



Research Article

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Transforming military leadership through innovative development approaches

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/bjir-2025-0006>

Abstract

Military leadership has undergone significant evolution in recent centuries, reflecting changes in society, technology, operations, and doctrine. In today's uncertain global environment, innovation in military leadership is crucial for addressing emerging challenges. Numerous examples from various periods are used to understand how military leadership has adapted to meet these evolving challenges.

This research paper provides a clear definition of innovative military leadership and links it to existing leadership theories, highlighting the factors that differentiate it from traditional models. It examines the differences between traditional and innovative leadership, as well as the essential skills and characteristics required for an innovative leader, such as creative thinking, flexibility, and a focus on change. The paper emphasizes the importance of strategic thinking and adaptability to new technologies, analyzing the impact of innovative leadership in both warfare and peacekeeping operations. Innovative military leadership plays a crucial role in addressing international threats, such as hybrid warfare, terrorism, and cybersecurity challenges. It explores leadership models, including decentralized leadership, and the integration of artificial intelligence in strategic decision-making, while underscoring the significance of communication and coordination in uncertain environments.

Technology plays a vital role in innovative military leadership, including the use of drones, artificial intelligence, and advanced information systems, which significantly impact the style and effectiveness of military command. These modern tools are transforming how commanders make decisions and lead operations in the field.

Another key aspect of this paper is the importance of education and training in developing innovative military leadership. The study highlights the need to research and adapt academic programs and training curricula to prepare future officers and commanders to lead in complex and constantly evolving environments. This remains a constant challenge for educational and training institutions within the Armed Forces, particularly the Armed Forces Academy. The central question that arises is: What skills and knowledge are needed to develop military

leaders capable of leading in an era of rapid change?

In conclusion, this research paper on “Transforming military leadership through innovative development approaches” aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how individuals can adapt to lead in a world transformed by technology and global dynamics. It also emphasizes the development of strategies that can lead to the success of military leadership in the face of emerging global security challenges.

Keywords: Military leadership, innovation, development, transformation, technology, strategic leadership, adaptability, decision-making, education, training, complex environment.

1. Introduction and background

Leadership is the ability to guide, inspire, and direct individuals or groups toward achieving shared goals. An effective leader creates a clear vision, motivates others, and manages resources and change to ensure success. Leadership involves not only managing tasks and responsibilities but also fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and innovation. Innovative approaches to leadership development adapt to the evolving needs of society and the market, enhancing the capacity to face new challenges and motivating individuals to achieve common goals.

The history of leadership has evolved significantly, reflecting social, cultural, and economic changes over the centuries. Leadership shifted from authoritarian and traditional structures to more collaborative, individual-oriented approaches. In ancient times and the Middle Ages, leadership was often based on absolute power and unquestioned authority. The thirst for power is a fundamental drive of human beings (Nietzsche, 2006). “If you can think and act like a leader, there is no limit to your achievements.”¹ Leaders like Egyptian pharaohs, Roman emperors, and medieval kings ruled through force and direct orders, believing they had a divine right to govern, often relying on military power and religious faith to maintain control.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, leadership focused on authority and hierarchy. During the Industrial Revolution, leadership remained reliant on authoritarian structures, with managers and factory owners exerting strong control over workers’ lives and tasks. Leadership during this period was centered on resource management and a strict hierarchy, where lower-level individuals had no influence on decision-making. “Military leaders are not only organizers of war, but also human resource managers, and moral leaders.”²

In the mid-20th century, leadership evolved from an authoritarian model to a more collaborative and democratic approach. It emphasized gathering diverse opinions, listening to the team, and involving individuals in decision-making. The concept of “transformational leadership,” introduced by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, focused on inspiring and motivating teams to achieve more than they thought possible. Transformational leaders create a compelling vision, engage team members

¹ Alexander the Great- Alexander III of Macedon , *most commonly known as Alexander the Great*, was a king of the ancient Greek *kingdom of Macedon*.

² Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969)- was the 34th President of the United States, serving from 1953 to 1961. During World War II, he was Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force *in Europe and achieved the five-star rank as General of the Army*.

in the process, and foster innovation and personal growth. This leadership style prioritizes the development of individuals, providing opportunities for everyone to grow, not just the leader, helping the team achieve common goals and develop as a cohesive unit.

2. Military leadership compared to leadership in other fields

There are certain characteristics and requirements that distinguish the military leadership from the leadership in other areas of expertise. An old military saying states that "... no one can be called a commander unless his appointment is ratified in the minds and hearts of his subordinates and soldiers."

