

LANDMARKS OF THE MILITARY ORGANISATION'S APPROACH AS A MANAGEMENT MODEL

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ABSTRACT

In a context where globalization meets new dimensions and management must quickly respond to different challenges, the need for successful management solutions, tested and validated, is increasingly present. In this context, the present paper analyses several perspectives of the military organisation as a management model. The approach has two main directions, both from military organisational internal environment and from the external, outstanding examples from literature being highlighted for the second.

KEYWORDS: *military organisation, model, management.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *H11*

1. PRECONDITIONS FOR ANALYSIS

Military organisation was and is, in the national context - something highlighted by opinion polls - preferred by the population, both before 1989 and after. We are used to often hearing the colloquial expression "like in the army". What the values underlying the use of this expression are and, subsequently, how this is supported to the point that the crystallization of a management model as best practice may be considered are the main lines of investigation in this article, in accordance with the title proposed. The idea has been less explored, one of the authors who have distinguished themselves in highlighting relevant interdependencies between the army, society and management being the reputed professor Ioan Abrudan who said: "Throughout history, wherever there was a relationship of authority they were considered good sources of inspiration for management. Among them, the state, the army and religion have distinguished themselves considerably." (Abrudan, 2012, p. 152).

As a background finding, theoretically speaking, there are frequently highlighted in the civilian literature (Popa, 2005), at least four areas assigned to the military institution, as initial points for further development for different fields of activity, which have nowadays become, true strong components of modern management. It's about strategy, logistics, innovation and projects, invoking the fact that progress in the civilian life had as referential the military theory and practice of functional areas listed above. Specifically, it is widely agreed that: the term strategy was used in ancient China about 2500 years ago by Sun Tzu to define the art of war in the context of establishing the role of an army's commander; logistics was considered as part of the art of war, in

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terms of practice of troop movements, names such as “logista” or “logistikos” nominating administrative occupations in the great powers of the ancient world, too; the occurrence, after the Second World War, of PERT method (“Program Evaluation and Review Technique”) was developed for the benefit of the United States Navy within Polaris project to achieve a submarine-launched ballistic missile; the invention of the Internet has as origins the concerns of the US Defence Department to create, for military purposes, a reliable system to transmit data, the Research Agency DARPA (Defence Research Projects Agency) launching at the time an initiative to develop for this purpose a network of computers.

On the other hand, it is imperative to treat military organisation management (we shall use the phrase military management) as a subsystem of general management (Iancu, 2013). Extrapolated, we have here the relation from whole to a part, the military organization being a subsystem of the social system. In this research registry two fundamental attributes of the military institution should be placed, the war and the security situation, analysed of course in interdisciplinary terms (sociology, economics, military art, psychology, etc.), given that there are phenomena that have characterized humanity since ancient times of social development. Returning to the term management, it is no less true that the phrases leadership and command can still be found synonymously, the explanation being focused on the operational component of management characterizing the actions and military activities. In fact, this situation was specific to the Romanian society before 1989, when it was used, regardless of the field (military or civilian) the term leadership.

Extending the plan for discussion at international level, things nuanced even more powerful for both the military and civilian environment alike, by introducing the term leadership, coming, in particular, from the US branch of managerial thinking. A recent reference work, which is worth mentioning here that blends harmoniously the theory and practice of management, civilian and military, gradually and systematically, establishing points of convergence and inflection (and inviting specialists to critical analysis on epistemological coordinates, at the same time), is the one coordinated by Stanley McChrystal, the US general in reserve. The authors introduce and discuss systemically, given the existing military-civilian interferences, management theories and practices, the most spectacular idea reached (successful, in fact) being the concept of team of teams, with dual applicability towards addressing this theme. But the starting point is again a common one: “The structure and culture based on disciplined, stratified reductionism of the Task Force had their origins in military organisational history. This organisational culture is not unique to the military; since the industrial revolution, most industries have accepted management doctrines based on or similar to Frederick Taylor’s scientific management, an excellent system to achieve very efficient execution of processes known, repeatable at a large-scale” (McChrystal et al., 2016, p.97).

