SUSTAINABILITY OF WICS MODEL IN MILITARY LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT
In the organizational context viability and applicability of the various military leadership models are subject to a number of factors, including those related to the specificities of organizational missions content, dynamic hierarchical military action and the exercise of influence by leading process are defining. Studying the particularizing becomes necessary and obligatory in terms of identifying and implementing effective solutions and ways of potentiating the leadership capabilities of military structures, pet imp peace and operation.

KEYWORDS: *WICS model, military leadership, military organisational environment*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *H11*

1. DEFINING ASPECTS OF WICS MODEL IN LEADERSHIP

Robert Sternberg, highly known for his work as a psychologist and psihometrician, proposed a number of theories including the triarchic theory of successful intelligence, balance theory of wisdom and WICS model, a system of effective leadership, which basically interprets leadership as being a synthesis between wisdom, creativity and intelligence, defining exceptional leadership (Boncu, Ceobanu 2013, pp. 271-273). These features found in the WICS reach a higher elasticity level, compared with the meanings of previously developed leadership patterns (Sternberg, 2005, p. 203). This view is supported by the fact that the leader uses the three attributes both in personal level, marking self-development, and in decision-making within the organization.

In his analysis, Sternberg assumes that successful leaders must meet two conditions, among others. First, they must have a vision that followers understand, accept, and eventually support. Then, they must engage in a complex processing, which results in the creation, implementation and monitoring of that vision (R. Sternberg, 2003, pp. 386-401). WICS leadership model addresses both aspects of the leadership process, relying on elements of the personality, situation, behaviour, contingency, and transformative of previous models. Sternberg's model focuses on the "optimal interaction between skills and creative attitudes" (Pop, 2011, p. 51). Approaching open-mindedly relations established between WICS model and previous theories and models of organization and management, we shall admit that certain ideas found by more specialists are advanced, such as Bass, Avolio, Adwater, Goleman, Sashkin, Conger, Kanugo, Weber, Hunt and others.

The main source of the model is the intelligence, by adapting, modeling and selection of socio-cultural environments, using analytical, creative and practical skills' balance. Such an assumption is

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perpetuated by Sternberg, stressing fundamental executive processes or the metacomponents of this ability (R. Sternberg., P. 96): identifying a problem; defining and redefining the problem; allocating resources to solve the problem; mental representation of that problem; formulating a strategy to solve the problem; simultaneously monitoring the problem to solve it; evaluating the solution to that problem after solving it.

Extending this explanation of analytical intelligence, it is employed when a person applies the processes mentioned in quite abstract issues, which take, however, a relatively familiar form. Simultaneously, creative intelligence characterizes the person applying those processes to relatively new tasks and situations. Moreover, practical intelligence affects the person applying processes to everyday problems in order to adapt, model and select circumstances.

Another important implication resulting from the outline of the model refers to the interaction of intelligence in the area of wisdom, creativity and knowledge in order to achieve the common good. From this observation we should bear in mind the immense need to balance intrapersonal interests with those of other people and extra personal interests, on the short term and long term, introducing values in order to adapt train and select the environments (Sternberg, 1998, pp. 347-365).

Therefore, intelligence, wisdom and creativity are interrelated. Sternberg argues that the best leaders show all three skills that can be improved. There is no doubt that intelligence is the foundation of creativity and wisdom. Later, creativity occupies an intermediate position in this picture, because it depends on skills related to a person's wisdom. Finally, wisdom is regarded as the emergence of intelligence and creativity, being built through them.

1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS ON THE UTILITY OF WICS MODEL IN MILITARY LEADERSHIP

Leadership is initiated by the leader, and as purpose, there are the performances of the entity, of subordinates, that is why, we should not confine ourselves to the perception that leadership is a mere hierarchy and equate leadership to position and power (Owen, Hodgson, Gazzard, p. 20).

Exploring the specifics of our military organization, the most obvious finding is that leadership is different in the three general levels or tactical structures, within the operational and strategic levels.

On an upward perspective, it is self-understood that the complexity at the strategic level encompasses and exceeds difficulties found by the operational or team leader, which requires a higher intake of knowledge and capabilities of the strategic leader. This is precisely why success has been achieved in terms of team leaders' training, while leadership skills required to leaders in operational and strategic levels were not fully embodied.

For leadership at the tactical level, we note the addressing of orders from the upper echelons to subordinates - elements of communication between leaders and subordinates are very relevant, as they practically constitute the instruments to carry out organization's objectives. The situations become difficult when there are divisions of the group due to dissatisfaction or other unforeseeable causes that hinder the efficiency of orders received. The problems the leader is facing at the tactical level are usually repetitive, occur daily and require immediate resolution. It is important to note this, because creativity at this level of organization is reduced, guidance being carried out by the direct heads of the organization. It is up to the leader to apply the experience gained in the development of human relationships and create ambience by influencing the subordinates' psyche, minimizing the possibility of complicating the mission entrusted.

