



Public management of the defence sector: The role of the leader in the formation of personnel policy

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■ **Abstract.** The ability of a national defence to play its function is becoming increasingly difficult as the complexity of the current security environment, which may be defined as a complex adaptive system, grows. This study intended to highlight the patterns of efficacy of leaders' roles in defining human resources policy within the defence sector in today's strategic context. Challenges in leadership and human resource management in defence sector, in particular based on experience in various regions of the world – Australia, Persian Gulf countries, and Lithuania – are analysed. The article proves that personnel decisions in the military sector largely depend on the level of leadership competencies of managers. The characteristics and peculiarities of contemporary landscape of defence sector are described in the terms of BANI world (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible). The findings show that leadership in the military business in a BANI environment requires adaptability, endurance, compassion, and a focus on fostering a culture of

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trust and optimism. To manage instability, uncertainty, and emotional stress, leaders must prioritise their employees' well-being and mental health, promote open communication to develop trust, empower individuals through flexible and agile processes, and embrace continuous learning. Based on the analysis of human resource management framework characteristics, in particular, within transformational leadership paradigm, drivers for improving leadership function on designing effective personnel policy are proposed. Expedient characteristics for BANI defence leaders and strategies for success in shaping high-performance personnel policy are summarised. The article also emphasises the need for closer attention to more effective and encouraging organisational culture creation, as well as application of Human Capital Management principles in military sector. The practical value of the study lies in outlining the vectors of development of patterns in public management within the defence sector in preparing leaders to deal with designing and implementing personnel policy under conditions of extreme dynamics, uncertainty, evolving and emerging threats

■ **Keywords:** military personnel; personnel security; defence sector HR policies; leadership; defence industry; military sector

■ Introduction

Public management of defence sector personnel policy entails setting principles, developing and implementing personnel strategies for recruitment, training, remuneration, and retention, as well as managing military and civilian people to ensure a capable force. Forecasting future demands, promoting career growth, cultivating integrity, and integrating human resources with strategic security objectives are all critical components. Tools such as human resource management frameworks and priority placement programmes assist firms in adapting to changing conditions and achieving their goals. Integrity, accountability, adaptability, and strategic alignment are core personnel policy elements in today's complex world of ever-changing and growing risks and problems in the defence sector.

In the defence industry, personnel policy and human resource management (HRM) are strategic functions that are vital for handling every stage of the employee lifecycle, from hiring and attracting to training, performance evaluation, and retention. defence human resource (HR) experts create and carry out policies that support national security objectives, guaranteeing that workers have the necessary skills in fields such as advanced engineering, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity, and that they receive enough career assistance. In the meantime, HRM in the defence industry offers a distinct set of opportunities and difficulties that provide deep insights into more general organisational procedures. The importance of personnel policy in the defence sector was emphasised, in particular, by Ukrainian scientists. Thus, in the study D. Zayats *et al.* (2025) notes that updating backend technologies is no longer the only aspect of modernizing human resources management; creating a platform to support readiness for critical tasks is also important. Furthermore, HR strategies in military and security organizations are crucial to fostering a productive and effective organization. In their research, D. Plekhanov & O. Plekhanova (2019) noted that for a long time, the competitiveness of the military sector was very low in the domestic labor market due to insufficient financial support for the military, an imperfect system of social guarantees, serious housing problems, and lack of confidence in the prospects for professional and career growth, which ultimately led to the destabilization of the situation in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the

outflow of the most experienced and trained military specialists abroad or to other areas of society. J. Dagher *et al.* (2024) proposed a fascinating case study in human capital management the military's approach, which is distinguished by its discipline, strategic vision, and flexibility.

Crucially, HRM is a key component of operational effectiveness and strategic success in the defence industry and is not only an administrative task. As noted by F. Kiluange *et al.* (2024), recruitment, training, retention, and morale are all aspects of the military's HRM strategies that require a high degree of accuracy and planning. These tactics, developed in high-stakes situations, provide significant insights for civilian groups facing comparable challenges. Furthermore, the HRM strategies of the military industry must be flexible enough to adjust to quickly changing conditions brought on by threats, geopolitical upheavals, or technical breakthroughs. Effective HRM in such a dynamic area is characterised by the capacity to change course and adapt (Karolyi *et al.*, 2025).

K. Hansen *et al.* (2025) tried to understand how Europe's defence modernisation is changing the hiring of leaders. They asserted that the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, rising budgets, and geopolitical unpredictability are all contributing to the swift restructuring of Europe's defence industry. Increasing defence spending appears to be a sign of progress and opportunity. The level of change needed is highlighted by underlying structural problems, such as a lack of talent, fragmented industrial landscapes, deeply ingrained organisational cultures, and changing procurement expectations. As a result, a new type of leadership is developing to satisfy the changing demands of the industry.