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MILITARY ORGANISATION RELEVANT FOR SETTING UP A MANAGEMENT MODEL

Military organisation represents a specific social entity, deliberately constituted of a sufficient number of individuals who own statutes and meet well-defined roles, in pursuing to achieve, in an organised manner, the purpose for which it was created, that of national defence. Military organisation is characterized primarily by the high degree of statutory regulation. The need for normativity in the military field is one of the highest, since:

- military system is extremely complex (both in architecture and the variety of actions), the stake of actions carried out in the system being of major importance;
- victory (success) in relation to conflict and violence with the opposing military system, with the opposing forces in particular, should be considered as a number of consequences of the action, such as error or failure and, unlike other systems of human action, have an absolute existential-

value condition (Vlăsceanu, 1993), equating with huge military destructions and, above all, the loss of lives and significant technical-material resources;

- in this register of comparison, it should be noted that, unlike all other systems of organisation and human action, the military system is characterized by the triple hypostasis of actions: the state of peace, state of war and the intermediate state (the crisis). This is exactly what determines both the high need to normalize and the extremely striking specialization of rules, instructions and regulations in the military system (Badea, Barsan, Iancu, 2013).

Also, no less important that the specifics of the military organisation should be highlighted by reference to the following aspects: the aspect of "community" of military life; widening the missions' spectrum, since the military institution is also involved in situations that do not require the use of weapons; hierarchical bureaucratic organization; activity internationalization through participation in various theatres of operations; the downward unique aspect of the chain of command; a robust, highly personalized culture; the use of various technologies and technical systems; own training system, built mostly at undergraduate level, postgraduate and masters on a curriculum in which management disciplines play a key role.

3. REFLECTION OF SOME STRENGTHS OF THE MILITARY ORGANISATION IN THE CIVIL LITERATURE

The need for military management study is a natural necessity through the targeted purpose, that of improving organisational performance. It is a trend simultaneously and at the same time a necessity of current conditions, wherein, under the auspices of the events' dynamics, the only valid constant remains change. Organisations reinvent themselves to be in step with the times, and after following the various stages (in duration and intensity) of the life cycle only the created or assumed values remain. Such an idea is underlined by P. Drucker, in whose work many appreciations and references to the military organisation can be found, one such example being illustrated below: "At that time (1870), the only large permanent organisation was the army. It is no wonder, then, that its organisation, based on command and control, became the model for those who set up transcontinental railway companies, steel mills, modern banks and department stores. Control-based model, in which a few are in top giving orders, and most from the basis listen, remained as a rule for almost a hundred years." (Drucker, 2010, p.12).

In another reference work of management, the famous specialists Philip Kotler and John A. Caslione, analysing the conditions for successful strategic management exercise in an unpredictable environment, stated: "It may seem strange to begin discussions about the sustainability of economic enterprise with a quote from the book of Carl von Clausewitz, the great Prussian soldier and intellectual of the early nineteenth century and one of the most brilliant military strategists in history. Our intention is not to indicate specific military strategies or tactics, applied in turbulent world of today; rather, we want to raise the question of three fundamental principles underlying the strategy execution in conditions of chaos, both in business and in battle: (1) disorientation and confusion reign everywhere; (2) communication is imperative; (3) supreme achievement guides all actions." (Kotler, Caslione, 2009, p.207).

The last reference brought to attention is that of a work that makes available to specialists fundamental ideas, genuine instruments to implement adaptation and change in organisations, a volume in which innovation in military organisation is given as an example to obtain competitive advantage: "How can we explain long-term military advantage - if not by superior weapons and brilliant commanders? Knox and Murray argue that long-term leadership is most often the product of fundamental improvements in terms of military doctrine and organisation. Armies and marine forces which recorded the most wins in history were those who managed to break away from the past and to think of new ways to motivate, manage, distribute and train fighters. They were responsible for innovations in management" (Hamel, Breen, 2010, p.46).