Military leaders are often regarded as role models for other soldiers. General George S. Patton emphasized this point by highlighting the importance of being an example for one's team and demonstrating courage and resilience. It is the duty of every leader, through their professional competence, personality, and the authority conferred by their position, to lead a specific team or unit, regardless of its size. According to Hunt (1992) the embodiment of leader behavior with subordinate orientation is "(1) emphasis on superior-subordinate relations; (2) the leader's attention on satisfying the needs of his subordinates; and (3) accept subordinate differences including the personality and abilities of subordinates."

What changes is the manner in which work is organized in order to apply leadership principles in practice. A careful examination of numerous successful and authoritative commanders reveals that one of the key qualities contributing to their effectiveness is the energy and personal example they demonstrate. "A good leader is one who knows how to lead by example, not merely by issuing orders."³

The example of General Joseph Stilwell, who successfully led a 140-mile march from Burma to India — not with a regular military unit, but with an unorganized group of men and women — serves as a model demonstrating that, where the personal example, the physical endurance, and the commander's energy take the lead, subordinates follow and come to value the authority with which the leader commands. "A leader leads example, not by force" (Giles, 2013).

In November 2000, the American General Montgomery C. Meigs offered a thorough analysis of four key traits that a leader must possess and cultivate within his/her personality: intellect, energy, altruism, and humanism. "Such qualities," he emphasized, "to some degree, are innate within each of us from the moment of our existence." The path to becoming a general perhaps begins with an understanding of those inner qualities that make a military officer a capable commander. Rue and Byars (1997) said that "certain characteristics are desirable in many leadership situations, there are four characteristics, namely: confidence; has mental and physical strength; a sense of responsibility and good relations with others."

Leadership is the process that encompasses the totality of concepts, skills, and principles that define what a leader should be, what the leader should know, and

³ George Washington- (February 22, 1732 – December 14, 1799) was a Founding Father and the first president of the United States, serving from 1789 to 1797. As commander of the Continental Army, Washington led Patriot forces to victory in the American Revolutionary War against the British Empire. He is commonly known as the Father of His Country for his role in bringing about American independence.

what the leader should do in order to accomplish a mission. There have been many thinkers on the theory of military leadership, from antiquity to the present day, who have addressed the concepts and practices of leadership, command, management, and guidance. "A leader is one who can perceive things as they are, anticipate what will happen, and take action to achieve objectives."⁴

Historical examples in the field of leadership theory and philosophy, referencing prominent figures such as psychologists, philosophers, and military leaders like Napoleon, A. Adler, Holl, H. Link, A. Morua, E. Harbery, Machiavelli, Stuart, Kovalev from Russia, and others, are quite significant. They closely associate the fulfillment of duty with the elements and factors of motivation, including group motivation, national motivation, task motivation, and combat motivation. A person who can make others feel important will win their hearts and respect (Pivetti, 2016).

At the core of strategy, military leaders must possess a broad vision and a deep understanding, being capable of leading a large group of individuals and implementing a complex plan that requires high levels of collaboration and coordination. Schwartzkopf (2000) speaking about the art of leadership, emphasizes: "I tell people that leadership is a combination of two things, character and competence." In other words, authority and respect cannot be imposed; they must be earned and deserved. In addition to the qualities common to leadership in other fields, military leadership must possess certain unique traits, which, according to Klock (2003) constitute the theory of the "Six-Dimensional Leader." The theory of military leadership encompasses essential elements such as decision-making, trust, the ability to delegate, resilience, morale, and flexibility in managing changes on the battlefield. What distinguishes military leaders is their ability to lead in extreme situations, managing pressure and making quick, wise decisions with significant impact. Maxwell's Law of Influence emphasizes that leadership is closely tied to the ability to influence others. "Without influence, there is no leadership" (Maxwell, 2025). This law demonstrates that true leaders gain followers through their actions and behavior, not through power or titles. Admiral William H. McRaven emphasized the importance of discipline and commitment in building a strong and efficient team during times of crisis.