For elite people, defence corporations increasingly directly compete with tech and AI enterprises. It's crucial to draw in mission-driven, digitally savvy people, especially in software and systems engineering. defence companies must rethink their organisational appeal and employer branding in order to successfully compete with the tech industry. Because Ukrainian companies were able to successfully recruit tech talent from civilian industries during the war, they provide compelling examples of realistic pathways that European defence corporations may follow. Ukrainian defence tech companies are actively developing it and luring talent. In order to increase the pool of Ukrainian

talent in harsh environments, numerous organisations have established training platforms centred on crucial technological skills like unmanned aerial vehicle assembly and combat systems integration.

Executives must also keep a close watch on new trends, as spotting and implementing ground-breaking inventions now requires constant market research. Defence firms face challenges in meeting modern operational objectives due to organisational and cultural processes. Lean manufacturing, agile supply chain integration, and systems-level thinking are more important than ever, particularly in light of the Ukrainian war's immediate demand for output.

In their works, P. Falcone (2022) and H. Ferdman *et al.* (2025) emphasised that leaders in the defence business are changing their profiles in a significant way. In addition to an entrepreneurial attitude, operational resilience, and expertise in cross-functional systems integration, executives increasingly require hands-on experience in startup and scale-up settings. However, the ability of leaders in the military sector to effectively and competently formulate people policy and have strong HRM innovation abilities is equally crucial. In the military industry, hiring decisions are mostly based on managers' leadership skills. With this in mind, this study sought to explore how leaders influence the effectiveness of HR policies within the defence sector in the context of the current strategic environment.

■ Materials and Methods

The study is based on constructivist paradigm of research, based on the prerequisite that knowledge is profoundly rooted in context, and understanding is achieved by delving into the distinctive experiences and viewpoints of persons inside their own surroundings (Denicolo *et al.*, 2016). The use of a qualitative methodology allows for a detailed description of the complex social phenomena surrounding the application of leadership techniques and their impact on enhancing the effectiveness of human resource management in the defence sector. To analyse the underlying conditions and mechanisms of these social phenomena, qualitative methods recommended by J.W. Creswell (2014) and J. Strauss & A. Corbin (2007) were used. For studying leadership in human resource management, the methodological recommendations of S.B. Merriam (2009) were applied, and for conducting a comparative analysis of different perspectives and conditions, the principles developed by N.K. Denzin *et al.* (2023) were followed.

As a methodological framework, the study employed integrative review elements. Case study approach is also applied as a kind of triangulation for theoretical perspective results. For generating the sample of items for study, the Consensus platform, which searches numerous databases simultaneously through a single interface, was used. Core scientometric databases were chosen based on the research topics and the library's general suggestions, as well as education and psychology-related resources: ScienceDirect, MDPI, Springer, ResearchGate, and JSTOR. The extra limitation "English AND/OR Ukrainian language" was also

selected in this interface. After removing duplicate, the publication's scope, volume (a minimum of three pages was required for inclusion), scientific quality, and relevance to the subject were all evaluated during the screening process. The selection procedure, thus, was implemented in frames of standard PRISMA protocol, and is shown in a schematic form in Figure 1.

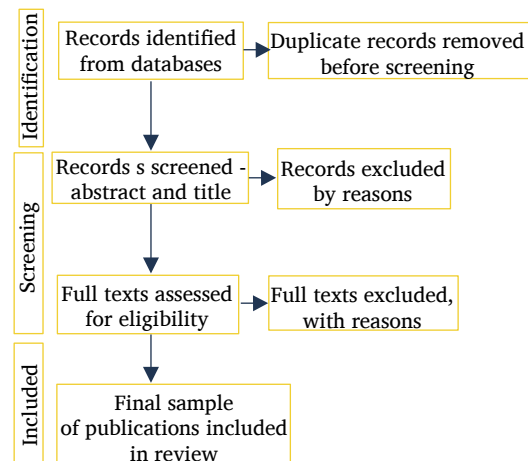


Figure 1. Diagram of the selection process

Source: developed by the authors

After forming the sample, a thorough analysis of the selected publications was conducted, focusing on the defined criteria. The analysis considered aspects such as leadership practices in human resource management, the effectiveness of applied leadership strategies, and the impact of technological and social changes on the process of personnel management. Particular attention was paid to theoretical and practical recommendations that could be applied to the development of HR strategies in the defence sector. The analysis also included an assessment of the impact of new technologies, such as unmanned systems, and geopolitical changes on personnel policy, particularly in the context of global challenges, such as cyber threats, hybrid warfare, and international instability. The final stage of the study involved integrating the results of the analysis and formulating conclusions regarding the impact of transformational leadership and personnel management approaches on the effectiveness of the defence sector. The potential for adapting current human resource management methods and leadership strategies in the context of BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) environments, which are a crucial part of global changes and challenges for defence organisations, was also assessed.

