive Yuan officially announced that men's compulsory military service would be restored to one year starting from the year after next. The Taiwanese National Army has reviewed the defense capabilities of various places based on the concept of homeland defense and has successively enriched the strength of 18 "Urban and Rural Garrison Brigade" (Tu, 2022).

Taiwan is now facing the dilemma of declining birthrate and shortage of military resources. Therefore, the national military should seriously consider how to retain talents and increase recruitment sources. In view of this, attracting a large number of women to join the military is currently an important direction to expand the supply of military personnel. However, with the improvement of women's education, coupled with factors such as self-affirmation, self-realization concepts and economic pressure, a large number of women have entered the workplace (Chen *et al.*,

2016). Our society has always held double expectations for women: on the one hand, women are expected to actively participate in and contribute to society; on the other hand, women are also expected to take into account their roles in the family. King (2018) pointed out that in the past thirty years, the number of women entering the job market has gradually increased. As a result, professional women who need to balance work and family life have gradually become a common phenomenon in society. Similarly, according to research by Hu *et al.* (2018), society's focus on women's issues in recent years has gradually shifted from the unequal treatment of women to various fields, and has begun to integrate gender awareness into the economy, medical, safety, and education and other fields. Driven by the trend of the times, women will participate in more diverse types of jobs, including military workplaces. As society changes, women's lifestyles at work and at home have continued to evolve with the times in recent years, and the proportion of women joining the military is also on the increase year by year. This can be seen as a rather positive trend as women have different perspectives and abilities than men and can create more value to the military. The biggest problems women face in the military are gender discrimination and sexual harassment. Since time immemorial, it has been men's job to be war heroes or to defend the country. While there are occasional female heroes (such as Joan of Arc and Mulan), these are rare occurrences. Today, the military is still a male-dominated profession. The National Defense Report released by the

Ministry of National Defense in 2019 pointed out that the scope of female soldiers' duties has been extended to grass-roots units such as combat services and technical services. In addition to serving in supporting roles, these military women also began to assume leadership positions in the military. This change has greatly impacted the military culture that was originally dominated by men. Although the military has adopted a series of measures to prevent and combat these problems, it still cannot avoid these problems (Pan & I, 2010). Female military personnel need to work harder to prove their abilities and worth before they can receive the same treatment and respect as men. A further issue that contemporary welfare reform must face is to make family services and labor market employment activities of equal value, so that people can enjoy the protection of the same social security system when participating in different activities (Huang, 2008).

Another problem that female military personnel have to face is physical limitations (Hong, 2018). Due to physical differences, women may be limited in performing certain tasks. In fact, many data also indicate that most women are not as good as men in terms of innate physical strength. Therefore, if women want to compete with men in the military workplace, where the concept of gender equality still needs to be improved, or to command male subordinates as a female supervisor, they often need to invest more time and effort than men (Huang, 2019). Moreover, high-intensity and long-term training may

have negative impacts on women's physical health. All jobs are not easy, require professionalism, and come with difficulties and pressures. To this end, the military needs to establish training programs that meet the special needs of women. With the advancements of the times, more and more women are joining the military workplace, showing their patriotism, courage to challenge themselves, economic motivation and influence. Women's performance in the military workplace not only improves their economic status, but also has a positive impact on society. Their achievements not only contributed to national development, but also inspired other women to pursue their dreams. Consequently, encouraging women to join the military and providing equal opportunities and treatment are critical responsibilities and tasks during the recruitment process.

Literature Review

As stated by Meier-Pesti & Kirchler (2003), if personal values are consistent with national values, individuals will develop emotional attachments which are further reflected in traditions, cultural achievements and devotion to the country. For both men and women, patriotism is an emotion that motivates them to identify themselves with their devotion to their country. For men and women, patriotism is an emotion that inspires them to devote themselves to their country. Huang's (2018) research pointed out that people will evaluate whether to participate in activities based on what their giving and receiving, interest and losses, rewards and benefits.

With the improvement of various welfare and fair environment in the military, the number of women choosing to join the military workplace has also increased (Chang *et al.*, 2013).

*Contribute to the country
out of patriotism*

Due to the different perceptions of democracy between China and Taiwan, Taiwanese society generally has doubts and concerns about China's "one-party rule" and "socialist system" (which may affect women's willingness to pursue military careers (Hsu, 2017). In addition, research by Zheng *et al.* (2020) and others pointed out that shaping brand image can help improve consumers' brand satisfaction and loyalty, and the level of identification is positively related to loyalty. Driven by a high degree of national identity, women are more likely to choose to join the military and contribute to the country's security and peace. Women in today's society have gradually begun to enjoy the right to join the military, so they can also contribute to the security of the country. According to Chen *et al.* (2020), satisfaction is considered as the basis of loyalty. Once a woman can overcome various obstacles after joining the military, she can become excellent military personnel.

*Economic Factors and the
Courage to Take Challenges*

There are many economic drivers for women to join the military, including stable income sources, unconditional basic income, social justice, and social

welfare system (Dai, 2020). Having a job with a basic income guarantee can provide a stable life for yourself and your family and enjoy generous retirement benefits. Taiwanese military personnel can apply for retirement and receive a generous pension after serving in the military for twenty years. Their retirement life will last about 40 years (Chang, 2021), while many other professions do not offer such retirement benefits. In addition, the Taiwanese government also provides some educational subsidies and allowances to military personnel to help women continue their education, sharpen their skills, and start a second career after retirement. Chen *et al.* (2018) believe that people can learn to pursue adventure and improve themselves in a variety of ways: joining the military is a good choice. It can not only contribute to the security and interests of the country, but also experience extremely challenging military life.

