

THE FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE MILITARY SYSTEM EVALUATION

Cristian-Octavian STANCIU, Răzvan-Ștefan BICHIR

“Carol I” National Defence University (cristianstanciu73@yahoo.com, brsro@yahoo.com)

DOI: 10.19062/1842-9238.2023.21.2.10

Abstract: *In an era where knowledge is diffusing at a relatively rapid rate, the nature and extent of the relationships enjoyed by a country's military forces with their counterparts abroad can become an important ingredient that enables more effective conversion of national resources into usable military power. Military-to-military relations come in various forms. At the simplest level, the presence of defense attachés in embassies abroad, functions as one conduit for monitoring new developments in technology, force structure, and organization. Participating in military education programs abroad and observing various foreign military exercises represents an interaction at a deeper, more significant level, especially if such participation is fairly continuous, is diverse with respect to the kind of instruction offered, and involves individuals who eventually return to postings in force training and combat development establishments back home. at the most sophisticated level, military-to-military relations take the form of combined exercises, combined training programs, and combined deployments for military missions.*

Keywords: *military system, national power, military capability, resources, infrastructure, evaluation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Military capability represents the main point of a country's national power. Internal and external threats to states' security are not only common but also present. Thus, we can say that military capabilities are intended both for defence against potential internal or external adversaries and for offering leaders the possibility to follow and fulfil their interests, even against other concurrent entities.

So, state power is applied in various ways- internally and externally- by military power which also becomes a political instrument.

In conclusion, we can say that a country's national power should ideally represent the capacity of its military force to engage against its potential adversaries.

Admitting that this military force is capable to annihilate these adversaries, we should pay attention to the whole context in which this confrontation of forces could take place, in order to understand their rapport, and, should there be a power balance, to be able to identify, through a dynamic battle analysis, those circumstances and advantages which can be exploited in gaining success in a possible military confrontation.

2. MILITARY SYSTEM EVALUATION

In writing this paper I didn't intend to make a detailed analysis of military power evaluation as a result of military capability, but only as its resource. I have tried to contribute to identifying the necessary ingredients for creating an efficient force and

understanding the way in which it could be theoretically conceptualized. So, the measures of ensuring military capability will be, as Stephen Biddle mentions, "entrance measures", that is what "enters" in order to create an efficient national military capability. The attempt to compare the efficiency of some countries' national capability cannot be interpreted as a possible analysis of military balance between them, the present study being just a prelude to the dynamic analysis of battle (Timothy D. Johnson, Winfield Scott: The Quest for Military Glory, 2018).

If we perceive military capability as a product of national power, it is necessary to understand that a country's military organizations are the recipients of national resources generating combat capabilities. These will be efficient if they allow a country's political-military leaders to impose their will against any adversary.

Reducing the logical framework of examining national power to the way in which national military units generate efficient military forces, we can ask ourselves whether it is enough if the army turns its available resources into military power and if this military power is also efficient. Of course, the resources that the militaries are provided with are very important and, the higher they are, the higher military efficiency is, but they are not enough. A clear military doctrine, adequate personnel training, good leadership and organization adapted to modern battlefield requirements are also necessary.

So, military power evaluation cannot be reduced only to accounting its components (personnel, weapons, etc) as it has been proved that big armies haven't always been the most efficient. Thus, a state with a small army- Israel was victorious in last century's wars, whereas the Chinese armed forces- perhaps the most numerous in the world- could not prove efficient outside their state's borders. So, the real capability of a military force depends on much more elements than the state provided resources.

3. STRATEGIC RESOURCES

Any evaluation of a country's military capabilities should have in view, first of all, the evaluation of financial, human, physical and technological resources that the state provides to its military institutions. At the same time, it is important to consider national performance and resilience, politico-military leaders' ability to manage the present situation and foresee solutions to counteract the effects of any future threats to national security.

Viewed and analyzed on the whole, these aspects, which function interactively, can create a real image of the type of resources that the military personnel need.

Thus, in order to correctly measure a state's national military power, it is necessary to obtain information about the following variable elements (Richard E. Beringer, Jones Archer and Hattaway Herman, *The Elements of Confederate Defeat: Nationalism, War Aims, and Religion*, 2019).

4. DEFENCE BUDGETS

The size of the budget assigned to defence is the main indicator of political leaders' interest in increasing a state's military capability. This information can be obtained from analysing the percentage assigned to defence both from global public expenses and from the Gross domestic product (GDP)/ Gross National product (GNP).

Yet, for a better understanding and evaluation of the defence resources distribution, it is necessary to analyse the potential threats that the country is confronted to, the structure and real power of the country's military institutions, as well as the way in which the militaries benefit from these resources: salaries, maintenance costs, military technology

research and development costs. This information can create an overall picture of a country's military power. When part of this information is periodically reiterated, it could suggest certain tendencies in modifying military efficiency.

So, there are numerous ways of analysing and estimating a country's defence budget, but, time and again, for various reasons, a country's budget data are not available to the public, which makes it necessary to resort to analyses and estimations that could lead to a truthful conclusion. A method would be examining a military's noticeable physical resources and calculating the taxes. Although we cannot categorise them as precise, these calculations can offer an approximate estimation of the state's commitment to support its armed forces and so they can be considered a first step in measuring its national power (Alice E. Carter, Richard Jensen. *The Civil War on the Web: A Guide to the Very Best Sites*, 2017).

5. MILITARY WORKFORCE

The second type of resource which contributes to increasing a country's national power is the military workforce. Its size and quality also offer a perspective on the dimension of national power.