■ Results and Discussion

Defence HRM: The context, possibilities, and leadership implications

Defence industry leaders today need to be ready to work in unstable, high-pressure situations where they must make snap choices based on scant information. This specifically pertains to the HRM domain. According to Ukrainian

academics O. Holota & O. Tytkovskyi (2023), the traits, skills, and behaviours of the primary strategic leader are crucial to the strategy formulation process of human resource management. In this regard, the ability of strategic leaders to develop, create, coordinate, and execute strategy as a coherent set of end-state, strategic objectives, consistent actions, and resources to accomplish them (interconnected set of ends, ways, and means) is of paramount importance for the establishment of defence institutions.

Case studies from several nations demonstrate how HR management in the defence industry may be enhanced by strong leadership. According to information of P.J. Sinaga *et al.* (2023), the Indonesian National Army (TNI – Tentara Nasional Indonesia), for instance, has put in place a number of leadership initiatives aimed at enhancing the professionalism and skill of its soldiers. TNI officers receive extensive field training in addition to strategic and technical courses as part of their leadership education and training programmes. The goal of the programme is to give officers the managerial and leadership abilities they need to successfully command military units. Good strategic leadership, according to O. Holota & O. Tytkovskyi (2022), encompasses the traits, skills, and actions of leaders in the creation and application of military HR management plans. defence companies may make sure they have employees that are prepared to take on the problems of the future by implementing the appropriate methods.

B. Kustiawan & G. Ghazalie (2025) asserted that in this period of globalisation, the issues confronting the defence sector are becoming increasingly complicated, with the emergence of new threats such as global terrorism, cyberattacks, and geopolitical instability. As a result, executives in defence human resource management must have a clear vision and effective methods in place to address these difficulties. Effective leaders must be able to see the big picture and direct the organisation toward long-term goals while simultaneously dealing with emergencies in a timely and appropriate manner. Defence organisations will be able to respond to threats more effectively and efficiently if they have both a strong operational capability and a strategic vision. In military operations and emergency situations, prompt and accurate decision-making is frequently required. In order to make the best choices quickly, leaders in the nation's defence must possess strong analytical abilities in addition to intuition and expertise. Making the correct choice can guarantee the mission's success and save lives in addition to protecting the organisation from losses. A competent leader must be able to weigh numerous pertinent factors and make the best choices given the information at hand.

On October 24, 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Building Integrity (NATO BI) Program unveiled the revised Human Resource Management Toolkit for the Public Sector. (NATO, 2022). The Norwegian Centre for Integrity in the defence Sector (CIDS) was the driving force for its creation. The toolbox provides an interactive manual for establishing integrity in the public sector, complete with employee questionnaires, methodical planning guides

for HR staff, and practical tests of managerial skills. According to the text, integrity-building which entails pursuing institutions that are open, accountable, and democratic requires HRM. In order to advance good governance and put the values of integrity, accountability, and transparency into practice in the defence and linked security sector, NATO BI supports the Alliance as a whole as well as its Allies and partner nations. Employees and institutions with inadequate human resources are less able to withstand hybrid organisational risks such as corruption and bad governance. In the military and security industry, effective HR management systems are essential because they create moral leadership cultures that are trustworthy and honest. For an organisation to be effective, integrity-building in HR must be included into all aspects of the organisation, including job design, recruitment and selection, employee induction, professional development, and organisational culture.

Technological advancements, shifting geopolitical conditions, and the psychological and sociological characteristics of employees are all obstacles facing the nation's defence human resources management leadership. All facets of life, including defence, are impacted by technological breakthroughs. In order to increase operational effectiveness, leaders must make sure that the HR department they oversee is able to adopt the newest technologies and adjust to changes in the industry. This calls for a thorough understanding of new technology in addition to training and skill development investments. defence plans and programmes are also impacted by constantly shifting geopolitical conditions. defence HR management leaders need to be able to adjust to these developments and make sure their companies are ready for a variety of potential dangers. This calls for the capacity to react swiftly and efficiently as well as ongoing monitoring of global developments.

There are also major issues with the staff's social and psychological well-being. Due to their jobs and obligations, both military and civilian personnel frequently experience high levels of psychological discomfort (Papadopoulou & Karavasilis, 2024). Effective leaders must be able to support these psychological components by offering the required assistance, whether it be through counselling, welfare programmes, or work-life balance-enhancing activities. Employees that receive quality psychological support will be better able to perform on demanding duties and maintain their mental health.

The role of “context”: Cases of nation-states' approaches

H. Sheikh & B. Fayek (2018) described the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) efforts to develop strong, contemporary models of military sector leadership. The GCC's armed forces must now concentrate on improving its human resources after more than a decade of modernising doctrine and equipment. GCC militaries require military human resources models that recruit, retain, and train individuals to have the requisite competences throughout service and then prepare them for retirement if they are to achieve the most from this upgrade. Instead, GCC forces are currently

experiencing problems with motivation, morale, and performance. Military human capital is more difficult to “purchase” than military hardware, therefore there can be a lack of employees with the necessary qualities. To attract the best personnel, properly educate them, make better use of them, and allow their reintegration into society after retirement, GCC governments must upgrade military HR paradigms (Mason, 2024). This will raise morale while also offering the skills required in times of greater security and a growing demand for advanced capabilities.

