Considerations on strategy and strategic management in the military organization

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Abstract:
The objectives and activities of an organization, starting from the rigors of management science, must be constructed, in first, on terms of long periods to ensure its correct functionality. But the current dynamic of the influence factors over the life of an organization, especially military organization, perhaps will require many corrections of that vision, but does not justify giving up the designing of strategies and strategic management.

Keywords: strategy, organization, strategic management

Rezumat:
Obiectivele și activitățile unei organizații, plecând de la rigorile științei managementului, trebuie construite din perspectiva, în primul rând, a termenelor îndelungate pentru a asigura o funcționalitate corectă a acesteia. Dar dinamica actuală a factorilor de influență asupra vieții unei organizații, în special a organizației militare, probabil va impune numeroase corecții a respectivei viziuni, însă nu justifică renunțarea la proiectarea strategiilor și a managementului strategic.

Cuvinte cheie: strategie, organizație, management strategic, militar.

Introduction

For a pertinent analysis of the ways in which the strategy and strategic management process shall be designed and detailed in an organization, it is necessary to start from their features and components. Thus, in every situation, the strategy of an organization must be characterized through the following characteristics (Rusu, 1999):

- **is dependent to an considerable volume of complex information**, many uncertain and incomplete, about the alternatives on future developments to be taken into consideration (options identified having a high degree of probability);
- **is subordinated to the objectives set**, meaning that the strategy will define the modalities and deadlines for achieving them; existing a close interdependence them – changing the objectives involving the change of strategy;
- **adoption of strategy not involves a immediate concrete action**, the strategy defines the main directions which will go towards the organization for a long lead time and required a long-term efforts;
- **is the support drawing up of strategic plans**, the strategy will indicate for managers the key areas where this strategy it should be materializing into the document of management;
- **require the permanent existence of a specific reverse connections** (strategic feedback) for so that strategy does not become outdated in the evolution of the organization and of your environment.

The forms in which these features can be found in the specific strategies of the types of organizations depend overwhelmingly by the determining factors, encountered in the environment characteristic of such organizations.
Argumentation

The proactive approach of the future is a prerequisite for the efficient management process and, that is why the strategy and the strategic management of an organization must occupy a central place in the activity of its manager, including within the military organization.

A first argument regarding the need for strategy and strategic management in the military is built around the need for individual development and global society as a whole to ensure that state security and peace for the conduct of life and its activities safely, based on proactive component of the individual regarding his future and that of the society to which he belongs.

The second argument, closely related to the previous one, refers to the fact that the nation-states through their legislative and executive power, build strategies and conduct a strategic management regarding the existence and the further development of countries in all the fields of activity (political, economic, social, cultural, religious, etc.); there is, naturally, the compulsory development of strategies and of a strategic management for the military organization as integral part of identifying the ways to follow in the short, medium and long run by the nation-states as well as their operationalization in practice.

Based on the identification and analysis process of the influencing factors within the surrounding environment of the military organization and its implications in the medium and long run on the military management processes, a third argument emerges regarding the utility of the strategies and of the strategic management in the military organization as integral part of identifying the ways to follow in the short, medium and long run by the nation-states as well as their operationalization in practice.

Analysis determinants on strategies in the military organization

Regarding the determinants of strategy in military organization, compared with the determinants of a firm's strategy think of as the following:

- The evolution of the role and place of the military organization (in the life of nations and global) and the situation of the defense industry (technical and combat weapons) - Building the strategy military organization must take into account by the approach of the nation-state on its importance in the executive power, of the one part, and the national defense system, on the other part, and the existence and development for companies in the defense industry (national and international).

