Principles of Military Readiness and Their Impact on Armed Forces' Performance

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Abstract

Human societies have emerged from common needs, and it is conflict of interest that does inevitably lead to warfare among them. Therefore, military preparedness is a societal necessity, and its most accepted goal is the protection of individual and social material and spiritual interests. The objective of continuous military preparedness is to prevent aggression from both known and unknown adversaries against the country's material and spiritual integrity. The forthcoming article aims to examine and analyze the principles of military preparedness to address the central question: What are the principles of military preparedness, and how do they impact the performance of the armed forces? This study is of applied type, the research methodology is descriptive-analytical and the research approach is of qualitative type. Data collection was conducted through both fieldwork and library research methods. The expert sample for interviews comprised 10 specialists with relevant expertise in the subject matter. The findings of the research indicate that the principles of military preparedness include: principle of operational scope, principle of regional characteristics, principle of quantitative self-sufficiency, principle of qualitative superiority, principle of complementarity between regular, popular, and reserve forces, principle of adaptability, principle of infrastructure, principle of foresight, principle of resource sufficiency, principle of morale and spirituality, principle of command and leadership, principle of national unity and cohesion in war, principle of creativity and innovation, principle of flexibility, principle of seriousness and certainty of threat, and principle of intelligence superiority. These principles impact the optimal quality of armed forces on the battlefield.

Keywords: Principles, Military Preparedness, Armed Forces

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Introduction

The Holy Quran states in Surah Al-Anfal (Verse 60): "And make ready for them whatever force and strings of horses you can, to terrify thereby the enemy of God and your enemy, and others besides them that you know not; God knows them. And whatsoever you expend in the way of God shall be repaid you in full; you will not be wronged" [1]

Imam Khomeini (may God have mercy on him) stated regarding military preparedness: "As the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, I instruct officials and decision-makers that under no circumstances should they neglect strengthening the armed forces, enhancing ideological and military training, developing necessary specializations, and especially moving towards military self-sufficiency. They must keep this country in full readiness to defend the values of pure Islam, the oppressed, and the downtrodden of the world. Attention to other programs should never lead to neglect of this vital matter, as certainly, failing to fortify the nation's defense infrastructure encourages foreign powers to contemplate acts of aggression, potentially leading to the onset of conflicts and orchestrated schemes." (Sahifa of Imam Khomeini, Vol. 21, pp. 357-358).

One of the vital and paramount domains in ensuring the security, defense, and preservation of any state's national interests is the realm of military preparedness and deterrent strategies against enemy threats. In the contemporary era, and particularly in recent years, imperial powers have sought to dominate the interests of other nations, especially vulnerable ones, through the utilization of threats and the instillation of fear and terror, thereby achieving their objectives. Military preparedness against potential threats and the use of military power constitute the primary response that states have employed to counter imperialistic ambitions (Lazgi et al., 2020). Military readiness in the face of potential dangers and the application of military power have emerged as the primary response governments have adopted against such hegemonic ambitions (Lezgi et al., 2020). The preparedness of armed forces to safeguard national territorial integrity and independence, and to repel enemy threats, consistently constitutes a significant preoccupation for political decision-makers. To enhance the

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1 And prepare against them whatever force and horses you can, with which you may terrify the enemy of God, your enemy, and others besides them whom you do not know. He knows that whatever you spend in the way of God will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged.

readiness of their forces, most nations resort to equipping them with advanced military tools and hardware. However, recent conflicts, including the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Syrian civil war, and the engagements between Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas with the occupying regime of Quds, signify a novel approach and discourse in military readiness. Consequently, the imperative to comprehend the principles of military readiness has become increasingly pronounced. While equipping forces with the most sophisticated military capabilities holds considerable importance, what transcends the acquisition of such armaments is the fundamental nature and methodology of military preparedness from the vantage point of a nation's rulers and principal decision-makers. Today, military power stands as a pivotal component of national power and authority. Therefore, in light of the foregoing, highly effective military strategies prove beneficial only when military forces adequately grasp and can properly implement the principles of military readiness on the battlefield. Based on this premise, the central research question is: What are the principles of military readiness, and what is their impact on the performance of armed forces? In this vein, the present research del ves into readiness and resilience, the foundational principles of military preparedness, the influence of these principles on troop performance, and ongoing readiness.