For GCC militaries to achieve this, they need military HR models that allow for flexible career assignment to increase productivity and efficiency, offer attractive pay scales based on skills and responsibility, promote mental and physical health, use more flexible recruitment, and ensure that retirees are properly assimilated into civilian life. These models should provide service members more autonomy over their careers, encourage academic and professional development, and link promotions to performance. The top applicants should be selected, training requirements should be uniform worldwide, retention initiatives should be implemented, non-operational activities should be performed by civilians, and civilian expertise in specialised industries like high tech should be leveraged. By

strengthening military human resources and providing fulfilling careers, these military HR strategies will raise force effectiveness, readiness, and performance levels.

The GCC forces have concentrated on updating their operating capabilities and introducing new equipment during the last few decades. Armed forces made training investments for “front-line operators” from a personnel standpoint (Sheikh & Fayek, 2018). Regretfully, military commanders had no plans to implement more extensive HR reform. Rather, HR procedures are still mired in Second World War-era protocols, which has resulted in low morale, a lack of drive, and subpar performance. GCC militaries are failing to recruit individuals with the necessary skills and are not giving those they do hire the proper training to match current equipment or handle military threats, thus a fresh approach to HR is essential. The GCC forces cannot fully benefit from the past ten years of updating their doctrine and equipment without these qualified professionals. The GCC military’s current HR models are under a lot of strain. The GCC armed forces are dealing with more proficient enemies, and geopolitical and military trends are taxing the military’s human capital. With more and more unmanned, autonomous platforms and weapons showing up on the battlefield, the technological landscape is likewise evolving (Fig. 2).

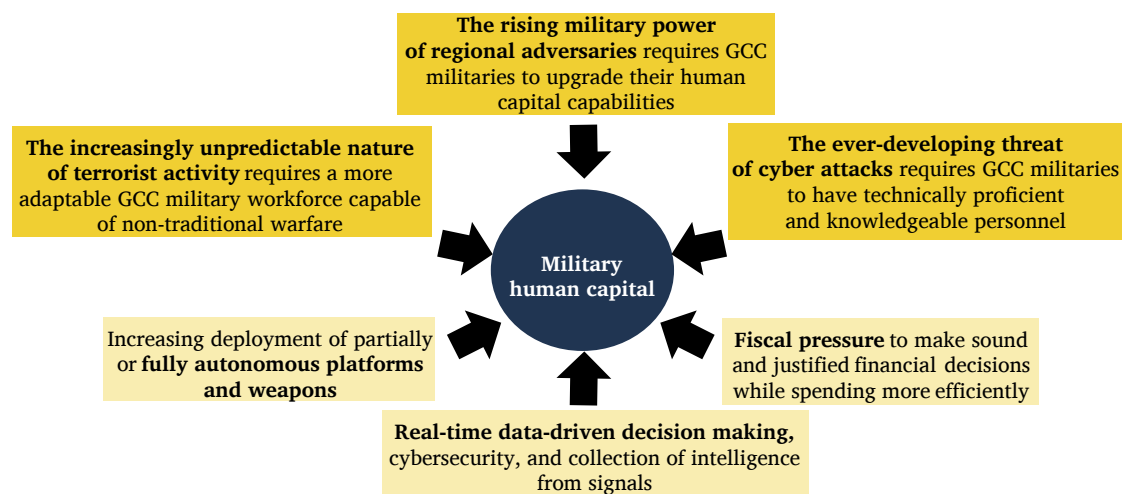


Figure 2. Geopolitical and military trends making unsustainable demands on military HR models

Source: H. Sheikh & B. Fayek (2018)

In the realm of national defence, leadership entails the capacity to inspire, encourage, and guide both military and civilian staff in accomplishing the organisation’s objectives. G. Yukl (2013) defines leadership as the process of persuading people to comprehend and concur on what must be done and how to accomplish it, as well as the process of supporting both individual and group efforts to accomplish shared objectives. Leadership in the military industry encompasses developing staff competencies, making strategic decisions, and fostering professionalism and patriotism. In addition to motivating and guiding military and civilian staff, successful leadership in this field also

involves managing change, making the most use of available resources, and ensuring efficient collaboration between different departments and divisions.

To accomplish the national purpose and guarantee the organisation’s preparedness in the face of changing challenges, leadership that can blend strategic vision with operational expertise is essential. When it comes to defence, strategic decision-making by leaders entails a thorough examination of the circumstances and the choice of suitable measures to deal with the current problems. Adaptive HR management is crucial to maintaining defence posture in the face of uncertain and complicated strategic environment

dynamics (van Houte, 2025). Enhancing defence effectiveness also requires developing staff competencies via ongoing education and training. The purpose of leadership education and training programmes is to give officers the administrative and leadership abilities needed to successfully lead military units. These programmes include technical and strategic courses as well as extensive field training.