From the perspective of psychological factors, Kuo and Lan (2015) explained that individuals may encounter several problems such as self-affirmation, lifestyle changes, and adaptation to the group lifestyle after joining the army. Women holding military positions need to have courage and strong will, because they need to take rigorous training, learn various military skills and knowledge, and face various dangers and challenges at any time. These challenges not only provide female soldiers with extraordinary life experience and inspiration, but also allow them to experience a variety of different cultures and environments.

Enhance Abilities

Wu et al. (2018) illustrates that the ability of technological innovation is an important factor and key foundation that determines whether a company can maintain its sustainable competitive advantages. Therefore, if a company stagnates in technological innovation, it will perish in a fiercely competitive environment. Likewise, women serving in the military can upgrade their leadership abilities. Taking women's military career as an example, serving as non-commissioned officers and military officers requires them to assume leadership and management responsibilities in order to enhance their leadership capabilities. Furthermore, being in the military means that one needs to deal with various challenges and learn how to get along with people of different personalities and backgrounds. This experience can significantly assist female leaders to improve their leadership skills.

In addition, as stated in Su's (2015) research, Taiwanese women display their self-identified personalities through behavioral motivations and social/workplace cognitions, and express their identities with their own life stories. Military positions prepare women to quickly make decisions under pressure. Learning how to analyze problems and make decisions within a short time is extremely valuable either in the workplace or in everyday life. In addition to acquiring knowledge, soldiers must also learn to respect the value of life, plan career development, improve the quality of life, experience real needs, and culti-

vate team awareness and responsibility. Female participation in the military can enhance teamwork capabilities (Lin et al., 2018). Soldiers need to respect and understand the viewpoints and contributions of others: Each member of the force has their own role and responsibilities and needs to cooperate with others to accomplish their mission.

Support from Family and Friends and Their own Interests

Chao et al. (2023) believe that the key elements involved in the decision-making process include tangible or intangible support provided by knowledge, family and friends, and important others, and these factors will greatly affect decision-making. Joining the military is not an easy decision for women as it has a great impact on their lives and families. Discussing relevant issues with family and friends, or significant others can increase a woman's decision to serve in the military. Women will feel more determined and confident if their families support their decisions. Moreover, with the support of their families, women can better cope with difficulties and pressure and reduce their psychological burden after joining the military. If a woman's friends think joining the military is a good choice, she is more likely to choose a military career. Besides, if the woman's friends are against her joining the military, she may feel alone and helpless. Additionally, a woman's partner also has an important impact on her military career. If her partner supports her decision, they can face this challenge together.

In the past few years, more and more women have become interested in military careers and actively chosen to join the army. On one hand, women in the military not only increase the diversity of the military and enrich the talent pool, but also contribute to the security and interests of the country. On the other hand, women in the military can bring unique skills and viewpoints. Generally speaking, women have keen observation and excellent communication skills, and these qualities are invaluable in military affairs. In the April 2020 Forbes magazine, Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic's (2020) article titled "Countries that have succeeded in fighting the pandemic are led by women", indicating these female leaders serve as examples of leadership. Unlike most male leaders, women can leverage effective and efficient strategies to demonstrate their competence in crisis management. Likewise, female military officers have demonstrated outstanding leadership and combat capabilities in the military. Women can receive the same rigorous training as men to develop robust physical fitness, improved combat abilities, and excellent leadership skills. Their determination and courage not only inspired the other soldiers but also boosted the morale and unity of the army. Women's participation in the military has positive impacts on the military and society. In addition, female participation in the army can help change the traditional concept in society that women are not suitable for joining the army, thereby promoting the development of gender equality.

Freedom and Equal Competition

According to a 2018 survey, Taiwan's Gender Inequality Index (GII) ranks 9th in the world and ranks 1st in Asia, indicating that men and women in Taiwan develop more equally (Lin, 2021). The fact that there are differences between men and women in the military workplace does not mean that women cannot achieve satisfactory levels of fitness. Female soldiers must be able to pull the trigger, move across the battlefield, and deal with casualties, and these requirements are no different than those of their male counterparts (Trobaugh, 2018). Extensive research by the United Nations shows that most national action plans involve local women in action but provide no space for women at the grassroots level to participate (Luna & Whetstone, 2022). Women have always struggled for personal freedom. In the pursuit of personal freedom, women have always been striving for it, and they have gradually changed from being submissive and repressed in the past to actively striving for freedom today. Nowadays, women are independent, have their own ideas, and are increasingly making their mark in various fields. Women seek freedom in diverse ways, including learning, integrating into the workplace, participating in politics, and planning their own lifestyles. From the pursuit of equality in education in the past to the pursuit of equality in the workplace today, women have come a long way in order to break away from the shackles of tradition and pursue a free life. By joining the armed forces in the Russian-Ukrainian war, Ukrainian women proved to the world that they were capable of defending their country

like other women (Darden, 2022). In many areas, women are still inferior to men and face many difficulties and challenges. For example, in some workplaces, women often face gender discrimination, unfair treatment and other issues, and these issues are important factors that affect their freedom. Through continuous efforts and struggles in the workplace, women have gained more and more rights and freedoms and participated in various social activities, thus gradually breaking away from the constraints of the traditional family.

Many experts have examined female military participation in Hualien and Taitung, and the literature reveals that the factors that may attract women to stay in the military including patriotism, economic factors and the courage to accept challenges, enhance abilities, support from friends and family and own interests, and freedom and equal competition (See Table 1. at the end of this article).