How has Albanian military leadership evolved? The development of Albanian military leadership is closely linked to the country's history, tradition, and challenges. After World War II, military leadership was structured around a system heavily supported by the communist regime of Enver Hoxha. Military leaders were known for their discipline and commitment to state defense but were often indoctrinated and closely tied to political leadership, influencing their authority and strategic decisions. Albanian military leadership was shaped by communist ideology, marked by a centralized structure and political influence, often leading to unprofessional decisions. Leaders were involved not only in defense but also in consolidating the regime's power. This model continued through the Cold War period (1945-1990), reflecting the dominance of communist ideology and centralized leadership.

After 1990, with the collapse of the communist regime, Albania went through a

⁴ Napoleon Bonaparte was a French general and statesman who rose to prominence during the French Revolution and led a series of military campaigns across Europe during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars from 1796 to 1815.

difficult period of transformation, which significantly impacted the military as well. The changes affected not only the structure and military doctrine but also the very philosophy of leadership. Military leaders faced the challenge of adapting to a new reality, in which they had to develop new skills to lead an army in transition. This process involved the modernization of structures, the professionalization of personnel, and alignment with NATO standards, integrating into the concept of collective defense and international cooperation. Following Albania's accession to NATO, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania underwent a profound transformation, adopting modern practices in military management and training. Albanian military leadership integrated into joint missions with allied forces, developing new skills to lead in an international environment and operate according to NATO standards. The list of leaders who have had an impact on Albanian history includes figures from various fields, each of whom played key roles in the political, economic, and cultural development of the country. Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg, Mother Teresa, Ismail Qemali, Ahmet Zogu, Enver Hoxha, Sali Berisha, and Edi Rama are among them, each contributing in their own specific way during their respective eras. Beyond these names, there have been many others who influenced the course of Albanian history in various areas of national life.

3. The evolution of leadership, innovative approaches

The evolution of leadership and innovative approaches can be understood through a comparative analysis, highlighting the differences and similarities between various models, leading to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. To be effective, assessment methods must be closely aligned with the context and objectives of the research, ensuring they yield valid and relevant information.

3.1 Purpose and methodology of the paper

Nowadays, leadership has evolved to meet the demands of a constantly changing world, where technology and globalization are key factors. Innovative leaders use new technologies and methodologies to achieve greater goals and distribute resources more efficiently. They focus on creating cultures of inclusion and diversity, encouraging team members to contribute their unique skills and ideas.

With the shift to the technology era, leadership now involves change management, flexibility, and adapting to market and social changes. Digital leadership, which uses technological tools and manages remote teams, is a major trend of the 21st century. As technology and digital transformation rise, leaders must be able to navigate a digitalized world, improving communication, collaboration, and resource management. Digital leaders can use online platforms to connect and lead remote teams.

In this sense a research question comes to mind: How has leadership evolved from an authoritarian model to a more collaborative approach that fosters individual engagement and participation in decision-making?

The methodology we will use in this case is based on an analysis of leadership development across various historical periods, employing a comparative approach.

In contemporary discourse, there is a focus on a new leadership paradigm, known as servant leadership, where leaders prioritize the support and development of individuals. This approach fosters work environments that allow each person to contribute meaningfully and experience personal growth. "Appreciate your soldiers, and they will follow you, even in the face of great danger." This model emphasizes the needs of team members, helping them reach their full potential. Servant leaders are committed to supporting and developing individuals by creating a healthy and collaborative environment. "One of the most powerful ways to influence someone is to make them feel that their ideas and thoughts are valuable" (Pivetti, 2016). On the other hand, this will require the use of advanced technologies and the creation of a culture of diversity and inclusion in which the growth of creativity and innovation is encouraged.

Innovative leadership development approaches involve practices and strategies that enhance and adapt leadership skills, making them more flexible in a dynamic environment. Adaptive leadership is essential in a constantly changing world, where leaders must adjust to emerging challenges and opportunities. It requires managing uncertainty while maintaining team motivation. A collaborative approach values all perspectives, ensuring that every member feels appreciated and involved in decision-making and development. Another key principle of leadership is that leaders rely on ethical values to guide decisions, ensuring sustainability, fairness, and strong trust with team members and stakeholders.

To achieve success, a leader must embody several key qualities, including: vision, effective communication, empathy, decision-making, integrity, the ability to motivate, the capacity to delegate responsibilities, reflective practice, flexibility and adaptability, as well as the provision of assistance and support.

Various theorists have advanced diverse perspectives and theories regarding leadership, drawing upon their individual experiences and research endeavors. Trait Theory, one of the primary leadership theories, suggests that leadership is intrinsically linked to certain qualities and characteristics inherent in individuals. According to this theory, natural leaders possess distinct abilities, such as intellectual capacity, self-confidence, and decisiveness. "Effective leaders possess a synthesis of innate characteristics and cultivated skills".

