



Military Leadership - Changing Paradigm

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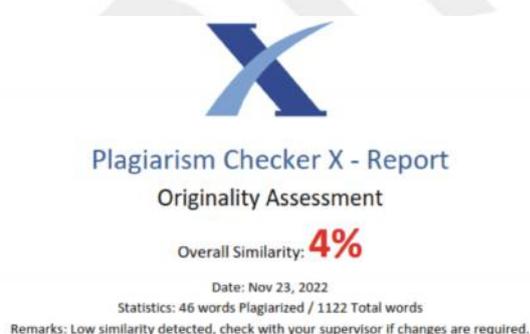
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ABSTRACT

“There will be no withdrawal without written orders and these orders shall never be issued.”

-Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw

The 21st century environment is complex, ambiguous with speed and rapid organisational change. Conceptual skills provide the capacity to perform effectively in these conditions. Leaders must become versatile, flexible, adaptive and innovative to remain effective in the new millennia. The literature review is to find and assess the gap between ‘Military Leadership in Future Warfare’ as compared to the leadership attributes displayed during conventional warfare.

KEY WORDS

Military Leadership, Warfare, National Security, Fourth-generation warfar (4 GW).

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in any organisation inspires people by providing a purpose and direction. It seeks to accomplish the mission while concurrently striving to improve the organisation. While the leadership attributes in all walks of civil life are by and large the same, military leadership is significantly different—the most obvious difference being the extremely high levels of motivation required to achieve the objectives. The leader is required to motivate his men to be prepared to follow orders, which may result in putting one’s own life at stake.

It is very common to debate the age-old adage i.e. are leaders ‘born’ or ‘made’? This however does

not hold true for leaders in the military. Time and again, this aphorism has been proven wrong by military leaders, who through conscious and relentless efforts, have developed leadership traits and applied those most successfully in the challenging circumstances.

Another unique aspect, which makes military leadership different from any other leadership, be it political or corporate, is the fact that there are no runners - up during war. The consequences of failure of military leadership are too high.

Hence, from the professional viewpoint, a military leader at direct and organisational leadership levels may have to fulfil many roles i.e. of a heroic leader, a military manager, and also a father figure. At the strategic level, he may have to supplement these roles with that of a politico- military expert, a public relations man or even a quasi-diplomat.

Future Trends

Significant trends in military technology have the potential to dramatically alter the future course of warfare and the characteristics of the future threat. The impact of applied automation and computers, electromagnetic warfare, electronic sensors, and the other technologies are indicative of a rise in military-techno culture in which time, space, speed, and other fundamental conditions are radically changing. The future operating environment is likely to be:-

- Less predictable and diverse, which is likely to increase both within and outside the armed forces.
 - Characterised by higher public visibility under the media glare and speed of communications. Increased visibility may result in higher potential for immediate interference and critical scrutiny of leader decisions and actions.
 - More complex rendering some weapons and equipment ineffective.
 - Marked by more complex chains of command.
 - Having information overload. Leaders will have to make decisions at all levels and sort out critical information from high volumes of data.
 - All leaders should have a shared view of the goals of the mission at all stages and have confidence that soldiers have a shared set of core values and ethics.
 - Levels of uncertainty and ambiguity will be higher.
 - More difficult to distinguish friend from enemy; military from civilian.
 - Focus on knowledge. Most valuable asset in 21st century is the knowledge. Wealth is moving from industry to knowledge and services.
 - Impact recruiting specially officers. Outsourcing will increase dramatically, Contractors will be conspicuously present in the battlefield.
 - Interwoven with continued technology growth. Use of computers, cellular phones and internet will continue to grow exponentially. These digital systems have to be fully utilised for leadership development.
- Leadership Evaluation Practices. The key qualities needed in future military leaders are given as under. Leadership and professional competencies are characterized by the following :-
- Cognitive capability to work across a variety of cultures and understand the impact of structure and design on organizational and team development.
 - Cognitive capability to think critically and develop and communicate.
 - A vision that fits within the strategic context of the environments in which they operate.
 - The capability to build military and civilian collaborative efforts.
 - Character accentuated by core values and ethical decision making.
 - A comfort with taking prudent risks.

Generations of War² *The First-Generation* battlefield was usually a battlefield of order, and the battlefield of order created a culture of order in state militaries. *Second Generation* war dealt with the increasing disorder of the battlefield by attempting to impose order on it. Second Generation war, relied on centrally controlled indirect artillery fire, carefully synchronized with infantry, cavalry and aviation, to destroy the enemy by killing his soldiers and blowing up his equipment. *Third Generation* war, also called manoeuvre warfare, was developed by the German Army during World War II. Third Generation war relied less on firepower than on speed and tempo.

Fourth Generation Warfare(4GW)³ has revolutionised the complete war fighting and has changed everything. It fields nations against non-national organizations and networks - including oppressed ethnic groups, mafias, narco-traffickers and extremist quasi-religious fundamentalists. 4GW is the chosen weapon of the weak, the downtrodden, the criminal and the radicals. Its evolutionary roots may lie in guerrilla warfare, the Leninist theory of insurrection, and old-fashioned terrorism, but it is rendered more pervasive by the technologies that the age of computers and mass communication has provided.

It uses all available networks like, political, economic, social and military to influence the enemy's political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is likely to be nonlinear, possibly to the point of having no definable battlefields or fronts. The distinction between "civilian" and "military" may disappear. Tactically, fourth generation war will be fought in a complex arena of low intensity conflict, include tactics/techniques from earlier generations, be fought across the spectrum of political, social, economic, and military networks, be fought worldwide through these networks and involve a mix of national, international, transnational and subnational actors.