Research Hypotheses and Methods

Research Hypothesis

As shown in the Importance Statistics Database published by the Executive Yuan: In 2020, Taiwan's workforce participation rate of women over 15 years old is 51.69%, and women joining the military has become a global trend. According to a press release from the Ministry of National Defense, with the expansion of volunteer recruitment, the number of women in the national army has increased year by year. As of Sep-

tember 30, 2020, there were more than 25,000 active military personnel, accounting for 13.57% of the current staffing ratio. It can be seen that women are still in a disadvantaged position in the military workplace. Given the relative scarcity of women in the military, how to attract senior female talent to stay and continue serving the country has become an important issue. Therefore, this study explores from three aspects:

1. The military service unit in which women serve has a significant impact on the following five factors: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, freedom and equal competition. (The p value indicates whether the effect is significant, $p=0.05$ is the critical point. When p

<0.05 , it is significant)

2. The category of military occupation that women engage in has a significant impact on the following five factors: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, freedom and equal competition.

3. The military rank of female soldiers has a significant impact on the following five factors: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, freedom and equal competition.

Research Methods and Subjects

This research employed a cross-sectional questionnaire method. The research subjects were active-duty female officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers serving in Hualien and Taitung.

The research period was from July 10 to August 15, 2023. Based on the above literature and the motivation and purpose of this study, the research structure is shown in Figure 1 below.

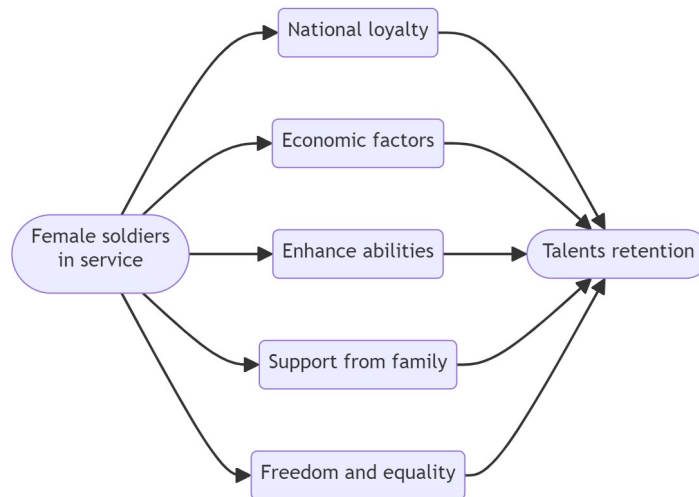


Figure 1. Diagram of research structure

Variable Description

(1) Questionnaire design

The subjects of this questionnaire are active military personnel from service units who have served in the military in Hualien and Taitung for more than 3 years. The previous literature review compiled articles from experts in various fields and the perspectives of female military personnel. The research questionnaire was conducted online through Google Forms: 304, 63 and 62 questionnaires were received from army, navy and air force personnel respectively, of which 429 were valid questionnaires. This questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part is used to collect basic in-

formation from the respondents, and the second part presents respondents' motivations for pursuing military career. The questionnaire adopts an assessment method, and the respondents will choose the most appropriate option to answer fixed questions. The questionnaire uses concise options so the collected information can be clearly quantified for statistical analysis and comparison. The research uses a Likert 9-Points scale as the basis for scoring, with items divided into "absolutely agree", "strongly agree", "quite agree", "slightly agree", "average", "slightly disagree", "quite disagree", "strongly disagree", and "absolutely disagree".

1. This study adopts basic characteristics such as service unit, occupational category, age group, military rank, and service years as variables to conduct a questionnaire survey on volunteer fe-

male officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers in Hualien and Taitung. Part of the questionnaire is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Basic personal information

Variables	Description
Service unit	Army, navy, air force
Occupational category	Combat units, combat support units, service support units
Age group	18-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40 years old, ≥ 41 years old
Military rank	Officer, non-commissioned officer, soldier
Service years	≤ 5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, ≥ 21 years

2. There are five main reasons why women can persist in military work: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to challenge, enhance abilities,

support from family and friends, and freedom and equal competition. Part of the questionnaire is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasons why women can insist on working in the military

Variables	Description
Loyalty to Taiwan	The bond between country and place of residence, long history and rich culture, defend the country with hard work, differences in universal values and concepts across Taiwan Strait, personal participation, sense of recognition generated by contribution.
Economic factors and willingness to challenge	Earn stable income and generous rewards, be willing to accept challenges and take risks, enrich their lives, challenge their physical limits, become stronger, and be able to take care of their family.
Improve abilities	Improve personal status and be respected by others, demonstrate their abilities, boost competitiveness, upgrade their ability to withstand pressure and solve problems, consolidate interpersonal relationships, overcome their shortcomings, and enhance their self-confidence
Support from family and friends	Encouragement and support from family, friends, classmates; personal ambition, accompany a friend to take military admissions exam, interested in military matters (including military history, culture, weapons and systems technology), or have an interest in leadership and organizational skills.
Freedom and equal competition	Gain fairness, have their lifestyles being recognized, enjoy fairer protection, have fair and equal work and development opportunities in the military, gain recognition and respect through outstanding performance, play non-traditional family roles, gain more independence and freedom, enjoy the freedom of work to pursue your goals and prove your abilities and worth.