- Capabilities military organization - The set of skills and competences (technological, financial, organizational, managerial, etc.), available for the military organization at a time have decisively influence for the design and the
implementation of strategy and, implicitly, adopting the ways of achieving its objectives;

- **Potential risks and threats to military activities and actions** - Any human activity carries a set of risks and threats related to the achievement of objectives, and for military organization this set is much more complex, taking into account the three plans that can run specific activities: peace, crisis or war. Strategies of military organization must identify and assess the risks and threats, on types of situations, and to find the solutions to counter future because the goals of this institution has achieved with obligatory;

- **Strategic vision military managers** - The strategic approach involves managers from the analysis and taking risks to establish performance levels and the time considered for achieving them. In the military, the followed targets the activities are achieved, generally, on medium and long periods of time (e.g.: subunits training for actions the theaters of operations or fulfilling future mission) and involve a number of risks that can’t be removed completely (e.g.: enhancement of fatigue or stress, loss of team members assault) requiring - in these circumstances - military managers to act in the present to the future without looking back: "mission first of all";

- **The realities of economic, social, political, legal and ethical environment of military organization** - The strategy of military organization must incorporate the evolution, quantity and quality of environment components in the reference period for this strategy:

  1. **The economic situation of the country**: the trend of the national economy, in generally, and the defense industry, in particular; the importance given by the executive power to the military domain, budgetary allocations for defense sector etc.;
  2. **The extent of social problems**: the stringency of solving the problem situations in some areas of society - health, social security, education, etc.;
  3. **Characteristics of society**: population structure (age, sex, origin, training classes, etc.) professional structure of the working age population, the level of labor migration (internal and international), etc.;
  4. **Current and future policy approaches**: political doctrine of ruling parties who hold the majority in parliament, perspective on national defense and international relations approach from political parties etc.;
  5. **Implications of legislative regulations on the organization**: rhythm, rigor and consistency specific to military laws and laws connected to this area, etc.;
  6. **Quality of ethical behavior in business and in relationships between state institutions and how to join them**: the degree of acceptance of ethical norms of business partners regarding the development of trade relations, the ways in which inter-conditioning occurs between state institutions and so on, because the strategy outlined must adapt more easily and with least cost to the realities of the environment of the military organization.

- **Military organizational culture** - features like that: cohesion within the microstructures, taking risks, scale and how to approach conflict in the organization, the acceptance level of rewards to work, recognition of merit, etc. determine, unequivocally, the adoption, implementation and evaluation of strategies in the military domain, having regard to the quantity and quality of human inputs to achieve them.

In structuring the strategic management process must be taken into account, necessarily means that the strategy will manifest features of its practical form, and have identified and analyzed the determinants of strategy developed. Also, the items listed above must be included in the algorithm development and implementation of the strategic management process designed. Taken together, the issues specified above shows that the strategic management raise the process of long term planning specific activities of an organization to the level of art. It is, therefore, the duty of senior management (in this case, the military organization) and the leaders of the composition of this level make every effort so that the strategic management of the military organization to be channeled to build solid a structures - as support strategies -
which later be checked and detailed down to the individual, so that the combined efforts of each lead to fulfill the strategic objectives.

Given the complexity of this phenomenon becomes capital how the analysis of the context in which must be designed, structured and implemented strategies and the strategic management in military organization and, therefore, the use a SWOT analysis is a great solution for those analyzes.

SWOT analysis is a management’s tool what investigating the future potential of the organization, by the systematic approach of introspection into its positive and negative aspects and his environment. The primary purpose of a SWOT analysis is to identify and evaluate each significant factor, positive or negative, in one of four categories, which allows a decider manager to gain a realistic perspective on the organization.

It is more useful the SWOT analysis in the development of strategies and management because, of the one part, it is highly qualitative, allowing the formulation of a correct diagnosis and realistic on past and current condition of the organization or its functional areas, being able to shape the long-term outlook for her and, of the other part, is very comprehensive, covering all sides of the work of the organization and all its specialized fields.

Application of SWOT analysis

Application of SWOT Analysis to the military organization reveals the following:

a) The organization analysis - Strengths:
   - The existence of a clear strategic direction - Romania, by the national consensus, decided to ensure national security by joining collective security structures (NATO, EU, OSCE, etc.) they have clearly defined strategic vision that are assumed and applied by the military organization.
   - The existence of a distinctive competencies in one or more planes (managerial, organizational, personnel training, costs, etc.) - the military organization has a very well trained military managers, geared toward success with the low consumption of resources.
   - The existence of a positive image - Romanian Army has a very favorable image, both in the national public opinion and in the international. Perception of public confidence in Romania on how the military carries out its activities is 73% positive (Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defense, 2012) and all opinions with the military NATO on how the performance of missions returned Romanian military units and subunits, either in theaters, either in programs joint training, was only higher level.
   - The existence of a good system-organized and effective strategic planning – the strategic approach in military organization is based on the fact that its organizational system is designed to respond at any time to any possible aggression on the country and this organizational system support, usually, the fulfillment of long-term goals (e.g., preparation and training components of all structures to ensure the nation's security status for an indefinite period).
   - The high quality of organizational culture - in military organization the elements of its organizational culture is defined and built on order and discipline in the development of individual and collective activities, on responsibility and initiative in the development of managerial processes, patriotism lived as a state of mind from the perspective of motivation to accede into this system, cultivate respect to managers on all levels of the military hierarchy as a result of the recognition of their value, elegance in the way of wearing the uniform of the organization at all times etc.

b) The organization analysis - Weaknesses:
   - Decreasing trend of financial resources - Through our country accession to the North Atlantic Treaty in 2004, the executive power assumed to allocate an annual budget of at least 2% of GDP to the military organization in order to fulfill with successful of all obligations in the aforementioned alliance. But because of objective economic conditions, the military budgets during 2007-2011 had a descendent trend (2007 - 1.5% in GDP, 2008 - 1.5% of GDP, 2009 - 1.4% of GDP, 2010 - 1.3% of GDP, 2011 - 1.3% of GDP) (Report
concerning the National Ministry of Defense activities in 2009).

- The existence of competitive disadvantage (handicap technological, high costs etc.) - Having regard to the current and future requirements regarding the Romanian Army missions, equipping each category of its forces, especially from a technical standpoint, is lagging behind compared to the other members of NATO (e.g. from the funds who planned for achieving force in 2009, was allocated only a percentage of 12.45% from necessary, the main problem remains, still, the financially support for their implementation (Report concerning the National Ministry of Defense activities in 2009).

- Vulnerability to market developments – The way of working the state budget, implicitly the budget for defense, overwhelmingly dependent on economic developments in Romania, therefore there likelihood of conducting military activities to suffer from this issue (e.g. bankruptcy of companies supplying goods and services to the military organization or sudden to strong prices of certain material goods, etc.)

c) The analysis of the organization environment - Opportunities:

- Rapid growth of the market - even if it isn’t a direct opportunity for military organization, it can benefit from this development in terms of increasing revenues to the state budget and directing them part of the executive power of the state for national defense.

- Possibilities of concluding leasing agreements - Diversification of these services on the national market can lead to carry out certain specific the military organization to access by the military service of genres relieving certain tasks or streamline the technical endowment (e.g. acquisition informatics systems or certain means of transport).

- Market entry of new providers - Increasing the number of providers of material and services, high competition on a particular market segment can be beneficial to the military organization, as would be able to purchase products much cheaper at the same quality levels.

d) The analysis of the environment organization - Threats:

- Joining an extended period of economic downturn nationally or internationally - will lead, unequivocally, to reduce overheads due to reduced state revenues to the national budget and defense spending will suffer directly as the amount allocated by the executive power.

- Unfavorable demographic changes - the military organization depends overwhelmingly by the quality and quantity of human resources attracted to serve the interests of the nation and definitely a negative trend in the demographic will bring negative repercussions on human resources management, on one side, and on the management process as a whole, on the other part.

- Increasing negotiating power of providers - Achieve the dominant market position by the suppliers of material and services to the military field may lead to a price increase in offerings, and consequently the need for reconfiguration of strategic programs, for example, equipping the army.

Conclusion

NATO’s strategic approach on the operation of its own structure requires to Romania (as a member of the alliance) to adopt a strategic approach to turn over operation of their military organization in line with the commitments made in various partnerships politico - military.

A medium to long term view on sizing, training and equipping the army of Romania is also required by the continuous change of contexts about to provide the needed capabilities to fulfillment the missions or future operations.

Definitely, the strategic management in the military organization is not a static process that can be implemented as a linear process and therefore the military managers who have responsibility for this process must be able to respond of developments in its two components: the internal and external environment of the military. Accordingly, the
Strategic management must be supple and flexible, allowing the military organization to quickly adapt to the new challenges, eliminate outdated ideas and practices with effective processes in terms of organizational response to these challenges.

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