Theoretical Framework

Background

In a 2017 article, Rouzbeh Kamali and Mehdi Kheirandish presented a model for developing the defense readiness of armed forces personnel. In the final research model, the role of the armed forces in defending national security and independence, along with the ideals and values of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was considered a causal condition. Subsequently, eight components for the readiness of armed forces personnel and four strategies for enhancing these preparations were introduced, the consequence of which is the effective fulfillment of the armed forces' role as a manifestation of national authority, resistance, and Islamic authority. The implementation of strategies for promoting spirituality, fostering military, knowledge-based, and technological capabilities, and disseminating Islamic culture can facilitate the development of readiness among armed forces personnel and ultimately

ensure the effective execution of these forces' missions (Kamali & Kheirandish, 2017).

Abdolali Pourshasb et al., in a 2018 article, presented a model for organizational enhancement for combat in future wars. This model has successfully predicted effective elements in combat power, thereby providing the requisite capabilities for armed forces in future conflicts. Ultimately, the aforementioned model has been formulated with four dimensions (human resources, equipment, support, command and control), twelve components (ideologically committed, capable, agile, suitable for operational theater, qualitative, indigenous, spiritual support, material support, decisive command, simple plans and orders, continuous communication, and real-time information), and thirty-five indicators (Pourshasb et al., 2018).

Ali-Naghi Lezgi et al., in a 2020 article, elucidated the components of defense readiness in military command and management as presented in Nahj al-Balagha, with an emphasis on human capital. In this study, the components of defense readiness in military command and management within Nahj al-Balagha, with an emphasis on human capital, were identified and analyzed. And, in order of priority, the following components were enumerated: piety, foresight, specialization, courage, generosity, observance of justice, consultation, prudence, purposeful planning, adherence to law and upholding rights, non-initiation of war, incentives and sanctions, motivation, addressing subordinates' economic issues, proper organization, and acceptance of criticism (Lezgi et al., 2020).

Reza Yadollahi et al., in a 2023 study, conducted a comparative analysis of the components of combat power in the armies of eight nations (Australia, England, the United States of America, China, France, Canada, South Korea, and India). The research findings encompassed ten common components of combat power among the armies of these eight nations. These components were identified and introduced as: warfare knowledge, training, will, leadership, and combat capabilities as qualitative components; and intelligence, maneuver and movement, force, firepower, and sustainability as quantitative components of combat power (Yadollahi et al., 2023).

Conceptualization

Readiness and Resilience

Possessing readiness implies the existence of necessary capabilities for executing military operations. Resilience determine how long operations can persist before casualties and shortages of consumables (ammunition, fuel, food, spare parts) render units ineffective. Readiness and resilience are mutually considered components of military preparedness; for forces that are rapidly deployable but lack high resilience are susceptible to premature defeat, and, conversely, forces possessing high endurance but arriving too late to the battlefield are likewise rendered unusable (Collins, 2004: 148).

Principles

These are enduring and stable concepts, extracted from a school of thought or a paradigm, adherence to which facilitates the achievement of objectives (Zohdi-Nasab, 2023).

Military Readiness

Military readiness entails the provision of necessary forces and resources, both material and spiritual, for confronting existing or potential adversaries (Zarif-Manesh et al., 2023).

Armed Forces

The armed forces of a nation comprise its collective military, law enforcement, paramilitary, and volunteer forces (Bowlhasani et al., 2021).

Doctrines of Military Preparedness

1) The Principle of Operational Scope

Hypothesis: Military forces demonstrate optimal efficacy when meticulously calibrated for the execution of specific, pre-defined missions and engagements.

Specialized functions fundamentally constitute the conditions for military readiness, as well as the capacity for resistance and resilience. Each branch of the armed forces is, in principle, prepared for operations within a specific domain: ground forces on land; air forces above land and sea; naval forces below, on, and above the water's surface and

through maritime avenues; amphibious forces along coastal waters; and space forces within Earth's orbital layer or beyond. Special warfare and support operations significantly impact the readiness conditions within each branch of the armed forces. While logical overlaps inherently enhance flexibility, a re-evaluation of functions and performances becomes imperative whenever inter-service competition devolves into counterproductive endeavors (Collins, 2004: 149). The establishment of the Integrated Air Defense Network of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Headquarters of Khatam al-Anbiya (PBUH) Joint Air Defense Base) exemplifies a logical overlap within the Iranian armed forces concerning air defense, with exercises such as "Velayat Sky" serving as successful instances in this regard.

