

# PROFESSIONALISM IN MILITARY: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACHES

**Shahid Mumtaz MALIK**

**Pakistan Air Force**

*Military sociology being a special discipline has resulted in establishment of a permanent study group with contributors in shape of academic scholars and military officers. Based on the works of military profession theorists, modern militaries have adopted a more flexible and technologically advanced outlook with emphasis on professionalism through training, education, mentoring and ethics in order to address and live upto the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century. In these changing and testing times one resounding constant has emerged in the shape of human being and his will to fight as a single most determining factor between winning and losing.*

**Key words:** *Military Sociology, Military Profession, Techmology, Professionalism, Ethics, Education, Mentoring, Will to fight, Determining factor*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Professionalism in military traces its roots to the works of Samuel Huntington. In his work the most fundamental thesis is that modern officer corps is a professional body and the modern military officer is a professional man. Professionalism, however, is characteristic of the modern officer in the same sense in which it is characteristic of the physician or lawyer. Professionalism distinguishes the military officer of today from the warriors of previous ages. The existence of the officer corps as a professional body gives a unique cast to the modern problem in

civil military relations. Huntington highlights that distinguishing characteristics of a profession are its expertise, responsibility and corporateness. He focuses on management of violence as main military expertise. Janowitz extended the notion of military professional to encompass experts in logistics, support services and acquisition processes that were equally necessary for success in war. Based on the works of these illustrious intellectuals, researchers, have made considerable advancements in domains of military professionalism. They have explored multiple areas of professionalism, the list is non-

exhaustive. Contemporary armed forces of the world are faced with challenges which in the past were even difficult to imagine. Geopolitical scenarios are experiencing transition at a phenomenal pace. Technological break troughs have quite considerably condensed the life span of new innovations. The rate of obsolescence has increased manifold, while on the other hand technology is getting more and more accessible.

In these testing times it is very important to understand that armed forces do not exist in isolation the economic and cultural changes inadvertently have an impact on military personnel and they cannot remain aloof from the society they live in. Military of country is a quintessential element of its national policy owing to rapid global volatilities, the importance of a professional military cannot be overemphasized. Professional armies all across the globe have invested heavily to bolster and further enhance their war fighting capabilities at strategic and tactical level both in theory and practice. The endeavor however is perpetual. Technological advancements have changed the dynamics of conflicts. A lot of ground has been covered in this realm. Extensive employment of technologies had enabled militaries to achieve high value objectives with minimum effort.

In above highlighted scenarios a likelihood of undermining the human element exists, which may have devastating results, because at the end of the day it is the human resource present at the helm of affairs and therefore, ethics, professionalism and will to fight will prove to be difference between winning and losing a conflict. The paper is an effort in this very direction.

## **2. CONTRIBUTORS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN MILITARY**

### **2.1. Military sociology**

Sociology is the academic domain employed to investigate military world and its relations and interactions with other special groups. The real contributions of sociological investigation on the military appeared in the frame work of widely varying disciplines. But the rise of a special sociology dedicated to the military, dedicated by second world war, did not follow any academic planning, but displayed a development that was fully marked by autonomy, diversity, and, at times, also by contradiction, often as a result of concrete, pressing requirements. Military sociology thus falls within the special sociologies and, consistently, within the International Sociological Association there is a permanent study group that deals

with this discipline, the Research Committee on Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution's. For centuries, the military world and the military mind-set have constituted a quite different, quite separate environment from the other institutions, groups, and aggregates of civil society. The contributors are split in to two major groups the academic scholars working in universities, national research centers and the military itself mostly as officers on active duty or leave.

## **2.2. Theorists of military profession**

Huntington, Janowitz and Hackett are three essential theorists of military profession. Huntington stretched his definition of professionalism across a three side frame work of expertise, responsibility and corporateness. Janowitz presumed that the militaries of western democratic states were professional and predicted their necessity to become smaller, more technologically focused, and more politically attuned. Hackett enshrined the concept of unlimited liability in professionalism, meaning thereby that demands of military profession are more encompassing than any other. A foundational balance is struck between these three theorists of military profession. Huntington planted firmly in historical context, Hackett describing the realistic,

even functional, role sacrifice and loyalty play in the profession, and Janowitz looking forward, predicting a continued revolution in military affairs and a changing context of military engagements. Much has changed since these works were presented more than half a century ago, and the question of professionalism is perhaps more complicated than it was a that time.