Reliability, validity analysis and KMO and Bartlett's test

In order to understand whether the questionnaire employed in this study has internal consistency reliability, this study uses Cronbach's α as an indicator. If Cronbach's α reaches 0.7 or above, the reliability is good. This study adopts the KMO test (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity to determine whether the sample data are suitable for performing

factor analysis. The higher the KMO value, the lower the degree of partial correlation between any two variables, indicating that it is more suitable for factor analysis. When the KMO and Bartlett test values are above 0.9, it means that it is very suitable for factor analysis; 0.8~0.9 is "suitable", 0.7~0.8 is "acceptable", 0.6~0.7 is "barely acceptable", and 0.5 is "unsuitable". This study conducted factor analysis on five variables, and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Reliability, KMO and Bartlett test results for five variables

Test	# of questionnaire questions	Cronbach's α	KMO value	Bartlett Test		
				χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>sig</i>
Loyalty to Taiwan	6	0.845	0.828	1267.85	15	0.000
Economic factors & take challenges	7	0.864	0.838	2061.43	21	0.000
Improve abilities	7	0.960	0.937	3491.51	21	0.000
Family support & interests	8	0.918	0.892	3010.25	28	0.000
Freedom & equality	9	0.966	0.942	4643.65	36	0.000

As shown in Table 4, the Cronbach's α of all the questionnaire dimensions are >0.7 , the KMO values are >0.7 , and the Bartlett test significance is $0.000 < 0.05$, showing that it is suitable for factor analysis.

Research Results and Discussion

1. Statistical analysis methods

This research employs the SPSS software for data analysis and verification. According to the research purpose and research hypothesis, the data analysis methods adopted are as follows:

(1) Descriptive statistics

1. Distribution of research population

The total number of respondents in this survey is 429, including 304 (70.9%) in the army, 63 (14.7%) in the navy, and 62 (14.5%) in the air force. By age group: 123 people aged 18-25 (28.7%), 185 people aged 26-30 (43.1%), 100 people aged 31-35 (23.3%), 18 people aged 36-40 (4.2%), and 3 people aged 41 or older (0.7%). By occupational category: 201 (46.9%) people in combat units, 143 (33.3%) in combat support units, and 85 (19.8%) in service support units. By service years: 220 people (51.3%) have less than 5 years of service, 130 people have 6-10 years (30.3%), 59 people have 11-15 years (13.8%), and 20 people have

16-20 years (4.7%). By military rank:
 168 officers (39.2%), 201 non-
 commissioned officers (46.9%), and 60

soldiers (14%). Details of the analysis
 are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Background of respondents

Variable	Category	# of times	%
Service unit	Army	304	70.9
	Navy	63	14.7
	Air force	62	14.5
Age group	18-25 years old	123	28.7
	26-30 years old	185	43.1
	31-35 years old	100	23.3
	36-40 years old	18	4.2
	≥41 years old	3	0.7
Occupational category	Combat units	201	46.9
	Combat support units	143	33.3
	Service support units	85	19.8
Service years	≤5 years	220	51.3
	6-10 years	130	30.3
	11-15 years	59	13.8
	16-20 years	20	4.7
	≥21 years	0	0
Military rank	Officer	168	39.2
	Non-commissioned officer	201	46.9
	Soldier	60	14.0

1. Obtain the means and standard deviations of questions by using descriptive statistics

This study used descriptive statistics analysis method to calculate the mean and standard deviation of each questionnaire to understand the respondents' feelings about the questionnaire data. When analyzing the questionnaire data of the effective sample, we focused on the dimension of national loyalty, which con

tains six questions. Table 6-1 shows that the mean of the overall respondents is 6.83, with the standard deviation ranging from 1.611 to 1.779. Among them, the first two questions with higher scores were "Have an emotional connection with your country (Taiwan) and your place of residence" and "Recognize Taiwan's long history and rich culture". The analysis results indicate that in terms of national loyalty, women's priority is to establish an emotional

Table 6-1. Means and standard deviations for national loyalty questions

Questions	N	mean	sd
1. Have an emotional connection with your country (Taiwan) and your place of residence	429	7.18	1.731
2. Recognize Taiwan's long history and rich culture	429	7.08	1.667
3. I hope that my contribution can ensure the security and stability of Taiwan society.	429	6.63	1.735
4. Because Taiwan and China are completely different in terms of universal values of democracy and life concepts.	429	7.07	1.721
5. Show patriotism through your own participation	429	6.59	1.611
6. After joining the military, I began to feel that this was the right choice for me.	429	6.46	1.779
Overall	429	6.83	1.707

connection with their country and place of residence.

In this questionnaire, there are seven questions about the "economic factors and accept challenges" dimension. As presented in Table 6-2, the mean of the overall respondents is 6.37, and the standard deviation ranges from 1.668 to 2.090. Among the seven questions, the top two questions with higher scores were "Joining the military can directly obtain actual benefits, such as wages, benefits, subsidies, pensions and other actual rewards" and "Due to family economic needs, joining the military is necessary and can provide A steady income to support my family." The analysis results demonstrate that when women consider economic factors and accept challenges, they give priority to actual benefits and substantial remuneration.

In this questionnaire, there are seven questions about the dimension of "improve abilities". According to Table 6-3, the mean of the overall respondents is 6.48 and the standard deviation ranges

from 1.635 to 1.763. Among these seven questions, the first two questions with higher scores were "When female soldiers face challenges and difficulties, they can think actively and respond proactively, thereby improving their ability to withstand pressure and solve problems." and "In the military, you can get along with people from different backgrounds and strengthen interpersonal relationships." The analysis results demonstrate that when women think about how to upgrade their abilities, their priority is to improve their ability to withstand stress and solve problems.