2) Principle of Regional Characteristics

Hypothesis: Military forces perform optimally when prepared for deployment in specific geographical regions.

Each Area of Responsibility (AOR) is unique, both geographically and in terms of natural and cultural geography. Military forces, specifically prepared for deployment within a particular environment, typically perform inadequately in other contexts, unless they undergo time-consuming and often costly transitional phases. They must both familiarize themselves with new allies, adversaries, terrain, climate, demographic patterns, cultures, and social conditions, and reorganize their weaponry, equipment, apparel, and supplies to conform with the new circumstances. For instance, forces operating in extremely cold climates necessitate overcoats, warm boots, lined sleeping bags, skis, vehicles adapted for snow, low-viscosity oils, and high-energy warm foods—none of which are required in equatorial regions. Furthermore, non-indigenous diseases that inflict heavy casualties upon unprepared military forces in tropical rainforests are entirely absent in desert environments (Collins, 2004: 149). In light of this principle, it can be asserted that the deployment of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been structured with due consideration for the country's geographical environment, along with formations and equipment appropriately tailored to that specific context. For example, infantry divisions are stationed in mountainous regions (e.g., 28th Sanandaj Infantry Division), while armored divisions (e.g., 92nd Khuzestan Armored Division) and mechanized infantry units are deployed in flat and desert areas.

3) Principle of Quantitative Self-Sufficiency

Hypothesis: Military forces perform optimally when their quantitative strength aligns with their assigned missions.

Small military forces possess limited capability to control extensive territory, cannot readily absorb heavy casualties, and lack the requisite flexibility in the event of unforeseen contingencies. The execution of rapid operations and the sustained deployment of forward forces necessitate more extensive resources when compared to the conduct of routine operations from domestic bases or those in their immediate vicinity (Bowlhasani et al., 2022).

A. Levels of Human Resources

The existence of an approved threshold for human resources inherently restricts the number of divisions, brigades, and other military units that a nation can commit to operations at full or maximum strength. If compulsory military service is absent, existing military personnel can only fulfill assigned missions effectively provided that a sufficient number of new volunteers are recruited through enlistment programs and the pay scale for active officers and non-commissioned officers is maintained at the recommended level. Units that are required to enter operations at their full combat strength must, during peacetime, maintain a larger complement of forces; this is due to the constant presence of personnel who are sick, or on leave, or have deserted, or are in transit, or are under detention, or are undergoing training.

B. Alignment of Organizational Structure and Human Resources

A misalignment between organizational structure and existing human resources can engender numerous challenges concerning productivity and the execution of assigned missions within the organization. The challenges pertaining to the human resource capacity within the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which commanders and human resource managers ought to consider, can be articulated as follows:

- (1) The extant human resource statistics for certain ranks and specialized fields are lower than the organizational figures, a discrepancy identifiable as personnel shortfalls; the presence of

unoccupied positions within military organizations serves as an indicator of this condition.

- (2) The extant human resource statistics for certain ranks and specialized fields exceed the organizational figures, a situation that can be examined under the rubric of personnel without assigned positions or dual appointments.

- (3) Given the shortfalls in conscripted personnel, particularly among officer and non-commissioned officer ranks within the armed forces, their allocation and deployment to frontline units must be a central consideration for commanders and managers.

C. Weaponry, Equipment, and Supplies

Units that are fully staffed will only achieve optimal performance if they are equipped with the authorized weapons, equipment, and spare parts. Numerically prepared forces must also possess sufficient supplies to sustain operations until resupply and refueling can be achieved. The requirements of units, logistics, missions, and areas of responsibility differ from one another. For example, during a fluid offensive war, the ground forces consume more fuel and less ammunition compared to when they are positioned in defensive positions (Collins, 2004: 150-151).