Another equally significant leadership theory is the Behavioral Theory, which emphasizes the actions and behaviors a leader must demonstrate to be effective. The Law of the Lid, introduced by John C. Maxwell in his book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, best illustrates the principle of leading by example. Maxwell asserts that a leader's capabilities determine the limits of their team's or organization's potential: "The stronger the leader, the greater the potential of the team". Jim Collins, speaking of leadership theories, classifies five levels of leadership from 1 to 5. "Level 5 leaders channel ego needs away from themselves and toward great purpose.... They are very ambitious, but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not for themselves" (Collins, 2009).

Leaders can develop their skills through learning and practice. Regarding communication tendencies, one of the pioneers of this theory, Kurt Lewin, identified

three leadership styles—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—and analyzed their respective impacts on teams. Beyond a leader’s personality and communicative abilities, another crucial aspect is adaptability to evolving circumstances. Situational Leadership Theory suggests that leadership should adjust based on the specific situation and the needs of team members. As the theory emphasizes: “A great leader must be flexible and adapt to the demands of the circumstances.”⁵

The theorists James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass focus on the transformative aspect. They emphasize that transformational leadership focuses on motivating and inspiring the team beyond personal interests, creating a new vision and engaging members to achieve common goals. According to Bass (1997) a leader is a person who has a goal and who behaves together with the members of the group they led to achieve that goal.

A pure example of a transformational leader is the president of the United States of America, Donald Trump. His return to the White House and his victories have been regarded as a strong critique of the status quo and a redefinition of politics, ensuring that it will evolve under new conditions for decades to come. Some historians consider Trump a “transformational” president. As political scientist Stephen Skowronek has argued, American politics tends to follow a cyclical pattern. Each cycle begins with an innovative president whose victory reshapes the political landscape, reorganizes governance around a new coalition, and brings to power a group of supporters chosen for their loyalty to the president’s agenda. This dynamic becomes even clearer when comparing Trump to another transformational president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. While Roosevelt’s policies had little in common with Trump’s, his election in 1932, much like Trump’s success, potentially signals a disruption of long-standing political norms and the beginning of a new era.

Another highly significant theory is the interest (transactional) Leadership Theory, which is based on direct relationships and rewards for achieving goals. Max Weber and Bernard Bass⁶, further developed this theory, which primarily emphasizes a system of rewards and punishments as a mechanism for guiding and motivating followers.

In summary, an examination of the history of leadership reveals a shift from a model centered on authority and control to a more collaborative and individual-oriented approach. Modern leadership now integrates elements of diversity, innovation, and adaptability, reflecting the demands of an ever-evolving world.

4. Differences in the approach between military leadership and leadership in other fields

The Law of the Process of Leadership Development, discussed by John C. Maxwell (2025) defines leadership as a long-term process, and the development of leaders is

⁵ Hersey and Blanchard: “The Hersey-Blanchard model” uses a diagram to classify employees based on their capacity and experience. In the model, employees are referred to as “followers,” while managers are referred to as “leaders.”

⁶ Max Weber (21 April 1864 – 14 June 1920) was a German sociologist, historian, jurist, and political economist who was one of the central figures in the development of sociology and the social sciences more generally.

a journey that requires time and effort. Leadership is not something that happens instantly, but a commitment that develops every day. It should be emphasized that the authority of military leaders and great commanders is not granted by their commanding position or military ranks, nor is it created by family heritage. Authority is solely the product of education, character, work, and the individual behavior of a military leader. Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge (Sinek, 2014). In the historical development of leadership, military leadership has undoubtedly been dominant and almost a model of success for others as well.

The methodology used to determine the differences between military leadership and leadership in other fields is based on a qualitative comparative approach, which examines various aspects such as the attitude toward hierarchy, discipline, life experience, motivation, social life, study style, different challenges, and career development.