This questionnaire contains eight questions on the dimension of "family support & personal interests". As shown in Table 6-4, the mean of the overall respondents is 5.50 and the standard deviation ranges from 1.925 to 2.210. The top two questions with higher scores in this dimension were "Having a family member or a friend who serves in the military may encourage or influence your decision to join the military." and "You have friends or classmates who join the mili-

tary or support your joining the military, which in turn affects your decision.” The results of this analysis indicate that when

women think about this dimension, their priority is "encouragement or influence from family or friends."

Table 6-2. Means and standard deviations for the "economic factors & take challenges" dimension

Questions	N	mean	<i>sd</i>
1. In order to meet the financial needs of the family, it is necessary to join the military to obtain a stable income to support the family.	429	6.98	1.837
2. Joining the military can directly receive various benefits (such as salary, benefits, subsidies and pensions) and other generous rewards.	429	7.19	1.668
3. Join the army for the purpose of taking risks and challenge yourself.	429	5.73	2.079
4. Joining the military can enrich your life through different environments and new tasks.	429	6.17	1.779
5. Leverage military training to enhance physical fitness and challenge physical limits	429	6.28	1.777
6. Exploit the pressure they face in the army to exercise their psychological quality and make themselves stronger	429	6.33	1.799
7. The military provides a flexible accommodation mechanism with normal working hours, so they can take care of their families.	429	5.94	2.090
Overall	429	6.37	1.861

Table 6-3. Means and standard deviations for the "improve abilities" dimension

Questions	N	mean	<i>sd</i>
1. After serving in the military for a certain number of years, women can improve their status and be respected by others.	429	6.32	1.713
2. Joining the military allows women to obtain more training and experience and have the opportunity to show their abilities.	429	6.27	1.642
3. In the military, women can continuously learn new knowledge and skills, develop professional qualities and abilities, and further enhance their competitiveness.	429	6.39	1.729
4. When female soldiers face challenges and difficulties, they can think actively and respond proactively, thereby improving their ability to withstand pressure and solve problems.	429	6.65	1.660
5. When encountering problems in the military, you need to reflect and ponder from time to time, deepen your self-understanding, and identify and overcome your shortcomings.	429	6.62	1.635
6. In the military, you can get along with people from different backgrounds and strengthen interpersonal relationships.	429	6.64	1.674
7. Improve your self-confidence and abilities by experiencing various positions and completing tasks.	429	6.48	1.763
Overall	429	6.48	1.688

There are nine questions in this questionnaire regarding "freedom and equality". Table 6-5 shows that the overall respondent mean is 5.99 with a standard deviation range of 1.701-2.002. Among the nine questions, the top two questions with the highest scores were "In today's social and cultural environment, women are often believed to be unable to take on difficult responsibilities and tasks, but the military can provide a relatively fair working environment." and "Different from the roles played by women in traditional families, women in the military will undertake various tasks and responsibilities, including combating terrorism, assisting in social disaster relief, and protecting the security of the country and society." The analysis shows that when women consider "freedom & equality", their priority is "relatively fair environment and benefits guaranteed by the military."

The military service unit in which women serve has a significant impact on loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and

the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, and freedom and equal competition.

The test results in Table 7. show that in the single-factor analysis of variance, there is no significant difference in the impact of service units on national loyalty ($F=1.906$, $p=0.150$). In terms of economic factors and accepting challenges, there was no significant difference ($F=2.427$, $p=0.089$); regarding enhancing abilities, there was no significant difference ($F=0.696$, $p=0.499$); concerning freedom and equality, there was no significant difference ($F=2.056$, $p=0.129$); finally, in terms of support from relatives and friends and personal interests, there was a significant difference ($F=4.233$, $p=0.015$). From the above, it can be seen that service units have a significant impact: Compared with the army, support from family and friends and personal interests have a significant impact on female personnel in the air force.

Table 6-4. Means and standard deviations for the "family support & personal interests" dimension

Questions	N	mean	sd
1. Having a family member or a friend who serves in the military may encourage or influence your decision to join the military	429	6.00	1.966
2. You have friends or classmates who join the military or support your joining the military, which in turn affects your decision	429	5.83	1.925
3. You are willing to join the army or want to achieve self-realization	429	5.69	1.995
4. You accompany your relatives or friends to apply for the military academy and start working in the military	429	5.62	2.210
5. Interested in all military-related things and thus decided to join the army	429	5.32	2.037
6. Interested in the history, culture, and origin and development of military weapons and equipment, so participate in military service	429	5.11	1.981

7. Interested in various aircraft, missiles, weapons, radar systems and other technologies, and then start their military career	429	5.11	1.957
8. Interested in leadership and the allocation/utilization of organizational resources (such as motivating subordinates to complete tasks), or interested in coordinating subordinates/supervisors/other units to achieve goals	429	5.37	2.021
Overall	429	5.50	2.01