The genesis of maritime industries during the Holy Defense era, aimed at supporting and assisting the combatants of Islam in the battlefronts of truth against that of falsehood, is noteworthy in this context; its emergence was manifested through the widespread production and supply of Ashura boats. Consequently, attention to the existence of over 2000 kilometers of maritime borders in the country, on the one hand, and the presence of extra-regional forces in the open waters and waterways of the country's south, on the other, necessitated the development of the maritime industry, given the complexities and difficulties of scientific, technical, and research activities in the naval domain. Consequently, with the aim of consolidating the abundant capacities within the maritime industries in the defense sector and establishing an efficient and developed structure, the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics proceeded to establish the Marine Industries Organization in 2008. Currently, this organization stands as the nation's largest maritime industrial complex and is the custodian of programs and activities within the maritime industry, encompassing both defense and civilian sectors. By leveraging the extensive equipment

and capabilities of the country's defense industry, its committed and specialized personnel, the latest scientific-specialized achievements, and the application of international standard and exclusive methods in this industry, it has prioritized the accelerating growth of the shipbuilding and offshore structures industry among its paramount objectives. Among the existing facilities of this organization are shipbuilding installations in various cities, including Bandar Abbas, Bandar Khorramshahr, and Bandar Anzali; large workshops and assembly halls; extensive storage complexes; suitable docks and anchorages; 350-ton cranes and a 2000-ton Syncrolift. It also possesses the capabilities for constructing various types of vessels and offshore structures, alongside appropriate facilities for the fundamental repair of vessels in floating docks and dry docks capable of accommodating and berthing large ships weighing up to 5000 tons. The design and construction of various high-speed, multi-purpose, rocket-launcher vessels, as well as combat and missile-launcher corvettes, the Zolfaqar torpedo boat, destroyers, hovercraft, and flying boats, along with the marine cruise system, floating docks, submarines, 10,000-ton barges, various landing craft, and offshore structures, represent examples of the activities undertaken by the maritime industries of the Ministry of Defense of the Islamic Republic of Iran in recent years (Rouzbeh & Kheirandish, 2017).

(4) The Principle of Quality Superiority:

Hypothesis: Military forces will perform optimally when they possess qualitative superiority over their most potent adversaries in terms of personnel, weaponry, equipment, and supplies.

Combat readiness necessitates the presence of qualified technical personnel and cost-effective technological equipment, as detailed below (Collins, 2004: 151):
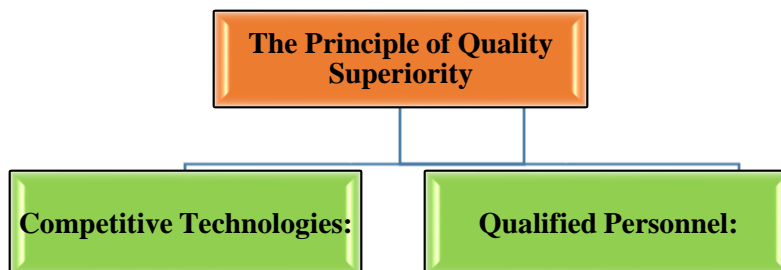

Figure (1): Components of the Principle of Qualitative Superiority from the Principles of Military Readiness.

Should the endeavor to attract and retain a cadre of thoroughly disciplined personnel, capable of absorbing the requisite military tutelage, fall short of success, the inevitable consequence is a precipitous degradation of military readiness. Consequently, the concerted effort to preserve individuals demonstrably endowed with competence, extensive experience, creative ingenuity, and a forward-looking perspective assumes a high priority. In this vein, the retention, assignment, and deployment of permanent armed forces personnel subsequent to their completion of extended specialized training courses demand rigorous, perhaps even critical, re-evaluation by commanders, chiefs, and managers.