Leaders must put a number of methods into place in order to face the difficulties and guarantee the efficacy of HR management in the defence of the nation. The application of performance-based management, collaborative and participative methods, building organisational culture, and sustainable leadership development are a few important ones. A continuous programme of leadership development guarantees that leaders keep improving their skills. Field experience, mentorship, and official instruction can all help achieve this. The most recent evolutions in global dynamics and technology should also be incorporated into these developments, as a crucially important context. In order to increase operational readiness and flexibility, A. Sarjito (2023) highlights the significance of incorporating human capital management concepts in the defence setting.

Australian Defence Forces (ADF) established three core elements of HRM leadership within military/defence context (Fig. 3). “Most of us seem to have an inbuilt preference to focus on one of the elements”, according to the Australian Defence Force Leadership Doctrine. Only if one can maintain equilibrium among all three, he will be a successful leader. “If any one element is overlooked, the others are unlikely to thrive” (Australian Defence Force, 2021). The writers of Doctrine recommend addressing the three-circle model of work, team, and individual demands, which was initially presented by British veteran and professor John Adai in 1973.



Figure 3. The interdependence of task, team and individual needs (the three-circle model of task, team and individual needs)

Source: Australian Defence Force (2021)

Most of the time, none of the three have competing needs. Individuals who are well cared for are more likely to commit to the team. If the squad is healthy, the leader should be able to fulfill the objective. However, there are moments when the demands of each element contradict.

For example, there may be time and resource constraints. This may demand the team to focus on the task at hand, which may be detrimental to the persons engaged. If team and individual requirements are overlooked, the effort put into the mission may be futile. Similarly, taking time to foster a healthy team spirit without putting out effort on the work can result in the team losing focus due to a lack of accomplishment. When competing needs arise, it is beneficial to focus on the long-term aim. If modifying the immediate work at hand does not prohibit the leader from reaching his long-term goal, he can invest in the needs of the team or individuals. However, if changing the present job jeopardises the long-term aim, the leader may be forced to prioritise the assignment. Every time the leader prioritises a task, he shows goodwill. So, it is critical to accumulate adequate credit to avoid going into debt. If the team trusts the leader, they will go through great hardship and risk to complete the mission. They will give him plenty of goodwill credit (Smiljanic, 2016). However, once the assignment is completed, the leader should strive to rebalance things by investing in the team and individuals.

The ADF asserts that leadership must be influenced by and true to the defence values of service, courage, respect, integrity, and excellence in addition to the traits that are inherent to each person as an individual (Australian Defence Force, 2021). Additionally, the way a leader leads must take into account and adapt to the situation at each given moment and location. ADF leadership framework can be depicted as shown on the Figure 3.

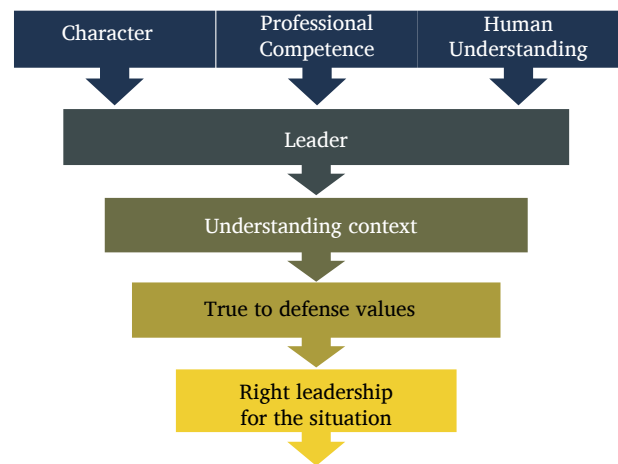


Figure 4. ADF leadership framework

Source: Australian Defence Force (2021)

In their study, A. Nugroho & G. Saputro (2025) sought to examine how transformational leadership may enhance human resource performance in defence companies. Transformational leadership is seen as a strategic approach to creating flexible, visionary, and high-performing employees in the present military environment, which is full of dynamic issues like cyber threats, hybrid warfare, and demands for professionalism. With the aid of NVivo software, the authors used data analysis techniques in a descriptive qualitative

approach. Direct observation within military work units, policy documentation, and in-depth interviews with defence people (commanders, trainers, and HR staff) were used to gather data. The results show that enhancing motivation, discipline, initiative, and loyalty among defence personnel is significantly impacted by the transformational leadership aspects of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalised concern. NVivo was used to discover critical themes such as job satisfaction, effective communication, and building a common vision. A. Nugroho & G. Saputro (2025) indicate that consistent application of transformational leadership can increase defence HR performance, resulting in professionalism, resilience, and mission-focused performance. As a result, for the effective functioning of the defence sector, it is essential to update human resource management approaches, particularly through the implementation of modern leadership models and adaptation to the changing strategic context.