Table 6-5. Means and standard deviations for the "freedom & equality" dimension

Questions	N	mean	sd
1. Obtain fair competition opportunities, a new lifestyle and recognition through the military workplace	429	5.70	1.846
2. In today's society, the benefits and salaries given to women are relatively unequal, but the relevant benefits are relatively fair and guaranteed in the military.	429	6.19	1.774
3. In today's social and cultural environment, women are often believed to be unable to take on difficult responsibilities and tasks, but the military can provide a relatively fair working environment.	429	6.10	1.701
4. Compared with some jobs in today's society, the military can provide fair and equal development opportunities.	429	6.03	1.757
5. Compared with some jobs in today's society, professional women in the military can gain recognition and respect through performance.	429	6.10	1.755
6. Different from the roles played by women in traditional families, women in the military will undertake various tasks and responsibilities, including combating terrorism, assisting in social disaster relief, and protecting the security of the country and society.	429	6.11	1.719
7. Joining the military can help women break through traditional family restrictions and gain more independence and freedom.	429	5.83	2.002
8. In the military workplace, women can have a relatively autonomous environment and the freedom to pursue their goals compared to at home.	429	5.83	1.871
9. Prove women's abilities and worth through their outstanding performance in the military	429	6.07	1.757
Overall	429	5.99	1.798

Table 7. The single-factor analysis of variance in terms of military service units

Research dimensions	Service units	mean	sd	F value	p-value	Scheffé test
Loyalty to Taiwan	(1) Army	6.84	1.33	1.906	0.150	n.s
	(2) Navy	6.59	1.11			
	(3) Air force	7.04	1.15			

Economic factors & take challenges	(1) Army	6.41	1.41	2.427	0.089	n.s
	(2) Navy	6.02	1.43			
	(3) Air force	6.51	1.14			
Improve abilities	(1) Army	6.46	1.48	0.696	0.499	n.s
	(2) Navy	6.35	1.72			
	(3) Air force	6.48	1.44			
Family support & interests	(1) Army	5.39	1.66	4.233	0.015*	(1)<(3)
	(2) Navy	5.51	1.58			
	(3) Air force	6.04	1.18			
Freedom & equality	(1) Army	6.02	1.60	2.056	0.129	n.s
	(2) Navy	5.65	1.63			
	(3) Air force	6.20	1.48			

*p<0.05

The impact of female soldiers' military occupational category on the following five factors: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, freedom and equal competition.

The test results in Table 8 show that in the single-factor analysis of variance, the impact of military occupational categories on national loyalty did not show significant differences ($F=1.848$, $p=0.159$); in terms of economic factors and accepting challenges, there was no significant difference ($F=0.996$, $p=0.370$); regarding improving abilities, there was no significant difference ($F=0.658$, $p=0.518$); concerning support from relatives and friends and personal interests, there was no significant difference ($F=1.418$, $p=0.243$); in terms of freedom and equality, there was no significant difference ($F=0.494$, $p=0.611$).

The impact of female soldiers' military rank on the following five factors: loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and

the courage to challenge, enhance abilities, support from family and friends, freedom and equal competition.

The test results in Table 9 indicate that in the single-factor analysis of variance, there was no significant difference in the impact of military rank on national loyalty ($F=0.399$, $p=0.671$); in terms of economic factors and acceptance of challenges, no significant difference was shown ($F=1.410$, $p=0.245$); regarding improving abilities, there was no significant difference ($F=0.360$, $p=0.698$); concerning support from relatives and friends and personal interests, there was a significant difference ($F=3.168$, $p=0.043$); in regard of freedom and equality, there was no significant difference ($F=0.062$, $p=0.939$). From the above, it can be seen that there is a significant difference in military rank after Scheffé's post-test, showing that female officers are more significantly affected at this dimension than female non-commissioned officers.

Table 8. The single-factor analysis of variance in terms of category of military Occupation

Research di- mensions	Occupational category	mean	sd	F value	p-value	Scheffé test
Loyalty to Taiwan	(1) Combat units	6.76	1.27	1.848	0.159	n.s
	(2) Combat sup- port units	6.79	1.32			
	(3) Service sup- port units	7.07	1.22			
Economic factors & take challenges	(1) Combat units	6.32	1.22	0.996	0.370	n.s
	(2) Combat sup- port units	6.32	1.22			
	(3) Service sup- port units	6.56	1.30			
Improve abili- ties	(1) Combat units	6.45	1.52	0.658	0.518	n.s
	(2) Combat sup- port units	6.41	1.55			
	(3) Service sup- port units	6.64	1.44			
Family sup- port & inter- ests	(1) Combat units	5.64	1.59	1.418	0.243	n.s
	(2) Combat sup- port units	5.41	1.55			
	(3) Service sup- port units	5.33	1.69			
Freedom & equality	(1) Combat units	6.01	1.54	0.494	0.611	n.s
	(2) Combat support units	5.89	1.65			
	(3) Service support units	6.10	1.61			

Verify Research Hypotheses

Univariate analysis of variation (ANOVA) is adopted when testing the research hypotheses. The report revealed that despite service units (army, navy, and air force), these five factors (loyalty to Taiwan, economic factors and the courage to take challenges, improve their abilities, family support & personal interests, freedom and equality) signifi-

cantly affect women's decision to join the military (H1 holds). However, occupational categories (i.e. combat units, combat support units, and service support units) have no significant impact on these five factors (H2 does not hold true). In addition, military ranks (i.e. officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers) have a significant impact on these five factors (H3 holds).