Competitive Technolodies

The deployment of weaponry and equipment, simple yet possessing high quality, inherently facilitates the training process, simultaneously augmenting the capacity for resilience in wartime conditions. Such technological assets empower armed forces to achieve designated objectives with accelerated speed and a lower casualty rate than conventionally anticipated. Accordingly, robust research and development organizations constitute a fundamental prerequisite for this strategic endeavor. The clandestine subterranean missile and drone installations of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces can be cited as a salient instance of competitive technologies, particularly in light of the specific threats endemic to the tumultuous West Asian region. Owing to the indigenous development and production of these drone and missile systems—a process distinguished by their exceptionally low manufacturing costs relative to rivals and the comparative ease with which this technology can be transferred to aligned nations—a dual strategic outcome is realized. This not only elevates military power but, crucially, enhances the Islamic Republic of Iran's deterrent capabilities.

5) The Principle of Complementarity: Standing Forces, Popular Militias, and Reserves

Hypothesis: Military efficacy is optimally achieved when the integrated composition of standing forces, popular militias, and reserve units collectively maximizes combat power while simultaneously minimizing the inherent vulnerabilities of their disparate components. Standing forces and reserve elements are, by their very nature, profoundly complementary. Certain states, such as Switzerland,

predominantly rely upon reserve forces. However, an undue emphasis on any single capability inevitably leads to the profligate expenditure of resources and a demonstrable weakening of combat readiness. Furthermore, when reserve forces are tasked with missions for which standing forces are demonstrably better suited, or vice versa, the degradation of combat readiness is further exacerbated (Collins, 1383: 151). A compelling historical illustration of this dynamic can be observed in the initial year of the Holy Defense (Iran-Iraq War). The strategic approach, characterized by the deliberate non-utilization of the mobilization potential of popular forces and militias, resulted in four distinct operational failures. Yet, with a pivotal shift in strategy and the subsequent optimal, indeed holy, integration of standing and popular forces in the second year of the Holy Defense, a series of successful operations—including Samen-ol-A'emmeh, Fath-ol-Mobin, Tariq-ol-Quds, and Beit-ol-Moqaddas—were executed. The direct consequence of these integrated efforts was the liberation of countless square kilometers of occupied territory within the Islamic Republic of Iran, the capture of substantial quantities of Iraqi equipment and materiel, and the large-scale apprehension of Iraqi personnel (Valivand Zamani et al., 1400).

6. The Principle of Compatibility:

Hypothesis: Military forces achieve optimal performance when meticulously prepared for participation in both joint and combined operations (Collins, 2004: 152).

Land, naval, air, space, and cyber forces must seamlessly collaborate with one another and with the forces of allied nations. Consequently, doctrines, policies, strategies, and tactics—whether single-service, joint, or combined—are an absolute imperative. A joint operation is precisely defined as an undertaking conducted by the principal elements of two or more armed services (e.g., ground, air, naval, and air defense) belonging to a single nation. Conversely, a combined operation involves the primary components of the armed forces of two or more nations, with the scale of these forces potentially varying significantly (Pourshab et al., 1383 [2004]: 9). Should armaments and munitions, such as artillery projectiles, air-to-ground missiles, and similar ordnance, be exclusively usable by a single branch of the armed forces, the expenditures associated with research, development, procurement, and general logistics would demonstrably

escalate. Furthermore, when the forces of a particular nation prove incapable of facile internal communication, their capacity to establish effective liaison with the forces of allied states is markedly diminished, a condition that inevitably gives rise to perilous operational challenges. The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and their allies within the Axis of Resistance, by virtue of their existing cooperation and synergy, have forged an optimal operational paradigm aimed at enhancing the military readiness and deterrent posture of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The recurrent staging of combined naval exercises with nations such as Russia and China exemplifies this coordination, undertaken precisely to augment collective deterrent capabilities.

7) The Principle of Facilities

Hypothesis: Military forces attain peak operational performance when diverse facilities effectively facilitate both training regimens and logistical support. Military forces intrinsically require robust domestic bases, serving as the essential loci for adequately preparing themselves for the execution of assigned missions. Furthermore, regardless of their deployment location, these forces necessitate access to comprehensive supply depots and maintenance facilities. States assuming regional or global responsibilities, by extension, require analogous extraterritorial facilities (Collins, 1383 [2004]: 152-153).

8) The Principle of Foresight

Hypothesis: Military forces will attain optimal performance contingent upon the decision-makers' meticulous consideration of both present circumstances and future contingencies.