Transformational leadership: New perspectives for defence sector in BANI context

Transformational leadership in the defence sector HRM requires leaders to inspire employees to achieve high

performance and loyalty by a shared goal, intellectual stimulation, and personalised concern. This approach is critical for military firms to respond to problems such as cyber threats and hybrid warfare by developing flexible, imaginative, and high-performing people resources. Transformational leaders can foster greater initiative, discipline, and a deeper sense of purpose in their teams by emphasising moral underpinnings, respect, and follower development.

Crucially, a personnel policy that encourages transformational leadership in the defence industry creates a culture of change by establishing a compelling vision, motivating employees, and fostering their growth through mentorship and recognition. This results in greater dedication, flexibility, and enhanced organisational performance, all of which are crucial for handling intricate, changing security issues (den Buijs & Olsthoorn, 2024). In order to build a workforce that is resilient to emerging threats like cyberwarfare and disinformation, such policies would include procedures for training leaders, fusing strategic thinking with operational execution, and coordinating organisational and individual objectives. Key aspects of transformational leadership in defence personnel policy are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Key aspects of transformational leadership in defence personnel policy

Aspect	Content
Inspirational & visionary leadership	Transformational leaders create and express a clear, compelling vision for the future of the defence organisation, motivating employees to work together toward common, lofty goals.
Innovation & intellectual stimulation	Policies should promote a culture of innovation and learning, with leaders intellectually challenging their staff and encouraging creativity and problem-solving abilities to combat emerging threats and adapt to complex global dynamics.
Personal attention and guidance	A strong policy emphasises attention to personnel's particular needs, mentoring them, and giving opportunities for personal and professional development, which fosters dedication and loyalty.
Responsibility and empowerment	To build transformational leaders, personnel policies should gradually increase levels of power and responsibility, allowing younger officers and leaders to gain confidence and competence in managing their teams.
Framework for ethics	The policy must support an ethical framework for leadership, in which leaders serve as role models, earning respect and trust while also fostering a good and productive work environment that values ethical behaviour.

Source: created by the authors based on W. Rynecki (1998)

V. Šimanauskienė et al. (2021) examined how military leadership influences creative employee behaviour using the Lithuanian Armed Forces as an example. The impact of top and middle management's leadership behaviours – support for innovation, delegation, intellectual stimulation, and rewards – on military officers' innovative behaviour was examined in this paper. A questionnaire was used in quantitative sociological research serves as the basis for the empirical validation of the four leadership behaviours that were chosen. The findings of the study indicated that, at the level of top managers (commanders), there are strong and statistically significant correlations between elements like intellectual stimulation and delegation, rewards and delegation, delegating and support for innovation, and support for innovation and rewards. In the meantime, two significant correlations between elements like rewards and delegating and delegating and support for innovation were discovered for middle-level managers (military officers). Although commanders and military officers both value the leadership styles of the Lithuanian Armed Forces' top and middle

management, an analysis of the compatibility of opinions revealed that commanders are more enthusiastic about the chance to contribute fresh ideas to their military unit. Additionally, when people perceive support for innovation, they are more positive about taking the initiative and are more positive about the statement that leadership gives them the authority to make decisions and carry them out. It is concluded that the inventive behaviour of subordinates is influenced differently in the innovation promotion process at different hierarchical levels of leadership due to the observed differences in the leadership behaviours of middle and top management. In actuality, this study provided empirical support for the significance of transformational leadership in HRM and people policy in the defence industry.

The analysis of considered studies and cases allowed claiming that, to improve leadership effectiveness in defence HR management, the following strategies can be adopted:

1. Development of a Leadership Training Program. An important first step is creating a thorough and continuous leadership training programme. The course ought to

address the interpersonal, technical, and strategic facets of leadership. The qualities, abilities, and conduct of a strategic leader are essential in the creation and execution of military HR management plans, claim O. Holota & O. Tytkovskyi (2022). A thorough training programme may ensure high operational readiness and the proper reaction to emergencies by preparing leaders to handle a variety of current and future difficulties.

2. The transformational leadership model in action. To create a happy and productive work environment, leaders must be encouraged to embrace a transformational leadership strategy that emphasises inspiring, motivating, and empowering employees. Employee motivation and morale can be raised through transformational leadership, which is particularly beneficial in the defence industry. M. Shah's (2021) research indicated that transformational leaders are able to motivate their followers to accomplish shared objectives and inspire them with a compelling vision, which eventually enhances the organisation's overall performance.

3. Coaching and mentoring. Another successful tactic is to put in place coaching and mentoring programmes to help staff members advance their managing and leadership abilities. Through coaching and mentoring programmes, the Australian defence Force has implemented a leadership paradigm that emphasises personal growth and enables military people to gain insight from senior leaders' experiences (Australian Defence Force, 2021). In addition to enhancing leadership abilities, the programme promotes the emotional and physical health of participants, which enhances military personnel performance and retention.