4. FRAMEWORK FOR CREATING A MANAGEMENT MODEL BASED ON THE MILITARY ORGANISATION'S EXPERTISE

To build a working possible option to explain the synthesis of the military organisation's functionality as a management model, the scientific meanings of the work to shape should be considered. First, broadly, the model should be seen both as a representation of a system or process, but also less more technical, as an example for what falls within a category of rules agreed by a socio-professional community. In a narrow sense, the management model contains certain categories of processes and management relationship through the use of which the performance and functionality of organisational management increases, being at the same time a tool that contributes to a thorough knowledge of reality, separation of the subjective from the objective, the positive from the negative (Nicolescu et al., 2011, p. 403).

In the conceptual model created (figure 1) we considered the conditioning of the conduct of military activities by specific rules and regulations and standard operating procedures with a very practical purpose. Following these activities, circumscribed to the functions of the research and development military organisation, training, mobilization, logistics, procurement, human resources, finance and accounting (Badea, Barsan, Iancu, 2013), a certain level of organisational performance occurs, that will serve as the basis for extracting lessons learned, as a means of regulating the input.

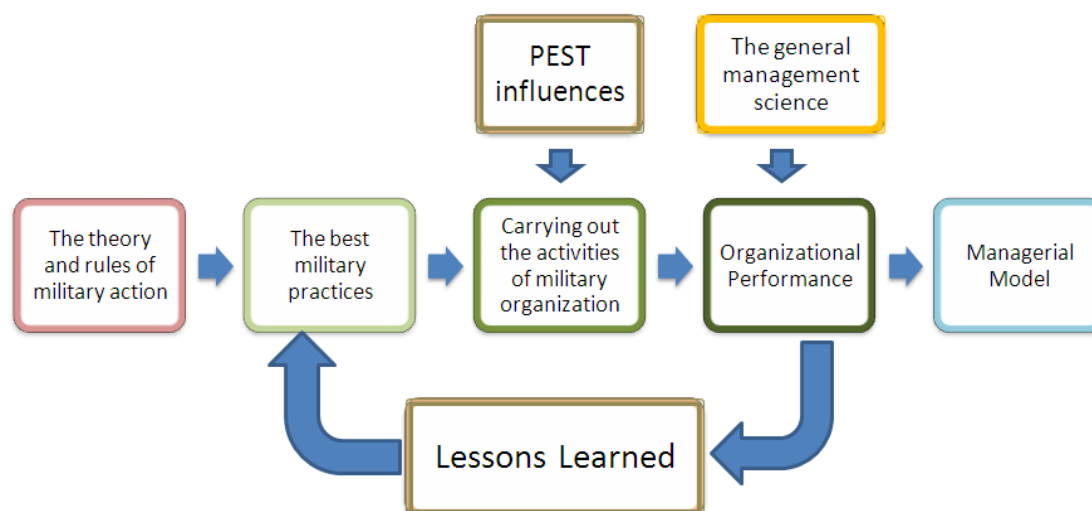


Figure 1. Crystallization of a managerial model

Macro-environment, by political, economic, social and technological (PEST) conditioning, plays an essential role in carrying out activities, influencing the achievement of forecasted performance levels (for example, failure to give the percentage of GDP needed to reach the level of ambition employed influences performance indicators). Furthermore, to obtain a managerial model with the title of best practices, which is civilian-military interoperable, military organisational performance obtained should be analysed through the filter of general management theory and practice.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As stated at the beginning of this article, the current management, as a science and practice, must undergo a renewal stage, talking even about a generation of management 2.0. For the implementation and maturation of such a step, obviously, managerial models that would become true paradigms are needed. By the tradition recorded in the art of leadership, military organisation

can provide to other organisations (particularly those in the government) such landmarks, some accepted and recognized, with a character of interchangeability. Being a vector of knowledge by incorporating high technology, certainly, military organisation will contribute, in a proportion equal to the intensity of the civil-military cooperation and openness, to the development of generally accepted management models, especially for the private sector.

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