Far-sighted national security strategists, whose fundamental mandate involves preparing forces for indeterminate future eventualities, endeavor to discern underlying truths from the complex interplay of event chains, recurring patterns, evolving trends, intelligence assessments, threat evaluations, and simulated war games. The enduring challenge lies in simultaneously preserving strategic, tactical, and technological superiority, preventing material attrition, and judiciously revising war reserve stockpiles without imperiling current readiness (Collins, 1383 [2004]: 153).

The Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Imam Khamenei (May God extend his high shadow), articulates a statement concerning having foresight in military design: "Military planners must premise, design,

and prepare their combat doctrine on the very probability of engagement with the United States. The initial prerequisite for formulating a combat plan commensurate with these novel conditions is, however, the unwavering conviction that such a plan is indeed achievable. Have the precise missions been delineated? Has it been explicitly determined which force component bears responsibility for the defense of specific national sectors, or within which defensive echelon it is positioned? How is combat to be waged? How is this mission to be executed? Have the forces' missions been calibrated to the evolving nature of the adversary and the changing contours of the threat? Are the forces merely to engage in conflict employing antiquated methodologies, or is there an intention to innovate and devise new stratagems?"

9) The Principle of Resource Sufficiency:

Hypothesis: Military forces will achieve optimal performance when the allocation of resources robustly empowers them to effectively execute comprehensive military strategies.

Military readiness, particularly in the absence of mandatory conscription, represents an inherently costly undertaking. When an irrationally low force posture and insufficient budgetary allocations create profound gaps between stated objectives and available means, the very "resilience and readiness" of the military apparatus will inevitably decline. Indeed, any nation harboring ambitions or pursuing policies that defy successful execution with extant capabilities will, at best, forfeit its influence due to widespread public apprehension and, at worst, suffer defeat in conflict (Collins, 1383 [2004]: 153). In confronting the perceived threats from the United States and the Zionist regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran might define its potential theater of conflict to encompass its entire national territory, the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, and a segment of the Indian Ocean, as well as portions of Afghanistan and Pakistan housing American bases, the Caspian Sea, and the territories of the Zionist regime and Lebanon. The appropriate scale of a nation's power dictates the specific armaments and capabilities required for self-defense. Consequently, the development of a missile with a 5,000-kilometer range cannot rationally be integrated into the strategic doctrine of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces, as its operational reach would exceed the boundaries of Iran's theater of operations. Notwithstanding this, prudent resource

allocators are acutely aware that the superfluous augmentation of military budgets can, rather than bolstering national security, serve to undermine it. The United States of America, having demonstrably failed to grasp this self-evident truth, concluded its protracted (20-year) military engagement in Afghanistan on August 30, 2021, after incurring 240,000 fatalities and expending over $2 trillion—a definitive end to the conflict that spanned from 2001 to 2021 (Aghamohammadi et al., 1400 [2021]).

10) The Principle of Morale and Spirituality

Hypothesis:

Military forces will achieve optimal performance when imbued with a profound sense of spirituality (faith in God) and high morale (Afshordi, 1402 [2023]).

Individuals imbued with profound faith in God do not engage in conflict solely for economic or political incentives; rather, the person of faith inherently subordinates material motivations to divine imperatives (Lezgi et al., 1399 [2020]). In this precise context, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Imam Khamenei (May God extend his high shadow), addressing the Martyrs' Cemetery in Hoveyzeh on March 11, 1997, profoundly articulated: "In the nascent stages of the war, these plains were overrun by invading forces. This entire pure, oppressed, and blood-soaked land lay beneath the boots of the aggressors, and our armed forces and military organizations exerted every conceivable effort to repel and suppress the enemy. Yet, these young men confronted the adversary with bare hands. Here, in these very plains, thousands of enemy tanks and armored personnel carriers were entrenched. That diminutive cohort advanced to face this seemingly formidable host, driven by an unshakeable faith in God and profound reliance upon Him. Just as Hussein ibn Ali, peace be upon him, stood against an ocean of adversaries with a meager company, his heart remained steadfast, his resolve unbroken, and no doubt penetrated his spirit. These young men were, unequivocally, of that very caliber. It was here that I inquired of Martyr Alamolhoda: 'What armaments and equipment do you possess, that you proceed with such resolve to combat the enemy?' I observed that their hearts were so fortified by the illumination of faith and trust in God that they harbored no apprehension regarding their material scarcity. They advanced and fought. They sought Jihad (holy struggle) in the path of God and