From a survey conducted with military students (sampling 50 individuals per group) at the Military Academy and two universities in Albania, it is generally observed that the difference between a military student and a civilian student is almost minimal, primarily due to the different environment, life experiences, and distinct educational goals. These differences influence how they experience and cope with the student life. This diagram, designed to include two columns for each group, displays characteristics such as percentages according to the table (see the table below)

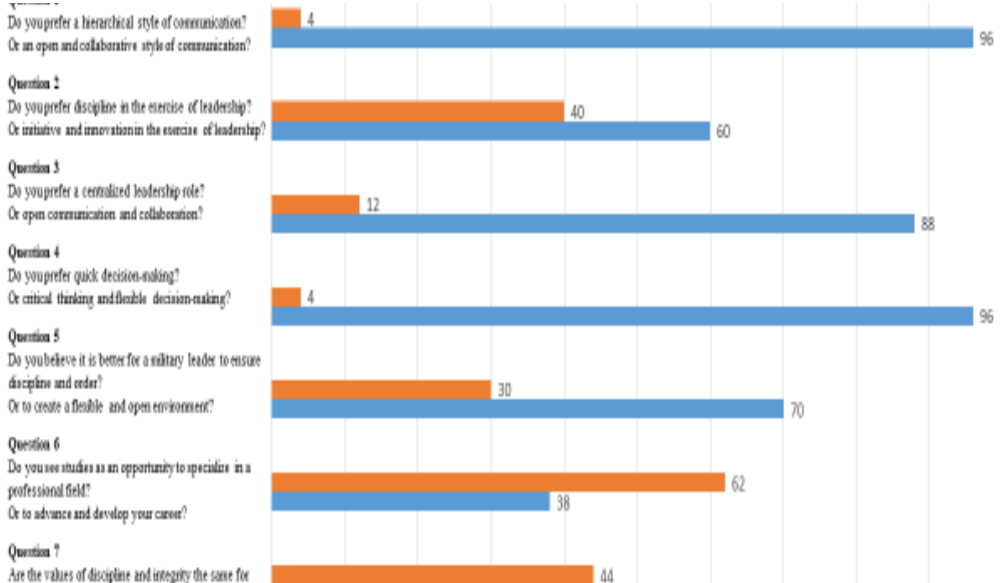
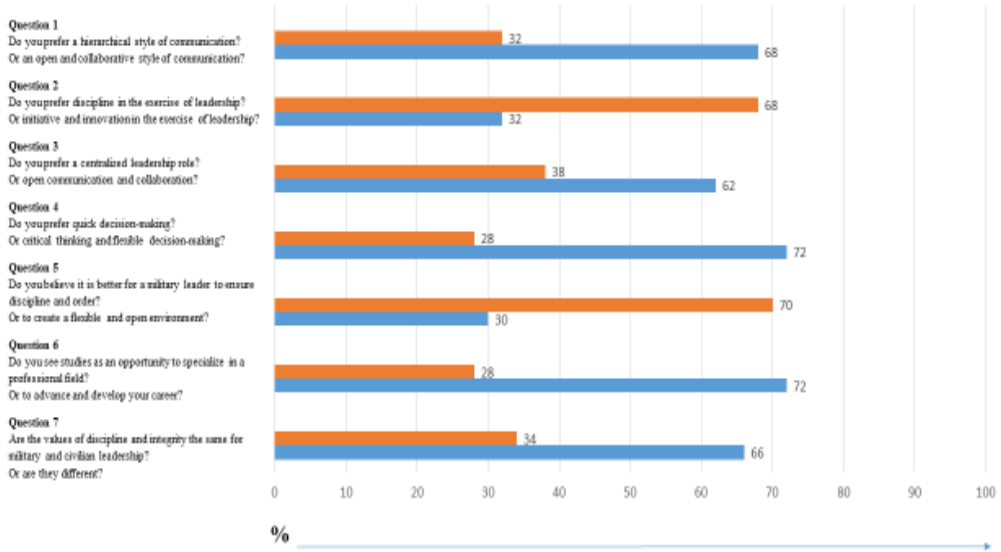
Questions and Answers

| Characteristics | Military Student | Civilian Student |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| A) Are you in favor of a hierarchical communication style? or, | 32 % | 4 % |
| B) An open and collaborative communication style? | 68 % | 96 % |
| A) Are you in favor of discipline in exercising leadership? or, | 68% | 40% |
| B) Initiative and innovation in exercising leadership? | 32% | 60% |
| A) Are you in favor of a concentration of the leader's role? or, | 38% | 12% |
| B) Open communication and collaboration? | 62% | 88% |
| A) Are you in favor of quick decision-making? Or | 28% | 4% |
| B) Critical thinking and flexible decision-making? | 72% | 96% |
| A) Are you in favor of decision-making with group support? or | 70% | 30% |
| B) Decision-making by orders (hierarchical decision-making) | 30% | 70% |
| A) Are you in favor of specializing in a specific field? or | 28% | 62% |
| B) Advancing in a career (civilian or military) | 72% | 38% |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| A) What is the biggest challenge in transitioning from military education to civilian education? or | 34% | 44% |
| B) From civilian education to military education? | 66% | 56% |