## **3. CHALLENGES OF 21ST CENTURY**

### **3.1. Flexible forces**

The central theme of most western states in post-cold war security landscape is to build a flexible military. The term flexible forces, entails such forces which are equipped with the appropriate hardware, force structures and people politics that will enable states to respond swiftly, in collaboration with allies and/or friends bounded in "coalitions of the willing", to a wide variety of crises whose precise nature it is quite difficult to predict in advance. These are some of the military consequences of living in a more uncertain world, at least when compared with what may now be regarded as the relative certainties or even relative security of the bipolar Cold war era. Development and maintenance of flexible forces entails serious tensions between two different kinds of flexibility, first is

the ability to maintain full range of military capabilities that might be required to meet any conceivable crises and second a more specific capability to provide rapid and appropriate military responses to a faraway crises which may have eminent repercussions close to home. In building agile and responsive forces the demand for quality of human resource is likely to increase. An important feature of the flexible forces, capable of being agile and responsive in a variety of military operation is the suppleness of their command and control systems. They must have the capability to manage political imperatives (the effects of military operations on the media and public opinion) on one hand and military imperative on the other. It will also be important for the armed services to compare their own people policies with those competitors in the private sector in terms of what will be required to recruit and retain the best and the brightest among the youth population for it is these young people who will be needed to make sure that such flexible forces will produce successful results in future military operations.

### **3.2. Impact of technology**

Maintaining military critical capabilities requires advance technology. The digital divide is not to be taken lightly because in military institutions, ranks sustains historical working patterns, it resists

the adoption of new technologies, and maintains obsolete procedures. Major technological changes have reshaped strategic priorities in defense. Cyber security, whose function is to protect systems, networks and programs for digital attacks, has become a cornerstone of military activity. Cyber-attacks usually aimed at accessing, changing, or destroying sensitive information are now targeting civilian public infrastructures. Technology has the power to reshape institutional functioning, and a change of such magnitude will necessarily marshal a vast quantity of additional means and resources as well as new skills leading to new capabilities. The introduction of AI (Artificial Intelligence) also entails that lifelong learning will become an essential component of a military career. Military education will be impacted too, and many courses, such as human resource management, aeronautical engineering, ethics and legal knowledge, and economics of innovation to mention just a few examples will need updating. In Huntington's view for an officer to understand his trade properly he should be able to develop his relation with other fields and the ways in which these other areas of knowledge may contribute to his own purposes. In addition, he cannot really develop his analytical skill, insight, imagination and judgment if he is trained simply in vocational duties. The abilities and habits of mind which he requires

within his professional field can in large part be acquired only through the broader avenues of learning outside his profession.

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONALISM**

##### **4.1. Training and education**

Extensive and quality training is imperative for any military. It forms the basis of armed forces, the members of a force must be reformed to ensure uniformity, skill development and aligning the attitudes in commensuration with the predefined standards. The imparted training ensures desired results at every tier of military, may it be at junior level or at different levels of command and staff. Professional militaries invest in programs of personal development way beyond basic training requirements. It endeavors to instill knowledge, enhancement of intellectual skills and most importantly creation of awareness in the members to envision their place in military and the direction in which the world is heading, in a logical manner. This desirable state of personal development falls in the realm of education. Education entails knowledge and knowledge expands understanding and it must be augmented with ethical education. This enables the professional to determine, what differentiates him in the society and what he owes to the society he is living in. Education

therefore enables the individual to continually comprehend improve impart, preserve the professional knowledge so that the forth coming generations can gain some benefit out of it. In today's world the concept of professionalism has permeated all rank and files with varying degrees depending upon the structure and hierarchy of the military. Military history is a very important component of military education which enables its students to develop understanding of past events, and to draw crucial lessons from them. History also provides guidelines for what professional militaries might be doing now. History does not repeat itself, but it does occasionally rhyme. Study of history creates humility a very important attribute of a professional. History sends an important message to its reader that he is not the first one. There were others prior to his existence who overcame daunting challenges. Furthermore the emphases while going through the annals of history should be on defeats and important lessons drawn thereof. The officers new in the system should be compulsorily acquainted with the history of their outfits it will create a sense of belonging. It will remind them that they are part of something bigger and older and the standards of conduct and behavior set for them must be adhered. Another very important aspect of professional development is conduct of operational exercises having different scenarios. The exercises

would involve all tiers, ranks and files. The process will ensure a practical feel and an opportunity to have a practical insight. It will give an exact overview and will answer the important question of where the organization stands professionally and what has been achieved and which areas need improvement. A system which ensures an intellectual growth as the officer's rise in rank and file is very important for the organization. The senior officers will operate in an environment which entails thorough understanding of what's going around, basically. They need to get a grip on geopolitical affairs, functioning of other diverse organizations and develop an ability to understand their perspective. This, primarily ensures, harmony, efficient and effective conduct of affairs.