Clearly, new ideas are vital after starting the fight, situational variables in times of crisis or conflict posing a lot of problems, whose solution lies in the hands of leaders at the tactical level. Subunits are based on innovation created by the commandant, especially when you do not know the details about the status of the enemy. Inevitably, heuristic (creative) thinking is the essence of success in the tactical field, and less mechanistic thinking. Housed in an intermediate position to the tactical and strategic levels, operational leader's activity outlines a wider range of responsibilities. There is

an interdependence between operational leaders' and sub-leaders' activity, the first being the ones who decide and give orders impacting tactics leaders and their subordinates. Difficulties in this case, most often have a simple solution based on ideas listed in various management guides or standard operating procedures. Risks related to data and information inconsistency or uncertainties are greatly reduced.

In an attempt to harmonize the size of the WICS model within the strategic level of the organization, leaders whose decisions show the strongest impact on the viability of the organization can be noted here. By this, we refer to the fact that the solutions adopted by them are comprehensive, far-reaching, attracting favourable or otherwise repercussions, endangering organizational goals. The solutions adopted turn into decisions, whose trajectory is directed straight at the operational level and, indirectly, at the tactical level of the organization. The major influence of strategic leaders, as "leaders of leaders' (J. Adair, *2014*, p. 63), places them in the top of the military hierarchy, having the greatest responsibility in carrying out the mission.

In battlefield situations may change unexpectedly. If this assumption is correct, then the military leader must have all the information necessary for selecting them to carry out the. A decisive role in this context is played by representations of space, spatial thinking, tactical creativity. Adjusting strategic elements by data collected may cause problems for the leader, because of the need to imagine the organization as a whole and of increasing the analytical capacity. In support of the same idea, creativity has also proved to be beneficial, as "one of the distinctive features that we meet at practitioners of this kind of leadership" (Sfârlog, Ralea, Giurcă, *2010*, p. 194), being unable to generate the future course of action without anticipating environment's dynamics, analyzing and evaluating the actual conditions of struggle, framing new ideas into an action plan, all these elements being communicated as scenarios to the subordinates.

Any obstacles we might encounter in the exercise of leadership at this level could be inability of practical thinking, inadequate training of leadership skills, limited capacity to analyze the factors that affect the organization, reduced involvement of leaders from all hierarchical levels in making the decision-making process efficient, frequent changes of political, economic, cultural conditions etc. The addressed issue acquires a new dimension in the development of human capacity to understand this phenomenon. One result of the involvement on a broad front of the model in leadership is the change of optics on criteria for assessing the leader in the organization. Successful leadership occurs only when "certain individuals exert influence so that organizational goals are achieved through increased productivity, innovation, satisfaction and moral commitment of subordinates." (Jones, *1998*, p. 296).

The more we advance in organizational complexity, the more present is the idea that complex organizations hardly digest new ideas, opinions or alternatives appears in the leader's consciousness (P. Smith, *1999*, p.141). The involvement of WICS network size is less visible, but it is noticeable, as the leader comes in by confronting those individuals who impede the creative process, by motivating them, by separating them from the rest of the people who exhibit positive attitudes, and under the fiercest situations, they can even call the exclusion of people with negative energy from the circle of creation.

2. DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The overall objective of the research is to identify the degree of applicability of the model to the specifics of the military organization and the ways to customize its exigencies in the defining situational context for the net impact of WICS on the field of military leadership. We target the focus of those interested in this innovative paradigm of exceptional leadership and direct towards conducting a study concerning the applicability of the theory to the strategic level of the military organization.

We initiated this research by formulating a number of *hypotheses* on which we focused our effort, namely: a) the share that WICS model holds in the leadership activities of military structures in tactical field is more relevant during a crisis compared to that of a state of peace; b) the rate of applicability of the model in peacetime is higher for the echelon located at strategic level of the armed forces.

The purpose of this work falls within a wider project regarding the shaping and building of a vision for the leadership of military structures, to provide a theoretical and methodological basis to improve military leaders' professionalism.

To investigate the correlation between WICS model and the specifics of military leadership we included in the research the employees with leadership positions in a tactical unit. We had the possibility of investigating a large number of subjects, in this case 10 military leaders, by collecting an extremely rich material. The research period overlapped with non-combatant missions held between August 2015- March 2016 within the Resolute Support Mission, committed to providing protection to the force in the region of International Airport Afghanistan, and active participation in training, mentoring and assisting Afghan National Police troops.

The practical approach involved determining the applicability of the model proposed by Sternberg in exercising military leadership for assigned missions or other special leadership tasks in the military field. For verifying the preset hypotheses, we completed the following steps: individual query of subjects; qualitative data collection; identification of WICS network size; determining institutional potential of model's components; interpretation of results.