Diagrams

Survey on Leadership – Military Students



5. Survey Analysis

This is a comparative analysis of leadership perceptions among military and civilian students, based on the results of two structured surveys with seven questions exploring communication, discipline, decision-making, morality, and the role of education. The results highlight contrasts and similarities between the two groups and fundamentally reflect the paradigm shift that the concept of leadership is undergoing in different cultural and institutional contexts.

Leadership is a concept that has evolved significantly over the past few decades, moving from authoritarian and hierarchical models to more collaborative, flexible, and empathetic approaches. The aim of this study is to compare leadership perceptions between two student groups formed in different contexts: the military structure and the civilian higher education system.

The data were collected through two standardized surveys, each with seven common questions. The participants were military education students and students from civilian universities. The questions aimed to analyze: communication approach, leadership style, decision-making, moral values, and the role of education.

The analysis of this survey for military and civilian students shows some interesting differences in their preferences and attitudes toward leadership, communication, and their approach to studies and careers. By comparing the results for both groups, we can identify several key trends:

Communication Style

- Military students prefer a more hierarchical communication style (32%) and a more open and collaborative style (68%).
- Civilian students are much more oriented toward open and collaborative communication (96%), with a small minority supporting a hierarchical style (4%).
- Civilian students are clearly more inclined toward open and collaborative communication, while military students accept hierarchical communication, which is typical for military structures. This likely reflects the differences in nature and structure between military and civilian environments.

Leadership Practice

- Military students support discipline in leadership (68%) more than initiative and innovation (32%).
- Civilian students, on the other hand, are more inclined toward initiative and innovation in leadership (60%) than discipline (40%).
- Military students show a preference for leadership based on discipline, which is characteristic of military structures. Meanwhile, civilian students appear more supportive of leadership that encourages creativity and innovation, likely due to the more flexible and independent nature of civilian environments.
- *Focus on the Leader's Role vs. Communication and Collaboration*
- Military students are focused on the leader's role (38%) but prefer open communication and collaboration (62%).
- Civilian students are much more inclined toward open communication and collaboration (88%) and less focused on the leader's role (12%).

- Military students, who are accustomed to centralized and hierarchical structures, value authority and the leader's role. In contrast, civilian students prefer a more open and collaborative approach, which may indicate a more collective and less structured work and leadership environment.
- Decision-Making and Critical Thinking
- Military students prefer flexible decision-making and critical thinking (72%) over quick decision-making (28%).
- Civilian students also favor critical thinking and flexible decision-making (96%), with a minority supporting quick decision-making (4%).

Both groups of students acknowledge the importance of critical thinking and flexible decision-making in the decision-making process, but military students may be aware of the need for quick decision-making in certain situations, despite preferring a more flexible approach. In contrast, civilian students are more oriented toward a highly critical and flexible approach.

Leader's Connection to Discipline

- Military students believe more in leadership that ensures discipline and order (70%) than in leadership that creates a flexible and open environment (30%).
- Civilian students, conversely, are more inclined toward leaders who create a flexible and open environment (70%) than leaders who ensure discipline and order (30%).
- Clear differences are observed here. Military students prefer leaders who maintain order and discipline, as this is very important in military structures. Civilian students, on the other hand, see flexible and open leadership as more suitable for their environments, where there may be more freedom and opportunities for creativity.

Approach to Studies and Career

- Military students see studies more as an opportunity to advance and develop their career (72%) than as an opportunity to specialize in a specific professional field (28%).
- Civilian students are more inclined to view studies as an opportunity to specialize in a professional field (62%) than to advance their career (38%).
- Military students may see studies as an opportunity to develop their careers within a specific military structure, while civilian students are more focused on acquiring knowledge and specializing in a specific professional field, which may relate to the more flexible and independent nature of the civilian environment.

Values of Discipline and Integrity in Leadership

- Military students believe that the values of discipline and integrity are different for military and civilian leadership (66%).
- Civilian students are more divided (44%) on whether the values are the same or different for military and civilian leadership, but the majority believe they are different (56%).
- Both groups express the opinion that military and civilian leadership require different values, likely due to the very different nature of these two environments.

