

MILITARY EFFICIENCY: THE ISSUE OF FINANCE

¹Obi-Nwosu V. O. and ²Ifedigbo Chinenye

¹Department of Banking and Finance,

²Department of Psychology,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Abstract

Military efficiency may best be described as a unit ability to carry out successful operations at least costs. It is also the measure of response readiness and competence in discharging the constitutional responsibilities of the military. In practical terms, this depends largely on personnel training, acquisition of sophisticated hard and soft wares, intelligence and motivation. However, these factors depend in turn on finance. It is therefore very cogent that discussion on military efficiency must factor in to what extent the national budget could go, and what possible avenues should be exploited by the military as an organization to raise funds. It is advocated that military engineering corps especially, and the medicorps should be partially commercialized, while cortage maintenance industries like dress making industry, should be set up, and also partially commercialized to ensure serious economic downturn arising from possible oil glut will not render the Nigerian military handicapped.

Keywords: Military, Efficiency, Finance

INTRODUCTION

The military are forces authorized to use lethal force, and weapons, to support the interests of the state and some or all of its citizens. The task of the military is usually defined as defense of the state and its citizens, and the prosecution of war against another state (www.wiki.org). The word military denotes someone that is skilled in use of weapons, or engaged in military service or in warfare. It usually refers to a country's armed forces or sometimes, more specifically, to the senior officers who command them. In general, military refers to the physicality of armed forces, their personnel, equipment and physical area which they occupy (Webster, 2011). On the other hand, efficiency connotes the ability to do something well or achieve a desired result without wasted energy or effort. According to the English Dictionary, efficiency refers to the quality of producing an effect or effects.

Contextually, military efficiency may best be described as a unit ability to carry out successful operations at least costs. It is also the measure of response readiness and competence in discharging the constitutional responsibilities of the military. Obi-Nwosu (2012) defined military efficiency as the measure of the real value of the military unit in combat, i.e. the achievement of desired goal by winning battles. This can also be looked at as the ability of the military to utilize what is available in the achievement of set-goal. Military efficiency revolves around the application of resources such as funding, budget etc. to engender optimal operations (Obi-Nwosu, 2012). Hence a meaningful discourse on military efficiency must figure-in the issue of finance.

According to Lejeune (2012), efficiency in military organizations is measured by the economy with which it is administered and by the quality of its production. This involves a careful spending of funds appropriated for its upkeep and the exercise of care in the preservation of Government property by all military officers and men. Military efficiency is said to be represented by success in recruiting, and by the percentage of the total force which is available for active service. Lejeune argues that making available for strictly military purposes the largest practicable percentage of the force is not such a simple one, but it is, nevertheless, just as vital to efficiency in military organization. Military efficiency anchors on the physical condition, discipline, morale and the degree of military training and instruction of the

officers and men. It depends upon the physique and character of the men appointed or enlisted and on the manner in which they are handled during their military service.

FACTORS THAT PROMOTE/ENHANCE MILITARY EFFICIENCY

Training

Military training involves the preparation of the officers and enlisted (or drafted) personnel of a nation's military and naval forces. According to Egon (2009), the goal of such training is to equip members of the services with the basic skills and discipline needed for appropriate action under the stress of combat. Qualified personnel may receive more formal education to enable them to advance professionally. Obi-Nwosu (2012), states that military training is a categorical imperative in military efficiency. According to him, well trained people are more skilful and they discharge their duty skilfully at least costs. He also opines that the extent to which military personnel can benefit from training boils down to funding.

Motivation

In general terms, motivation refers to an inner state that moves an organism toward the fulfillment of some goal. In a human being, motivation involves both conscious and unconscious drives (Kassin Saul, 2008). As an independent factor, military motivation anchors majorly on incentive such as allowances/money, which will make military personnel to perform better. It is of paramount importance therefore to state that one of the ways military efficiency can be enhanced or promoted anchors on creating incentives. This also includes instituting a matching program that provides funds to commanders and managers who bring about efficiencies, including competitive sourcing initiatives that are hard to implement, in addition to the existing incentive program. The availability of these matching programs will go along away in meeting all legitimate needs at their bases or in their programs (DoD, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 2001).

Acquisition of Sophisticated Hard and soft wares

Efficient military operations require the acquisition of sophisticated hard and soft wares such as guns, ammunition and military aircrafts such as F-22 Raptor, Virginia Class Submarine, Trident II Missile, V-22 Osprey, Arleigh Burke-class Destroyer, communication equipment, will go a long way to promote/enhance efficiency in the military.

Military Intelligence

Adequate knowledge of a possible or actual enemy, their strengths and weaknesses, or area of operations, acquired by the collection, evaluation and interpretation of military information by relevant military personnel, is a good ground for sufficient operation and productivity. And this to a large extent enhances efficiency, when other factors such as military weapons and training, are in place.

Involvement of Top Military Official/Management

The active involvement of military management/top officials plays a vital role in enhancing efficiency. Military top managers should focus on initiatives that require their personal attention but can yield large efficiency savings such as base closures and competitive outsourcing (Donald Rumsfeld, 2002).

Again, adequate interest of top military officials/management to field personnel, who often know of many smaller changes that can save money, enhances efficiency to optimal level. According to William Perry (1995), substantial efficiencies can be attained if the top military officials institutionalize efforts to gather up ideas from the field, and find ways to nurture the promising ones with funding and support.