As a *research tool,* we used the SOARA interview technique, which is one of the most effective modern methods of research. It was structured on the following aspects: *situation*: aiming the description of a recent leadership challenge or situation in which the participants were found; *objectives*: reflection of workload entrusted to the participants in the situation described; *action*: working instruments, motivation and the available alternatives to achieve the objectives; *results*: participants' achievements in the situation described the and objectives achieved; *consequences*: lessons learned from that experience and their impact in the ongoing process of knowledge.

By conceptualizing the theme, we built a semi-structured interview guide with indicators related to each dimension of WICS network. The formulated guiding questions try to capture the specifics of the metacomponents' analyzed issue.

4. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

In the study with methodological purpose, significant differences in the responses to the interview have resulted, and we trying to highlight these issues in the following table:

Table 1.

Current no.	Type of thinking – expression manifested in the interview's stages				Observations
	Situation	**Objective**	**Actions**	**Results and consequences**	
Subject 1	Algorithmic thinking	Sequential thinking	Directed thinking	Projective thinking	Familiar situations, determined operations
Subject 2	Evaluative thinking	Explanatory thinking	Unproductive thinking	Analogical thinking	Reasoning of everyday professional life
Subject 3	Inductive thinking	Analytical thinking	Critical thinking	Practical thinking	Maintaining contact with reality

Current no.	Type of thinking – expression manifested in the interview's stages				Observations
	Situation	Objective	Actions	Results and consequences	
Subject 4	Descriptive thinking	Associative thinking	Inductive thinking	Deductive thinking	Inventiveness, initiative
Subject 5	Vigil thinking	Logical thinking	Positive thinking	Linear thinking	Prudent progression in operations, boldness
Subject 6	Factual thinking	Analogical thinking	Lateral thinking	Convergent thinking	Finding new alternatives and enthusiasm created
Subject 7	Lateral thinking	Dynamic thinking	Divergent thinking	Imaginative thinking	Testing possible solutions, getting out of stereotypes
Subject 8	Unproductive thinking	Convergent thinking	Directed thinking	Critical thinking	Unity in action
Subject 9	Analogical thinking	Algorithmic thinking	Creative thinking	Practical thinking	Creating similarities between events
Subject 10	Linear thinking	Integrative thinking	Deductive thinking	Vertical thinking	Researching differences between phenomena

(*Source*: Table adapted from the interview guide designed by Denise Jodelet in 1974)

In order to check the hypotheses, we used as an independent technique the qualitative, text-thematic analysis, data analysis in a systematic, objective and quantifiable dimensions being achieved by operationalizing the model variables that were the basis of content analysis. The used working tool is a content analysis grid, where we have integrated the terms estimating the frequency of the described behaviour by items in the communication sent during the interview. In fact, we compiled a list of keywords, seen as code values. For *intelligence* we have identified pragmatism, relevance, organization and logics, for *creativity* we aimed originality, communication, innovating capacity and proximity to the task, and for *wisdom* we considered to be relevant *objective judgment* (cold judgement), opportunity and enthusiasm created.

All interviewed military leaders have concluded that intelligence, creativity and wisdom are among the very important skills that a leader must demonstrate in the leadership process and in the achievement of specific tasks. Thus, metacomponents play a decisive role in becoming and perfecting military leaders. The most important behaviours that enable the knowledge of abilities and attitudes of military leaders are the interpretation of data relating to the model's applicability of the outcomes in military leadership.

Operator's answers to questions were scored on four structural scales, namely: 8 points if the response corresponds to a very large extent; 6 points if the response corresponds to a large extent; 4 points if the response corresponds to a moderate extent; 2 points if the response corresponds to a small extent. The interview's data were scaled depending on the applicability of WICS model components in military leadership, tactical relevance of components and the implementation of components during a conflict situation, and the results were summarized in Table 2:

Table 2. Interview's evaluation scale

	Implementation of WICS model in leadership	Implementation of components at tactical level	Implementation of components in a conflict
Subject 1	6	4	2
Subject 2	6	2	2
Subject 3	2	2	4
Subject 4	2	2	2
Subject 5	8	2	4
Subject 6	4	4	2
Subject 7	8	4	2
Subject 8	6	4	2
Subject 9	8	2	2
Subject 10	6	4	2
TOTAL	**56**	**30**	**24**

To get an even clearer picture of these issues, we created the figure below, a schematic representation of research findings on the applicability of WICS model in military organization.