The military requires a more centralized approach and strong discipline, while the civilian sector may require more flexibility and opportunities for individual expression.

Based on these results, we can conclude that military and civilian students have two different and almost opposite approaches to leadership:

- Military students believe in discipline, quick decision-making, hierarchy, and structured leadership.
- Civilian students value innovation, flexibility, collaboration, and a longer decision-making process.
- These differences reflect the environments in which these groups have been formed:
- Military students are trained to make quick decisions and follow a strict hierarchical structure.
- Civilian students, on the other hand, are used to operating in a more open world, where ideas and collaboration are highly valued.
- From the analysis of these diagrams, we can conclude that the differences between military leadership and other types of leadership are being reduced or eliminated, as modern leadership development trends are strongly influenced by changes in technology, strategy, and the nature of contemporary conflicts. This survey shows that military students are more oriented towards discipline, hierarchical structure, and centralized leadership, whereas civilian students prefer open communication, innovation, and creativity. These differences are natural and expected, reflecting the distinct nature of military and civilian environments. Some of the key factors influencing this development are:
- Military leadership, like other forms of leadership, is increasingly integrating modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, robots, and drones, to enhance the effectiveness and accuracy of military operations.
- Modern conflicts often involve a combination of conventional and unconventional warfare (hybrid warfare), where military forces face new challenges such as guerrilla tactics, cyberattacks, and subversive warfare. This requires military leaders to be flexible and ready to adapt to these various strategies.
- Modern military leadership has shifted from an authoritarian style to a more collaborative, innovative, and transformative approach, where leaders encourage creativity, communication, and cooperation within the ranks, fostering strong and motivated teams. Modern armed forces require individuals who possess the ability to manage diverse groups, embrace diversity, and promote an inclusive and fair environment.
- Application of Results in Practice
- For military structures, these results could help better understand the importance of flexibility and innovation in leadership, by integrating some elements of the civilian approach to improve efficiency.
- For civilian organizations, this study could help evaluate the importance of discipline and clear decision-making in more unorganized structures.

- To improve innovative approaches in military leadership, it is essential to create mechanisms that connect modern strategy with advanced leadership practices. Military leadership must quickly adapt to technological changes, including AI, autonomous systems, and advanced communication tools. This requires continuous training and integration of new technologies to enable faster, more accurate decision-making and efficient coordination of global military operations.

The training and development of officers in these areas will enable them to lead effectively in an environment adapted for digital warfare and advanced technology. Innovative leadership development methods embrace new technologies, modern learning approaches, and a deeper understanding of human behavior. The demands for further development of military leadership are increasing through the improvement of education, training, and professional skills, with opportunities for specialization in areas such as strategic leadership, resource management, strategic communication, and cybersecurity. These programs should focus on developing the skills necessary to lead in an increasingly technologically integrated and international environment. This can be achieved by creating personalized modules to help military personnel develop specific leadership skills in key areas. Leadership development programs increasingly focus on emotional and social aspects, alongside tactical and strategic training. Developing skills in managing emotions, supporting troops, and handling diversity strengthens group cohesion and boosts morale. According to Goleman (1998): Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to know and control emotional symptoms and information. The results showed that the characteristics of effective leaders are controlling emotional intelligence. This type of leadership training fosters leaders who can build strong relationships and trust with their troops, enhancing operational effectiveness and cooperation on the ground.

"One of the most effective ways to build meaningful connections is by demonstrating a genuine interest in others. Inquire about their lives and engage with them thoughtfully, showing a sincere interest about their experiences" (Pivetti, 2016). These methods help leaders develop emotional intelligence, resilience, and decision-making skills by fostering self-awareness and reducing stress. Military leadership should evolve with advanced training and NATO collaboration. Programs should focus on critical thinking, opportunity evaluation, and handling challenges, using simulations to strengthen leadership under stress. They should also include resource management, clear communication, and collaboration with international teams for effective joint operations. "War is an art, and like any art, it requires persistence, perfection, and adaptation."⁷

Military leadership must develop crisis management skills and be prepared for unexpected situations, with multidimensional leaders being crucial. According to Robbins and Judge (2019) a leader who puts forward empathy makes people still want to help the leader, even in difficult conditions.