Generation Z Leaders⁴

Generation Zers, born between 1997 and 2012, appear to have a totally different outlook on work, yet they possess certain qualities that are in high demand by today's organizations. As a rule, they are flexible, action-oriented, independent, self-directed, technically competent and comfortable with the constantly changing nature of work today. They strive for a healthy balance among work, life, and relationships.

Sometimes interpreted as lacking respect, they are often unimpressed with status and authority. They are financially savvy, fascinated by the possibilities of technology, and represent a culturally diverse population.

Members of "Generation Millennials, are born between 1981 and 1996. This generation seems to thrive on challenging work and creative expression, loves freedom and flexibility and hates micromanagement. They are fiercely loyal to managers who are knowledgeable who act as caring coaches who can mentor and help them achieve their goals. Leadership Implications. Research shows that "respect for differences in people" is one of the most important qualities of a successful leader. Today's younger workforce embraces a style of leadership that emphasizes the power of collective responsibility, cooperation among diverse individuals, sensitivity toward others, and equal participation by all regardless of their authority or position. Traditional "top-down" notions of leadership are least appealing to this group of Americans. Leonard Wong, in his study *Generations Apart: Xers and Boomers⁵* in the Officer Corps, deems direct leadership by senior leaders as the main stopgap in mitigating the Xers' (junior officers) aversion to hierarchical leadership. Senior leaders play an important role since the younger force desires interaction with senior leadership. A vital step building this relationship might begin with how we look at mentoring. Wong concludes that the heart of the problem is that "today's senior officers do not understand today's junior officers or their perspective."

Prognosis

- Leadership in general & its attributes: defining and assessing leader effectiveness.
- Leadership in military & its special requirements in combat situations: identifying and assessing leaders combat potential & leaders' performance under adversity, leadership and the development of subordinate

personnel. Present leadership teachings and methods to prepare military leaders, leadership development as an integrated system.

- Types of warfare and main attributes of asymmetric warfare.
- Essential attributes of military leadership in asymmetric warfare.
- Leadership idols & models studied in past mainly refers to conventional warfare and not for Asymmetric Warfare. Thus, bringing out challenges of leadership in asymmetric warfare in variance to conventional warfare.
- Changes required in preparing a future ready combat leader for asymmetric warfare situations across the world.

Every military leader, particularly those who practice the art of war, must be given every opportunity to study war. Every soldier, regardless of grade or specialty, should be given unfettered access to the best, most inclusive programs of war studies. And every soldier who takes advantage of the opportunity must be recognized and professionally rewarded for the quality of that learning.⁶

The Army should consider a broader approach to officer education and professionalism strategy, as indicated in figure 1 below. As an officer rises in rank, his training requirements decrease, while his corresponding education requirements increase.⁷

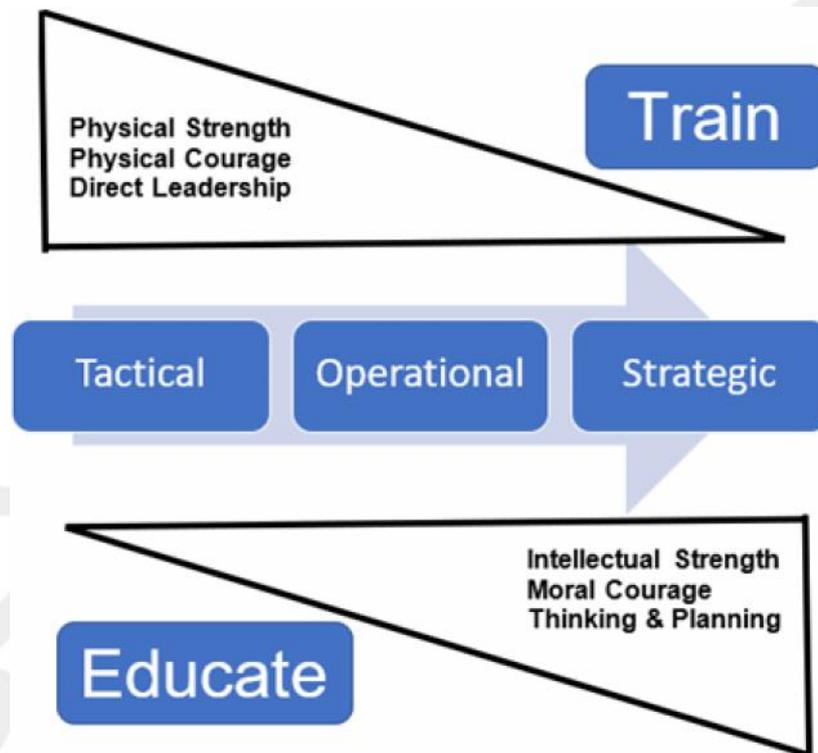


Figure 01: Training and Educational Development

CONCLUSION

Leadership is a dynamic concept and it has to evolve with the changing times and circumstances especially in the armed forces. It is said that 'courage, competence and commitment' are the three vital values that all military leaders must possess. However, there can be no absolute answers to these questions and neither can there be leaders who are absolutely perfect. Even the most successful leaders had their weaknesses but, the management of these weaknesses became a mark of their success. As the Indian Armed Forces march their way through the 21st century, the success we achieve and the progress we make will be largely dependent on

the quality of leadership showcased by our senior leadership. The Indian military has produced very good leaders in the past who have provided the requisite direction in war and peace. As globalisation and technology necessitate changes in our military structures and outlook, there is an overriding requirement for our leaders to adapt to these nuances.

Our future generation of military leaders should be those who possess the enduring qualities of adaptability and high moral values.

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