#### 4.2. Mentoring

The process of mentoring plays a crucial role in formulation of a professional identity. It surely promotes talent, to start with, it is an integral part of some service cultures. Mentoring is a relationship between a less experienced individual and a more experienced person. Mentoring is further divided in to formal mentoring and informal mentoring while the latter is established based on a relationship, in formal mentoring, the match is created by the organization. The impacts mentoring create are a much better understanding of the functions of an organization. The

individual acquires ways and means to execute critical assignments it also develops a sense of competence and identity. The most important impact is the role modeling, wherein the mentor deliberately sets an example for an individual which is incorporated in the professional identity. A successful mentor possess a desire to serve and benefit others, similarly the potential candidate for mentoring is the one who has a strong desire to learn and has a high level emotional stability. Mentoring in an organization depends upon organization culture and how the organization views this activity. Success and satisfaction in a working environment is a benefit also attributable to mentoring beside other factors. Military is primarily a combination of individual capabilities and cohesive organizations. The leader endeavors to strike a balance between the two. The structured composition of military hinders all those present in the chain of command to become mentors and the members need somebody to lead them, so that they can make sense of their potential roles in the larger whole.

Mentoring also leads towards creation of professional identity. In this form of learning process individuals seek assistance of others to define their identities through engagement and imagination as a part of social learning process. According to recent studies there exists a strong link between professional identity formation and mentoring. Experimental learning

activity form the basis of mentoring. It entails ongoing activity between the mentor and the individual and both of them are exposed to new ideas and new experiences. These ideas and experiences culminate into reflection and the desire to answer new questions. Mentoring is based on inside out learning which is a reflective process of learning and the second form is the outside in learning wherein the external forces exert their influence on learners and open new avenues of learning. Closely associated with experimental learning is storified learning in which inspiration is drawn, wisdom is achieved and opportunities for reflection are created. Story basically allows the listener to live an idea. Benefits of storytelling are huge. Storytelling is a tool in mentoring which is extensively employed. Solid foundations of mentoring relationship hinges upon authentic two way storytelling process, as fraudulent narratives soon get exposed.

Third, component of informal learning is, understanding of mentoring as a source for professional identity formation known as cognitive apprenticeship. The learner through collective problem solving assignments is put in multiple roles, experiencing ineffective strategies and misconceptions as they refine their individual and collaborative work skills. This draws on students own life experiences to build new learning construct, that

ease transition into the profession. Mentoring is not merely a transfer of knowledge but on the contrary it is based on exchange of ideas and insights. The learning process is mutual. Military organizations can best promote mentoring by creating mentoring spaces rather than matching mentoring faces. In this bid tactical level units can provide the best forum along with the cognizance of individuals developmental needs.

### **4.3. Ethics**

Military professional have fundamental commitments they owe to the service, their subordinates and the public they serve. These commitments in the turn hold ethical significance. Professions exist in a relationship with a specific client, same holds good in a case of military profession. There are ethical requirements of the profession for instance, expertise, rules and values. Thereafter comes the ethical requirements of a professional, encompassing skill, leadership and character. In the end comes the ethical requirements of the clients comprising of guidance, support and value they need to enable the profession and its professionals to set and uphold those standards. There is a requirement to view the profession and the professional distinctly. Profession influences behavior in a manner its individual numbers cannot. Individual numbers are responsible to maintain the health

and strength of the profession. The individuals however do not possess this ability. In the same manner it's imperative to distinguish between the two while examining ethical responsibility. It is also important to examine ethical requirements of the client. The client's obligations to the profession and its members at times get overlooked. There exist ethical burdens on those who receive the profession service. The elements of professional relationship that is the profession, professional and client must honor their responsibilities this will in turn flourish the professional relationship.

The ethical obligation of military is disciplined use of violence for a political end. Society expects from military to advise its leaders thoughtfully on feasibility of violence to reach desired political results, and to then execute society decisions effectively. In order to achieve a political end through disciplined use of violence, the society trusts military to define the standards of expertise and subsequently holds military accountable for the consequences for falling to demonstrate it. The profession being answerable to client endeavors to perpetually polish the abilities of its constituent elements so that the profession can deliver in the hour of need. If the members of profession stop serving the client and start serving themselves they would cease to be a profession or professional.

The ethical requirement of professional is that he must fulfill certain responsibilities to maintain standards of the profession. The professional owes ethical responsibilities to its institution and the client he serves. The individual undergoes a process of transition from minimum standards of tactical proficiency to a professional excellence in a complex rapidly changing environment with a simultaneous growth of intellectual abilities. Development of juniors also comes under the ambit of ethical responsibilities of a professional. The phenomenon however gets overlooked as the burden of executing operational exigencies increases. Leaders have the responsibility to allow subordinates to practice, fail, and grow without fear of negative consequences.