Leaders should work not only in military settings but also with security partners, civilian institutions, and international organizations. This requires flexibility and the ability to collaborate in diverse environments, managing complexities from varying

⁷ Erwin Romme l (1891 –1944) - was a German General Feld Marschall (field marshal) during World War II.

interests and approaches. Success depends on blending crisis management, effective partner interaction, and swift decision-making.

This requires developing communication, negotiation, and collaboration skills. Emerging leaders must work under pressure, manage resources, and lead with a clear vision. While technology and training are key, moral leadership and ethics are equally vital. These qualities help balance high performance with strong ethical standards, enabling leaders to guide troops justly and foster trust and cohesion within the team.

Military leadership must be developed in such a way as to ensure the trust of subordinates and the population in the leaders' ability to make just decisions and lead with integrity and responsibility. This trust is essential for guaranteeing the effectiveness and unity of the armed forces, enabling soldiers to feel secure and motivated to follow leadership, even in difficult circumstances. To achieve this, leaders must cultivate a culture of justice, transparency, and accountability, promoting values such as respect, loyalty, and integrity, and acting as role models for others. This will ensure that leaders have the moral authority and necessary ability to lead successfully. (Kouzes, 2012)

Technology is increasingly important in the military, with leaders needing to master tools like Artificial Intelligence, surveillance systems, and modern weaponry. Advanced simulations, augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) scenarios help personnel and leaders prepare for real combat by improving decision-making, collaboration, and response in challenging situations. This requires leaders to adopt technological innovations in operations. Innovative leadership programs should include example-based learning, similar to mentoring and coaching, to promote personal growth and improve leadership skills through shared experiences. Leadership philosophies like "servant leadership" focus on meeting the needs of soldiers and units, building trust, and ensuring leaders support and develop those under their command. Trust, built through honesty, integrity, and commitment, is the foundation of all leadership. Leaders must build trust within their team through honesty, integrity, and commitment (Maxwell, 2025).

Through these methods, a military leadership capable of meeting the challenges of the future can be developed, one that is responsive to the rapidly changing environment and prepared to lead in an innovative manner.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper emphasizes that to enhance and advance innovative approaches to military leadership, it is crucial to integrate key components into a balanced program and curriculum that offers students a comprehensive experience, ultimately preparing them to become competent, responsible, and successful leaders. Military leadership must adapt quickly to technological transformations and new strategic developments. Based on this paper, the following key conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- Adopting Technology in Military Leadership – The use of artificial intelligence,

autonomous systems, and advanced communication tools is essential for success in digital warfare. Training and development of officers in these fields will enable them to lead effectively in an environment characterized by high technology and the fast-paced dynamics of modern battles.

- Developing leaders' emotional and social skills – A military leader must possess emotions management skills, troop support capabilities, and diversity management expertise. These competencies contribute to strengthening unit cohesion, fostering a healthy environment, and boosting troop morale, particularly in high-stressing conditions
- The Use of Advanced Technologies in Military Training – Advanced simulations, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) constitute highly effective methods for preparing military personnel and leaders for real combat situations. These technologies enable the simulation of battlefield conditions and challenges, enhancing decision-making, collaboration, and responsiveness in critical situations.
- Developing Communication Skills and International Cooperation – Military leaders must possess the ability to coordinate and collaborate not only within military structures but also with security partners, civilian institutions, and international organizations. Military diplomacy and negotiation skills are essential for achieving success in multinational operations and stabilization missions. By mastering diplomatic engagement and conflict resolution, military leaders can contribute to more effective crisis management, peacekeeping efforts, and global security cooperation.
- Reforming Military Education and Training – Leadership development through education and training plays a crucial role in shaping effective military commanders. Academic programs and training curricula at the Armed Forces Academy should prioritize the development of analytical and strategic skills, professional ethics, stress management, and advanced military planning. Additionally, training should incorporate practical exercises and simulations that enhance rapid and effective decision-making in high-pressure and complex situations. By fostering these competencies, military leaders will be better prepared to adapt to evolving challenges and ensure mission success in dynamic operational environments.

Only through these methods can a military leadership capable of addressing future challenges be developed, fostering a culture of strategic thinking and operational flexibility. This approach will enable a faster and more precise response to the dynamic changes of the battlefield and the evolving landscape of global security. Furthermore, such leadership will be equipped to integrate technology and artificial intelligence into decision-making processes, strengthen cooperation with allies and international partners, and establish a command environment that promotes professionalism, ethics, and inclusivity. Only in this way can military leadership remain effective and ensure the success of operations in complex and unpredictable conditions.

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