4. Regular evaluation and feedback. Assessing leadership effectiveness and pinpointing opportunities for development requires regular feedback and review. Organisations may make sure that their leaders are capable of handling new issues and are always changing by conducting regular assessments. Constructive criticism enables leaders to recognise their strengths and shortcomings and take the appropriate remedial action to enhance their performance, claim P. Neves *et al.* (2018). According to this study, commitment-based HR strategies might boost emotional commitment to change, which in turn can lessen resistance to future change.

5. Creating a culture of support throughout the company. Establishing an organisational culture that promotes creativity, collaboration, and personal growth is essential. Innovation thrives in environments where trust is deeply embedded within the organizational culture. Trust acts as the catalyst that sparks creative thinking and empowers employees to push boundaries beyond conventional limits. Without trust, employees often hesitate to share unconventional ideas or challenge existing processes out of fear of criticism or failure (Smyth, 2025). Job satisfaction and employee retention can be increased in a supportive work environment with appropriate acknowledgment. Employees feel appreciated and motivated to give their best work when there is a positive organisational culture. A. Sarjito (2023) asserted that the application of Human Capital

Management principles in military firms shows how an encouraging organisational culture may enhance operational readiness and flexibility in the face of change.

The current security environment in which military forces must operate is commonly referred to as "VUCA" – Volatile, Unpredictable, Complex, and Ambiguous (Smiljanic, 2016). While volatility and uncertainty are not new, complexity and ambiguity might be seen as a result of the post-Cold War period. Moreover, in recent years, the war in Ukraine and in Israeli-HAMAS (Islamic Resistance Movement) war evidently testify to the onset of BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) era. Thus, military leadership, including the domain of HRM, cannot be generically defined as a universal construct but rather be considered a multi-layered, adaptive process.

Leadership in the defence industry in a BANI environment necessitates flexibility, fortitude, compassion, and an emphasis on cultivating a culture of trust and positivity. In order to manage instability, uncertainty, and emotional strain, leaders must emphasise their staff members' well-being and mental health, encourage open communication to foster trust, empower people through flexible and agile processes, and embrace continuous learning. A systematic literature review was carried out by F. Kiluange *et al.* (2024) in order to identify the patterns of military leadership in a BANI scenario and a VUCA environment. The information gathered indicates that military leadership in a VUCA world and BANI scenario is defined by a complex combination of competencies at the personal, relational, and organisational levels, and that traditional leadership models are unable to accurately reflect the modelling of new challenges and realities. These include the abilities to think creatively, innovatively, instinctively, resiliently, flexibly, and adaptably. These talents are based on a condition of constant alertness and mindfulness, which enables one to view the world and make the best decisions.

According to S.P. Spain *et al.* (2015), the United States Army should promote its human capital and the culture that supports it. The authors proposed that the Army reconsider and perhaps change how it recruits, trains, selects, and forms the culture of future commanders. This is especially important for enhancing officers' conceptual skills. According to the need to develop officers' conceptual abilities, which is seen as an ambition in the US military education system, and the character, which is observed in some European countries (e.g., Norway Military Academy), the traditional model of military education does not adequately prepare military leaders for the challenges of the current and future strategic and operational environment. Leaders that are able to handle persistent ambiguity, identify significant trends, and see the world from the viewpoints of different stakeholders are better able to prepare and direct companies to react correctly to the difficulties of the complex environment. Characteristics for BANI defence leaders and strategies for success in shaping high-performance personnel policy can be briefly summarised as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics for BANI defence leaders and strategies for success in shaping high-performance personnel policy

Characteristics for BANI defence leaders	Strategies for success in shaping high-performance (effective) personnel policy
Agile and adaptive: Instead of sticking to strict, conventional hierarchical systems, leaders need to be nimble and ready to adapt to quickly shifting circumstances and unanticipated events.	Accept uncertainty: Instead of trying to manage chaos, leaders should develop their ability to recognise patterns, blind spots, and system dynamics in order to successfully traverse it.
Resilient: To handle the stress and difficulties that come with working in a BANI workplace, leaders must develop their own resilience as well as encourage the personal growth of their teams.	Foster resilience: Increase organisational and individual resilience by improving flexible systems and planning for interruptions.
Empathetic and supportive: In an anxious society, leaders must prioritise their employees' well-being and mental health, provide security and orientation, and actively build a healthy workplace culture.	Promote well-being: Implement programmes to assist employees' mental health and mainstream the usage of mental health services.
Empowering and collaborative: To improve organisational effectiveness, leaders should delegate authority and responsibility to their followers while promoting initiative, self-assurance, and problem-solving skills.	Promote ongoing learning: Establish an experimental culture where learning from mistakes and triumphs is a fundamental aspect of the process.
Creative and innovative: Making the best choices in a complicated, non-linear environment requires the ability to think "out of the box", invent, and view the world issue from several angles.	Communicate openly and transparently: Open and transparent communication fosters confidence and offers vital information for making decisions in an incomprehensible world.
Learning-focused: In an incomprehensible environment, flexibility, unlearning, and ongoing learning are more crucial than strict, long-term planning.	Lead from "perspective vision": To obtain perspective, create an area where people may see system dynamics and patterns above the immediate "dance floor" of activity (Riatmaja et al., 2024).