embraced martyrdom in this cause, for they knew they stood with truth. Our martyrs, across every sector of this immense front, waged war with this identical spirit and faith. These compelling spectacles of combatant youth offer a profound lesson—a monumental lesson for the Iranian nation today, and for all of history. In the Revolution itself, we entered the arena with empty hands, yet with hearts overflowing with faith and devotion, we contended with an enemy armed to the teeth and emerged victorious. Undeniably, struggle entails hardship, but truth will ultimately prevail over falsehood."

11) The Principle of Command and Leadership

Hypothesis: Military forces will achieve optimal performance when they benefit from spiritual command and leadership (Afshordi, 1402 [2023]).

A close examination of Imam Khomeini's (RA) approach to war management, particularly during its initial years, reveals a compelling model for navigating political crises. This paradigm, given its unique characteristics, possesses its own specific intricacies and complexities. From this model, a wealth of lessons and insights can be derived for confronting potential future crises. Contrary to the perception held by some who view the Imam's management style as merely individualistic or solely through direct interaction with the populace, he simultaneously and continuously made optimal use of systemic management, and it was fundamentally through this method that he directed the war. The imposed war was an unpredictable and inherently tension-generating event. The significance of this crisis was further magnified by its occurrence during the nascent stages of the revolution, thus creating a "crisis within a crisis" scenario. In this regard, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Imam Khamenei (May his shadow extend), stated on September 21, 2020: "Indeed, our imposed war and Holy Defense commenced. It is precisely here that one discerns the profoundly sensitive and astonishing role of the great Imam's leadership and command. In such circumstances, the Imam was able to initiate the war and subsequently sustain this movement under his vigilant oversight and resolute will, managing it throughout. Some deny or express astonishment that an elderly cleric, a man in his eighties, could possibly administer the armed forces in a war. They imagine that the Imam's wartime management and command entailed, for instance, his presence at forward tactical headquarters, redeploying units, or

dispatching brigades hither and thither. The issue was not that; the Imam's approach encompassed several other crucial elements. Firstly, and most importantly, the Imam's great achievement was his immediate recognition of the true scale of this conflict from the outset. He comprehended from the very beginning the meaning of this war. Secondly, the Imam made a fundamental and vital assessment: that this critical issue could only be resolved by the Iranian nation itself. Following this was his unparalleled decisiveness, that extraordinary resolve; the Imam's leadership, his guidance, and his command enabled the accomplishment of seemingly impossible tasks—tasks that, in the truest sense of the word, appeared unfeasible."

12) The Principle of National Cohesion and Unity in Conflict

Hypothesis: When national cohesion and unity prevail within a state, comprehensive support for the armed forces will be engendered, under which conditions the armed forces will attain optimal performance (Afshordi, 1402 [2023]).

The Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Imam Khamenei (May his shadow extend), during a meeting with a group of commanders from the Air Force and Air Defense of the Army on February 8, 2023, articulated: "...One of our crucial contemporary requirements is national unity and cohesion. National unity serves as a formidable bulwark; it is a towering and unyielding rampart against the adversary. National unity is precisely that element which has played an immense role in the triumph and advancement of the Revolution..." National cohesion is defined as the solidarity among all strata of a nation's populace, encompassing individuals, factions, parties, and intellectual groups, as well as politicians and officials who eschew all forms of internal strife, discord, and hypocrisy, thereby precluding enemy infiltration into their borders, even if these various groups may hold divergent ideological or religious beliefs, or differing intellectual orientations. The paramount principle within national cohesion is resistance against vulnerability. The following strategies can effectively contribute to the preservation and enhancement of solidarity, cohesion, and national unity through the mobilization of internal capacities in confronting adversaries (Zarifmanesh et al., 1402 [2023]):

- (1) Paying attention to the structural factors building national cohesion and unity, including: balanced development and distribution, development and strengthening of comprehensive

national defense, ensuring social security for ethnic groups, and increasing the level of public trust.