The responsibility of the client is to enable the profession and professional to fulfill their responsibilities. The profession requires clients trust, it also requires material support. The client spells out political guidance to direct and constrain the disciplined application of violence for a political end. The client identifies the political end communicated through the country's political leaders and communicates its expectations concerning what constitutes the disciplined application of violence.

## **5. WILL TO FIGHT**

### **5.1. Importance**

The phenomenon of will to fight is the single most important factor in war. It is also the firm stance of military strategies and historians. The American armed forces believe this to be the most important factor in war. The failure of will, results in ending of every military conflict in world history. Will to fight is composed of intricate human aspects of warfare and many more. It is tested in the tense days, hours and minutes between instances of combat. It expresses dedication towards an armed conflict, in the matter of life and death the will is most clearly tested and revealed, everything is focused on the physical capability. This position to fight is complex it is the result of individualized factors like physiological characteristics, motivation and expectations for support. It is the human agency which activates the disposition to fight, to avoid fighting or to flee. The will to fight is tested in ceaseless barrages of enemy artillery, lack of sleep, extreme weather, and constant fear of death. Will to fight cannot be quantified as human agency defy meaningful quantification, it is simply cannot be measured.

### **5.2. Morale**

The will to war is directly proportional to good discipline and strong morale among troops.

Morale relates to training, ideology and esprit de corps. An excellently trained individual possessing strong ideological beliefs that align with military mission and a powerful connection to an elite unit is more likely to have high morale at any given point in time. Lower will to fight factors make individuals more vulnerable to low morale. Surface indicators of morale are extraordinarily difficult to determine the will to fight, it cannot be deduced from the face value. Neither job satisfaction nor martinet obedience is consistent indicator of high morale or will to fight. There are therefore, strong chances of misinterpreting the enemy morale will to fight.

### **5.3. Motivation**

Motivations are obtained through cultural interactions with family members, friends and groups from formal and informal learning at home and in school and from social and material needs including desire to succeed and the need to survive. Motivations weigh heavily on the decision to fight but they do not stand alone. It is an interconnected network of unit and individuals will to fight. Desperation is another form of motivation, it is the combatants will to survive. Revenge fueled, will to fight, can also be an immediate motivator or it can reflect deeper danger. Oppression of minorities over time can generate a deep desire for revenge motivation through

organizational or state information campaigns. Ideology is another manifestation of motivation, it is a commitment to a cause or belief system. It can encompass patriotism, religious commitment or explicitly political ideologies such as strong belief in communism or Nazism, or abstract concepts like peace or freedom. Identity is the most weird and most complex motivation and is multifaceted. Soldiers among other identities have social and ethnic identities. Will to fight of all soldiers will be influenced by various identities from within and outside the military organization. Identity is both culturally obtained and unique within the individual. Each soldier form a unique perspective on various influencing identities and in doing so creates a separate unique identity that influences will to fight. These motivators contribute towards a soldier's will to fight.

#### **5.4. Individual capabilities**

Individual capabilities fall under two categories the first is soldier quality and second is the competence. Quality consists of education, social skills, fitness, physiological traits, adaptability and resilience. Quality is the soldier's ability to understand the often complex reasons that fighting is required to remain stable and avoid succumbing to panic. Higher quality soldiers have more disposition to fight. Lower quality soldiers have fewer dispositions to fight. Next in line is the competence comprising

of skills and capabilities developed as an individual or as part of unit, including fighting, basic soldering, specialty, leadership and fitness. Skills and capabilities can, preexist training, but they are strongly influenced by military training and combat experience.

#### **5.5. Expectation**

It is an important will to fight factor. A soldier's expectations are numerous. They expect their leader to be competent, to take good care of them and they will risk lives only when necessary. They expect from other units to keep their flanks secure. They also expect from higher formations to provide reinforcements and medical support. At the higher levels they expect state leaders to remain committed to their mission to provide them with clear objectives and to rally public or moral support. Sustained expectations correlate with sustained disposition to fight. Broken expectations can weaken and even shatter soldiers will to fight. If soldier's in a unit do not expect much from their leaders, organization, or each other they will be less enthusiastic about fighting.

### **6. CONCLUSION**

The paper is developed to gain an insight into military professionalism starting with the works of twenty century intellectuals, form where the foundations of military professionalism were laid.

Ever since the ground breaking works in this field, various factors have brought about a change in the ground realities. These changes are in the form of geo political situation, technological innovations and formation of coalition alliances. The dynamics of warfare have experienced a considerable advancement in requirements of the militaries, forcing them to restructure with greater flexibility and emphasis on being lean efficient and technologically advanced. The only constant in this process of evolution is human being. In contemporary world professionalism and will to fight are the areas of utmost importance. Last two chapters of paper have explored these dimensions for the reader.

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