Source: compiled by the authors

The difficulties of the BANI era would be lessened if the distinctiveness of the defence sector workplace were acknowledged. Leaders in the military industry should also be able to absorb shocks and disruptions from any source while "designing" and implementing personnel policies. They should also be able to think strategically and react quickly to outside disturbances. The crucial requirement for agility and adaptability is reinforced by the BANI features. While providing direction for creating strong, durable, and forward-thinking tactics, each dimension presents particular difficulties. The right framework should be created by addressing both structural weaknesses and psychological difficulties. This will enable people and organisations in the defence industry to successfully negotiate the unpredictability of contemporary environments.

■ Conclusions

The current study outlined the patterns of effectiveness of the leaders' role in shaping HR policy within defence sector in contemporary strategic environment, but this outlining allowed revealing new landmarks. The study aligned characteristics for BANI defence leaders with strategies for success in designing and implementing high-performance (effective) personnel policy. Traditional transformational leadership patterns should be redesigned for BANI context, and more reliance on best practices of corporate sector should be definitely taken as newly approach for HRM in defence sector, in particular Human Capital Management, Agility and adaptiveness, focusing on continuous learning. For defence sector, BANI-world challenges are bigger and more crucial than for corporate sector, thus personnel policy should be accordingly aligned.

Although limited to some nation-state specific cases, the research meanwhile allowed revealing the patterns of contemporary environment in which leaders of defence

sector have to function, in particular when developing and implementing personnel policy. Public management and leadership development within the defence sector should be built on recognising, comprehending, and adopting the realities of BANI, as well as integrating appropriate drivers of successful strategic HR leadership embracing uncertainty, adaptivity and agility, fostering resilience, encouraging leaders to adopt a transformational leadership approach, observing patterns and system dynamics from the perspective, creating a culture of experimentation, transparent communication. By fostering and consciously managing each of these motivations, one can attain an optimal condition of leadership. Being aware of just one or two of them is insufficient.

Combining existing knowledge on military leadership in BANI and VUCA settings can help guide future study and application. Given the dynamic and ever-changing settings, military leadership would benefit from a deeper understanding of each term's constituent parts and how they relate to effective military command and leadership. With this in mind, one can suggest that design-thinking approach in defence sector personnel strategies and policies should enter the array of prospective fields for further research, which would allow successful rearrangement and creative combining of the elements of existent frameworks, some of which are described in the article.

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Публічне управління оборонною сферою: роль лідера у формуванні кадрової політики

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■ **Анотація.** Зростаюча складність сучасного безпекового середовища, яке можна визначити як складну адаптивну систему, ускладнює виконання функцій національної оборони. Представлене дослідження мало на меті висвітлити закономірності ефективності ролі лідерів у визначенні кадрової політики в оборонному секторі в сучасному стратегічному контексті. Були проаналізовані виклики в галузі лідерства та управління людськими ресурсами в оборонному секторі, зокрема на основі досвіду різних регіонів світу – Австралії, країн Перської затоки та Литви. У статті доводиться, що кадрові рішення у військовому секторі значною мірою залежать від рівня лідерських компетенцій керівників. Характеристики та особливості сучасного ландшафту оборонного сектору описані в термінах світу BANI: крихкого (Brittle), тривожного (Anxious), нелінійного (Nonlinear) та незбагненого (Incomprehensible). Результати дослідження показують, що лідерство у військовій справі в умовах BANI вимагає адаптивності, витривалості, співчуття та зосередженості на формуванні культури довіри та оптимізму. Щоб впоратися з нестабільністю, невизначеністю та емоційним стресом, лідери повинні ставити на перше місце благополуччя та психічне здоров'я своїх співробітників, сприяти відкритій комунікації для розвитку довіри, надавати повноваження окремим особам за допомогою гнучких і оперативних процесів та підтримувати безперервне навчання. На основі аналізу характеристик системи управління людськими ресурсами, зокрема в рамках парадигми трансформаційного лідерства, запропоновано фактори, що сприяють поліпшенню функції лідерства в розробці ефективної кадрової політики. Узагальнено доцільні характеристики для лідерів оборонного сектору в умовах BANI та стратегії успіху у формуванні високоефективної кадрової політики. У статті також наголошено на необхідності приділяти більше уваги створенню ефективнішої та заохочувальної організаційної культури, а також застосуванню принципів управління людським капіталом у військовому секторі. Практична цінність дослідження полягає у визначенні векторів розвитку моделей державного управління в оборонному секторі з метою підготовки керівників до розробки та впровадження кадрової політики в умовах надзвичайної динаміки, невизначеності, еволюції та появи нових загроз

■ **Ключові слова:** співробітники сектору оборони; кадрова безпека; кадрова політика оборонного сектору; лідерство; оборонна промисловість; військовий сектор