Table 9. The single-factor analysis of variance in terms of military rank

Research di- mensions	Military rank	mean	<i>sd</i>	F value	p-value	Scheffé test
Loyalty to Taiwan	(1) Officer	6.79	1.14	0.399	0.671	n.s
	(2) Non-commissioned officer	6.83	1.36			
	(3) Soldier	6.96	1.38			
Economic fac- tors & take challenges	(1) Officer	6.28	1.23	1.410	0.245	n.s
	(2) Non-commissioned officer	6.37	1.44			
	(3) Soldier	6.63	1.56			
Improve abili- ties	(1) Officer	6.45	1.47	0.360	0.698	n.s
	(2) Non-commissioned officer	6.53	1.54			
	(3) Soldier	6.35	1.54			
Family support & interests	(1) Officer	5.72	1.43	3.168	0.043*	(1)>(2)
	(2) Non-commissioned officer	5.31	1.72			
	(3) Soldier	5.55	1.59			
Freedom & equality	(1) Officer	5.98	1.47	0.062	0.939	n.s
	(2) Non-commissioned officer	5.98	1.68			
	(3) Soldier	6.06	1.68			

*p<0.05

H1: Service units show significant difference regarding 5 dimensions.

After pairwise comparison, the three service units (i.e. army, navy, and air force) have no significant impact in these four dimensions ("loyalty to Taiwan", "economic factors and accept challenges", "improve abilities", and "freedom and equality"). Only in the dimension of "support from family and personal interest", the air force show a significant difference from the army. Statistics are shown in Table 10.

H2: Occupational categories show significant difference regarding 5 dimensions.

After pairwise comparison, the three occupational category (combat units, combat support units, and service support units) do not show significant difference regarding all the five dimensions ("loyalty to Taiwan", "economic factors and accept challenges", "improve abilities", "family support & personal interests" and "freedom and equality"). The statistics are shown in Table 11.

Table 10. One-way ANOVA on service units for female soldiers

Dependent variable	(I) Service unit (army, navy, and air force)	(J) Service unit (army, navy, and air force)	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
1. Loyalty to Taiwan (mean)	1	2	.381	-.1888	.6817
		3	.539	-.6366	.2397
	2	1	.381	-.6817	.1888
		3	.153	-1.0074	.1175
	3	1	.539	-.2397	.6366
		2	.153	-.1175	1.0074
2. Economic factors & take challenges (mean)	1	2	.127	-.0803	.8585
		3	.890	-.5654	.3797
	2	1	.127	-.8585	.0803
		3	.150	-1.0885	.1247
	3	1	.890	-.3797	.5654
		2	.150	-.1247	1.0885
3. Improve abilities (mean)	1	2	.867	-.4036	.6282
		3	.640	-.7193	.3194
	2	1	.867	-.6282	.4036
		3	.517	-.9789	.3545
	3	1	.640	-.3194	.7193
		2	.517	-.3545	.9789
4. Family support & interests (mean)	1	2	.880	-.6532	.4301
		3	.015	-1.1912	-.1006
	2	1	.880	-.4301	.6532
		3	.174	-1.2343	.1656
	3	1	.015	.1006	1.1912
		2	.174	-.1656	1.2343
5. Freedom & equal- ity (mean)	1	2	.241	-.1686	.9134
		3	.718	-.7251	.3641
	2	1	.241	-.9134	.1686
		3	.153	-1.2521	.1462
	3	1	.718	-.3641	.7251
		2	.153	-.1462	1.2521

*Mean difference = 0.05 indicates significance

Table 11. One-way ANOVA on occupational category for female soldiers

Dependent variable	(I) Occupational cate- gory (combat units, combat support units, service support units)	(J) Occupational cate- gory (combat units, combat support units, service support units)	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
1. Loyalty to Tai- wan (mean)	1	2	.971	-.3778	.3102
		3	.175	-.7166	.0971
	2	1	.971	-.3102	.3778
		3	.291	-.7066	.1547

	3	1	.175	-.0971	.7166
		2	.291	-.1547	.7066
2. Economic factors & take challenges (mean)	1	2	1.000	-.3685	.3760
		3	.424	-.6754	.2050
	2	1	1.000	-.3760	.3685
		3	.453	-.7049	.2271
	3	1	.424	-.2050	.6754
		2	.453	-.2271	.7049
3. Improve abilities (mean)	1	2	.978	-.3729	.4426
		3	.618	-.6751	.2894
	2	1	.978	-.4426	.3729
		3	.549	-.7382	.2827
	3	1	.618	-.2894	.6751
		2	.549	-.2827	.7382
4. Family support & interests (mean)	1	2	.438	-.2053	.6564
		3	.340	-.2046	.8145
	2	1	.438	-.6564	.2053
		3	.937	-.4600	.6188
	3	1	.340	-.8145	.2046
		2	.937	-.6188	.4600
5. Freedom & equality (mean)	1	2	.785	-.3075	.5507
		3	.916	-.5941	.4209
	2	1	.785	-.5507	.3075
		3	.636	-.7455	.3289
	3	1	.916	-.4209	.5941
		2	.636	-.3289	.7455

*Mean difference = 0.05 indicates significance

H3: Military ranks show significant difference regarding 5 dimensions.

After pairwise comparison, the three military ranks (i.e. officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers) have no significant impact concerning these four dimensions ("loyalty to Taiwan", "economic factors and accept challenges", "improve abilities", and "freedom and equality"). Only in the dimension of "support from family and personal interest", officers show a significant difference from non-commissioned officer. Statistics are shown in Table 12.

Discussion

From the data analysis, it can be seen that when women engage in military positions, whether it is recommended by relatives and friends or based on personal interests; these two dimensions have a significant impact on their choice of military service units. Especially in the selection of military service units, the Air Force is more favored by women than the Army. This is consistent with the general perception that the Air Force has a better work environment than the Army. Moreover, compared to non-commissioned officers, recommendations from relatives and friends and personal preferences have a more significant impact on officers.