FACTORS THAT HAMPER EFFICIENCY

The description of the term military shows that the primary and dominant mission of the military is to deter wars, and if required fight and win them. It could be observed therefore that neither profit nor efficiency is contained in the military mission statement, like it is in most private firms where profit signifies a key goal. It is perceived that this poses the most important barricade to achieving efficiency in the military. Some of the very direct factors that hurt efficiency include:

Poor/Reduced Incentive

In humans, incentives play a significant role in motivation. As a factor that engenders military efficiency, the height/length of military efficiency depends partly on the level of incentives made available. Salaries of military personnel and other emoluments should be paid as and when due. Their promotions should not be delayed, and importantly also, their salaries must be made very attractive.

Paradropping

Military paradrop has to do with the delivery of personnel or equipment from an aircraft by parachute. Parachute means a cloth canopy that fills with air and allows the soldier to descend slowly when dropped from an aircraft, or is released from the rear of an aircraft on landing to act as a brake. Most times, the parachute tends to be heavier on the military personnel, causing discomfort, which in turn, reduces efficiency. Sometimes also, landing targets are missed.

Frequent movement of unit

It has been observed that military units which are moved frequently perform below expectation in combat. This reduction in efficiency is thought to relate to acclimatization to the physical and psychological environment.

Being on reserve

Experts in military training and operations hold that it takes a minimum of two weeks for any unit on reserve to pick up again. It follows that activity is the watch word for any military unit to retain efficiency. This means that daily preparedness costs for every military unit must not be lowered since military exercises must be engaged in without pausing.

Acquiring Sophisticated Military Hard and Soft Wares

It has been observed that the acquisition of sophisticated military hard and soft wares promotes/enhances military operations. But, most times, the acquisition of these hard and soft wares tends to be very difficult. Recent experience has shown that the more sophisticated military weapons are, the more expensive they become. This is evident from Busk Sexton (20 12) published costs of the five most expensive military weapons on earth:

1. F -22 Raptor

Type: stealth fighter jet

Price per Unit: \$211.6 million

2. Virginia Class Submarine

Type: nuclear submarine

Price per Unit: \$255.26 million

3. Trident 11 Missile

Type: ballistic missile

Price per Unit: \$65.7 million

4. V-22 Osprey

Type: tilt rotor transport plane

Price per Unit: \$95.2 million

5. Arleigh Burke-class Destroyer

Type: destroyer

Price per Unit: \$1,299.3 million

These military weapons are not easily acquired in most countries, because of their costs. In Nigeria, for instance, there are some airplanes that Nigeria did not even want to buy until the emergence of Boko haram insurgency.

INCREASING MILITARY FINANCES

Military funding entails the overall financial support made available for military operations. Contemporary, military funding are basically anchored on Government budget, which depicts that the extent to which military personnel can perform depends heavily on government budget/financial provision. This, in turn, can affect factors needed to be in place for military efficiency. Observably, it can be believed that all the factors needed to engender military efficiency require funding. Talk about military training. motivation such as incentive etc., the achievement of these goals boil down or anchor on finance.

Nigeria as an oil producing country relies largely on its oil glut. As such, the implementation of government budget anchors majorly on whatever is realized from oil. Most times, what is needed for

military operations may not be overly provided within the Government budget, making it pertinent for the military to source other avenues to raise funds finance. However, with respect to the internal! underground wars that pose considerable threat on the security of citizenry, it may spell doom for military operation/efficiency, if the military depends solely on government budget/financial provision. It is suggested therefore that the military should embark in other possible ways/avenues to increase their finances for optimal efficiency. These include:

1. The military should get involved in bidding for certain category of contracts from the Federal Government, by identifying federal jobs that can be performed by the military without jeopardizing discipline.
2. The military engagement in acquisition reform, where they seek change processes by using commercial items rather than military-unique ones, reducing detailed specifications for new weapons, cutting the time required to buy new weapons and equipment, and assisting contractors in replacing government-unique business and manufacturing processes with commercial equivalent (Cohen & Lippitz, 2000). Such process changes appear to be achieving savings.
3. The military embarking on public-private partnerships, which often includes competitive sourcing and enlist private expertise in solving a problem not currently being adequately addressed by the public sector. Example of this is military family housing. The military can enter into agreements with private builders to set up a building at their expense. These houses can be occupied by the general public, while the rent fees go into military savings.
4. The military hospitals should be partially commercialized, some equipment service centers that used to be exclusive should also be commercialized, while cottage industries like Dress Making Industry, should be set up, and also partially commercialized.

All these put together, can go a long way to helping the military gain increased finance, away from the normal government budget/financial allocation. When this is achieved, achieving military efficiency will be enhanced. Secondly, these measures are germane to ensure that serious economic downturn arising from possible oil glut will not render the Nigerian military handicapped.

CONCLUSION

The importance of finance in all endeavours of humans does not require much emphasis. It has been practically observed since the invention of money, (as opposed to trade by barter) that finance is very vital in every aspect of living. Practically, military efficiency depends largely on personnel training, acquisition of sophisticated hard and soft wares, intelligence and motivation. However, these factors depend in turn on finance. It is therefore very cogent that military explore possible avenues, away from the national budget to raise funds. It is advocated that military engineering corps especially, and the medicorps should be partially commercialized, while cottage maintenance industries like dress making industry, should be set up, and also partially commercialized to ensure that serious economic downturn arising from possible oil glut will not render the Nigerian military handicapped.

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