Applicability of WICS model in military organizations
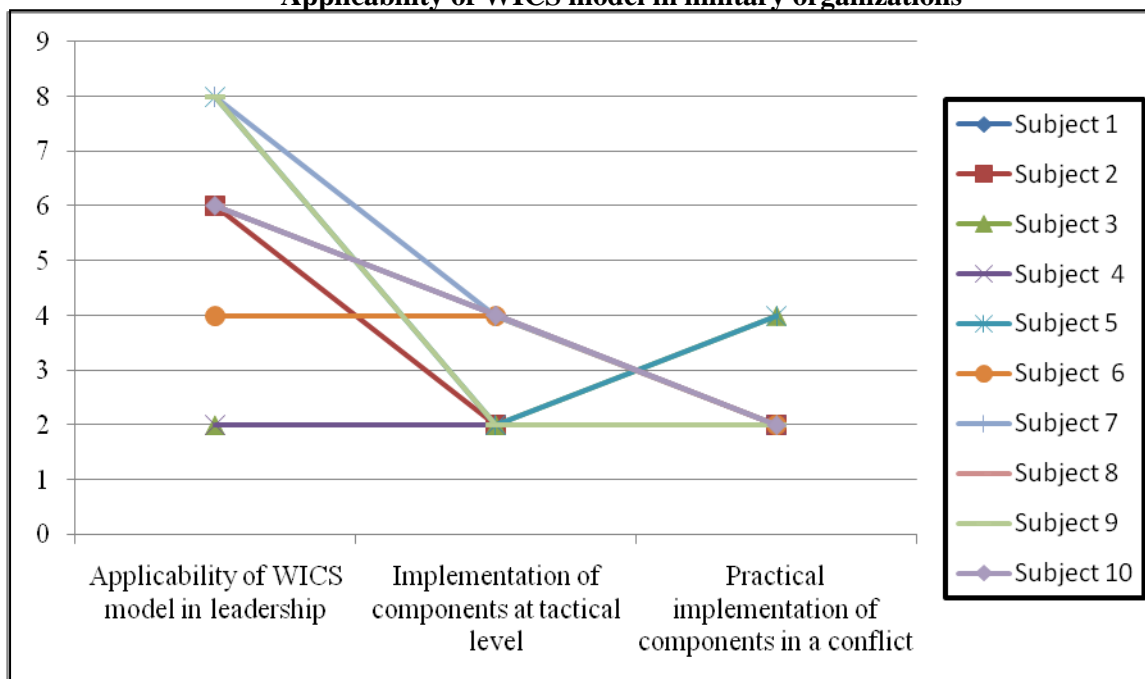
Figure 1

In other words, the military leaders felt that synthesizing WICS model's components is relevant to a very large extent in the military leadership, but they are more visible within the strategic level of the armed services, as they must be located in the top of the hierarchy, and then to reflect in the entire organization. Thus, components of the WICS model are hardly in leaders at the tactical level, and even more, they are put into practice only to a small extent in a situation of conflict, due to the rigors of the laws, regulations and procedures that must be followed.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research involved going through certain steps, in a logical sequence by which to reach the goal of the research. Analyzing the carried approach it is revealed that the initial objectives of the research were achieved, the SOARA behavioural interview method being adequate to demonstrate the indispensability of information from respondents.

Based on the arguments made, it appears that the central ideas that have guided this approach are confirmed. The first hypothesis has been confirmed, as the share of WICS model in the management structures of the military structures in the tactical field is not more relevant during a crisis situation compared with the one corresponding to a state of peace. The second hypothesis has not been confirmed, demonstrating that the rate of applicability of the model in peacetime is higher for the category of forces located at the strategic level of the armed forces.

The final product of this study resulted in a set of final considerations drawn from data processing, summarizing aspects that must be taken into account in becoming leaders.

The military control act conditions the leader, but the goal of fulfilling his mission involves his cognitive ability to solve problems in an intelligent manner, combining the spirit of analysis and his creative thinking. As we progress in the military hierarchy, we note that ideas must be formulated on a larger scale, from where we emphasize the leader's need to acquire the ability to understand the environment in which he operates. Referring to the tactical level, characterized by the proper solution of short-term plans and conduct of subunits for operations' execution, there are highlighted the leaders' skills to directly lead the military structures they are employed in. Moving to higher levels, the personal contacts' network grows and leaders have a decisive role in giving orders to ensure the success of the mission and defence policies, thus of the effectiveness of the military institution.

The most important aspect is the information benefit provided to the younger generation of military leaders, who once initiated into career and constantly ready to face any kind of situation, acquire knowledge, skills and competences necessary for obtaining effective actions.

Another decisive consequence is the good relationship between the tactical level and the upper echelons, by eliminating any discrepancies in the communication between structures. We should notice that the potential for effective leadership is not a privilege offered only to those located in top of the hierarchy. The model creates a sense in the world of leadership, at least by transforming mentalities on becoming the leader, so that we can say that the model takes part in transforming the organization's members, which makes it valid.

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