The measurement of the military workforce requires, as a first stage of assessment, the examination of the total force, then its separation into its active and reserve components and their distribution among services. However, the detection of gross power alone is not enough for a complete picture, so, the facilities offered by open sources must be used in order to discover relevant information: the educational level of active and enrolled personnel, military equipment, as well as the ability to integrate and exploit the latest military technologies internationally.

At the same time, the way in which human resources are managed within the army can really contribute to building a more comprehensive picture of a country's military power. Here, we have in mind the existence of a military tradition, the extension of national societal divisions within the military system, the difficulties of integrating into the system according to gender, social class, race or ethnicity. Therefore, this is a valuable source of information that can contribute qualitatively and quantitatively, when assessing the basic nature of the military workforce and its potential in a possible conflict (John W. Chambres II. *To Raise an Army*, 2019).

6. MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE

The third type of resource that has a significant impact on a state's military capabilities is its military infrastructure. This is, essentially, the physical infrastructure owned by a military force, commonly referred to as "bases and facilities". In addition to facilities for accommodating military personnel and equipment, this category includes training and testing facilities, medical facilities, warehouses, etc. the extent and quality of these facilities can contribute to military capability development.

The ability of the military infrastructure to support soldiers provides, of course, a valuable tool for assessing a state's military power. In this regard, in order to analyze, for example, a country's air power, the information on the number of air bases in relation to the existing air forces, the type of protection (active and passive) offered to aircraft and the airfield, the level of protection offered to its elements (checkpoints, communication centers, fuel-lubricant depots, ammunition, etc) must be used.

Of course, all these resources can be considered components of a country's military capital and can contribute to its military effectiveness, but for a more accurate assessment

of their value, it is necessary that all information about them be corroborated and interpreted not only synthetically but also analytically.

7. INDUSTRIAL DEFENCE BASE

Another resource that determines a country's military effectiveness is the industrial defence base, more precisely the industry involved in the production of technologies and military tools. This depends on the allocations from the country's defence budget, on the funds needed for the production of these goods for military use, on which the country, in turn, depends to ensure its military power.

For a generic assessment of the industrial defence base, one could resort to the classification according to the quality and degree of autonomy of a country's production capability: large and small weapons, non-lethal but strategic products, support consumables (John W. Chambres II. *To Raise an Army*, 2019).

Of course, very few states, especially those with a strong, technologically advanced industry, can achieve full autonomy in the production of military equipment, most countries being forced to more or less resort to imports— which ultimately means certain vulnerability.

Obtaining relevant information about the industrial defence base structure and quality contributes not only to creating an image of an army's own capabilities, but also to revealing its vulnerability when the information about dependence on foreign suppliers is relevant.

8. INVENTORY AND COMBAT ASSISTANCE

A country's military inventory and combat support capabilities are as important as any other category of its military power. Therefore, obtaining intelligence about some countries' military inventories has been and will continue to be one of the main objectives of the intelligence community. Together with the intelligence about military workforce, the intelligence about the military inventory and the combat support capabilities will reveal a country's real military capability.

In this regard, it is the intelligence community's responsibility to collect intelligence on the number of tanks, artillery pieces, ships and fighter jets and other military equipment held by different countries. Possessing this intelligence can help shape both the defensive and the offensive capabilities of a country (John W. Chambres II. *To Raise an Army*, 2019).

However, it must be borne in mind that war is a constantly changing phenomenon, especially in terms of its nature and conduct, and especially the forces and available and used means. Hence the reluctance to collect real data about the weapons and combat facilities of potential opponents, about the different categories of stocks and their combat support capabilities.

CONCLUSIONS

Strategic resources are essential for a country's military capability, but they are not enough to create a military force capable to respond efficiently to any type of threat. These resources need to be assessed, converted into military force and used as such on the battlefield.

Successful conversion of these resources into an efficient military capability is undoubtedly a real test of military leadership quality, but, unfortunately, success in this

endeavour is often conditioned by factors, structures and entities that go beyond the military institution itself.

Of the many factors that influence the militaries' ability to turn resources into operational capability, the following may be the most important:

(1) Threats to national security that may frequently change, and the strategy developed and adopted to deal with them.

(2) The structure of the civil-military relationships, including military access to the decision making process which could enable them to understand change in major national objectives, to support the allocation of additional resources and gain the freedom to operate in order to transform them into efficient operational capability.

(3) Military relations with foreign armies, which facilitates access to intelligence about other military forces.

(4) The doctrinal nature, training and organization within a force, which allows gross military resources to support the combatant forces efficiently- from an operational and a practical point of view.

(5) The potential and capacity for innovation, which gives a military force the opportunity to cope with its ever-changing strategic and operational missions, while seeking solutions to keep it afloat before potential adversaries.

All these variables condition a country's military leadership ability to achieve effectiveness in the event of an armed conflict. Consequently, understanding how these qualitative factors affect military capability is important in order to analyze one's own national power and the potential adversaries' national power.

REFERENCES

- [1] R.E. Beringer, A. Jones and H. Hattaway, *The Elements of Confederate Defeat: Nationalism, War Aims and Religion*, 2019, p. 22;
- [2] A.E. Carter, and R. Jensen, *The Civil War on the Web: A Guide to the Very Best Sites*, 2017, p. 19;
- [3] J.W. Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 2019;
- [4] T.D. Johnson, W. Scott, *The Quest for Military Glory*, 2018, p. 32.