Table 12. One-way ANOVA on military ranks for female soldiers

Dependent variable	(I) Military rank	(J) Military rank	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
1. Loyalty to Taiwan (mean)	1	2	.971	-.3627	.2970
		3	.675	-.6460	.3031
	2	1	.971	-.2970	.3627
		3	.764	-.6028	.3255
	3	1	.675	-.3031	.6460
		2	.764	-.3255	.6028
2. Economic factors & take challenges (mean)	1	2	.804	-.4509	.2598
		3	.245	-.8606	.1618
	2	1	.804	-.2598	.4509
		3	.460	-.7539	.2462
	3	1	.245	-.1618	.8606
		2	.460	-.2462	.7539
3. Improve abilities (mean)	1	2	.871	-.4733	.3065
		3	.916	-.4655	.6564
	2	1	.871	-.3065	.4733
		3	.726	-.3698	.7276
	3	1	.916	-.6564	.4655
		2	.726	-.7276	.3698
4. Family support & interests (mean)	1	2	.044	.0085	.8286
		3	.761	-.4123	.7675
	2	1	.044	-.8286	-.0085
		3	.591	-.8180	.3361
	3	1	.761	-.7675	.4123
		2	.591	-.3361	.8180
5. Freedom & equality (mean)	1	2	.999	-.4165	.4043
		3	.944	-.6721	.5089
	2	1	.999	-.4043	.4165
		3	.950	-.6531	.5021
	3	1	.944	-.5089	.6721
		2	.950	-.5021	.6531

*Mean difference = 0.05 indicates significance

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Questionnaire statistics show that among the reasons why women choose to join the military, family support or strong interests in military careers are the most critical factors. Especially the difference between female air force and

female army (p value is 0.015), this difference is very significant. The initial motivation for female soldiers to join the Air Force was that they learned that the Air Force rarely changed station locations compared to the Army, which made it easier for them to take care of their families. In addition, the difference between female officers and female non-commissioned officers (p value is 0.044)

is also significant, this is because the salary increase obtained by officer promotion is more significant than that of non-commissioned officers. It can be seen that family support and personal interests and ideas are key factors that influence women's decision to join the military.

Given that human resources are the most important capital of an organization, it is essential to be people-oriented when establishing an incentive system. If people's fundamental needs are satisfied with an attitude of respect, understanding, and care as the guiding principles, a win-win situation can be achieved (Cheng & Yang, 2023). With the improvement of modern women's education and the increase in market demand for labor, many women have left their families and entered the job market (Wang, 2016). The Taiwan military has long ignored the incentive system in the past, but professionalism has become very important under the current national military volunteer service system. If there is no follow-up professional training and regular assessment of training results after entering the military, it will not only weaken the military's combat effectiveness, but also fail to retain talents. Take the masters of traditional agricultural technology groups as an example. In addition to undergoing a strict recruitment and screening process and receiving regular professional training, they would also be assigned to various farms and accumulate rich agricultural experience (Li, 2019). Similarly, in the military, through hierarchical training and mutual exchanges, the training mod-

els of different units can be adopted to conduct internships where "strengths make up for weaknesses" in order to reach a higher professional level. Then, taking Singapore as another example, they chose to send students for internships due to a lack of adequate entrepreneurial environment and resources. After students return to Singapore, they will be arranged to live in the same dormitory, allowing them to exchange internship experiences with each other and help stimulate innovative ideas (Research by Lu & Guo, 2018). Taking into account factors such as the scarcity of professional talents and the time required to cultivate them, a strict and multi-level structure is designed to provide a long-term career development vision and encourage employees to continuously improve their professional skills and pursue professional diplomas in order to obtain promotion qualifications and opportunities while strengthening the technical foundation and professional strength in various military professional fields (Teng, 2018). Military personnel must have new thinking and make career plans in order to foresee the future and keep up with the latest trends in the world. The military should adopt planned strategies (such as allowing students to see industrial prospects and keep pace with the latest trends) in order to attract and retain talents (Chen & Lin, 2018). Many companies are unwilling to invest in and hire talents, attempting to save costs on the grounds of low salaries and bleak industry prospects, and even hoping that employees with low salaries and junior qualifications can deliver high-level results. As a result, senior

employees have a stronger sense of crisis and are afraid of being fired at any time (Zhang Ruixiong, 2018). Therefore, the three strategies for retaining talents include providing high salaries, making employees love their jobs, and outlining prospects for employees (Chuang, 2016).

Recommendations

1) Retaining talents is the key cornerstone for enterprises to maintain sustainable development. Currently, the proportion of women serving in the military is only 13.57%, making them still a disadvantaged group. Paying attention to the work abilities and difficulties of female military personnel is the key to retaining talents.

2) The current situation across the Taiwan Strait is extremely tense, so Taiwan has adopted a "all-people national defense" policy, and Taiwan's national army continues to expand. Whether or not women are required to serve in the military, increasing the proportion of female military personnel can improve the overall proportion of the national military.

3) The National Army does not pay significant attention to women in terms of economic factors, indicating that the welfare policy has not been fully implemented. It should be promoted and implemented in small units such as squads and platoons, and the allowances of volunteer service personnel should be greatly increased to distinguish them from compulsory service, so as to retain talents.

4) Communication and connection with family should be valued, and this was a significant element in this study. Most of the women interviewed in this study were influenced by the support of relatives and friends or their own interests in the decision-making process, and the military should take this factor into account. In addition to opening up communication between military personnel and their families, the military can also allow military personnel to invite families to the units they serve to deepen their understanding and continue to support female military personnel.

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