- (2)   Paying Attention to the value-based and identity-related factors building national cohesion and unity, including: attention to ontological identity (religious), attention to sociological identity (national), constructing a comprehensive value discourse, attention to anthropological or ethnic identity, attention to collective identity, and the production and reproduction of cultural and ethical needs.

- (3) Enhancing Islamic-Iranian identity, including: commitment to national and religious symbolic manifestations, commitment to national interests, and upgrading the strategic capacity of the Persian language (Zarifmanesh et al., 2023).

13) The Imperative of Creativity and Innovation

Hypothesis: Military forces, when imbued with a profound capacity for creativity and innovation, are demonstrably capable of achieving optimal performance (Afshordi, 2023).

In the domain of defense and warfare, where an adversary is invariably present, full foreknowledge of their actions is neither consistently possible nor conceivable. Consequently, an appropriate engagement with the enemy perpetually necessitates creativity, initiative, and innovation. Creativity serves as the driving force of military sciences; such dynamic capacities, however, emerge only under the aegis of comprehensive decision-making authority, coupled with systematic organization and the continuous enhancement of specialization and skill within the armed forces. The most significant manifestation of creativity by the Islamic combatants during the Holy Defense was their capacity to impose their own strategies, tactics, and techniques—which constituted genuine creativity and innovation—upon the powerful strategies and doctrines of the enemy. This effectively disrupted fundamental military principles that had been bound by a set of dictated rules. Specific techniques included: altering the geographical environments of conflict, modifying tactical approaches, achieving surprise against the enemy in diverse operational settings, changing combat methodologies, strategically choosing the timing of battles, and compelling the adversary to continue fighting in areas not of their choosing. Furthermore, they utilized the geographical

capacities of various regions to offset their own vulnerabilities, diminish the enemy's strengths, and maximally exploit nocturnal operations for surprise and to reduce the effectiveness and precision of enemy weaponry. The development and construction of engineering equipment tailored to the geographical and operational environment, such as the Kowsar and Kheibar bridges enabling combat in the marshlands, or the construction of roads in the sandy areas of Bostan to facilitate flanking operations and access the enemy's rear during Operation Tariq al-Quds, along with the execution, design, and construction of floating bridges to cross the ostensibly impassable Arvand River (as perceived by the enemy)—all these represent forms of initiative and creativity within the Holy Defense, realized through divine grace and the spiritual support of Imam Khomeini (Rouzbeh & Kheirandish, 2017).

14) The Principle of Flexibility

Hypothesis

Military forces, when characterized by flexibility, will achieve optimal performance (Afshordi, 2023).

Military forces must be both prepared and flexible. Commanders who rely exclusively on a singular plan expose themselves to acute vulnerabilities; for if adversaries succeed in neutralizing that sole plan, no alternative recourse remains for mission execution. Swift movement, rapid redeployment of forces and equipment, and the maintenance of appropriate, mobile reserves exemplify the principle of flexibility within armed forces. During the eight-year Holy Defense, the armed forces perceptively grasped emerging requirements. Based on this understanding, they adapted themselves through structural and managerial flexibility, enabling a responsive addressing of contemporary needs. Dynamic and swift adaptability characterized the engineering capabilities of the armed forces during the Holy Defense. The simultaneous or near-simultaneous execution of three distinct missions—preparation, combat engineering, and combat support engineering—within operations, coupled with the acquisition of flexible capabilities commensurate with the diverse combat environments across various operational zones, ultimately conferred a decisive advantage upon the Islamic combatants against the enemy's superior capabilities (Aghamohammadi et al., 2021).

15) The Principle of Seriousness and Certainty of the Threat Hypothesis:

Military forces, when perceiving the seriousness and certainty of a threat based on threat assessments, will prepare their personnel, weaponry, equipment, and logistics to confront the adversary, under which conditions these armed forces will achieve optimal performance (Afshordi, 2023).

The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Imam Khamenei (May his shadow extend), states: "One must not avert one's gaze from the enemy's movements; constant vigilance over the enemy's actions is imperative. A crucial component of the armed forces comprises the intelligence sectors and intelligence awareness. One must never lose sight of the enemy's movements. Constant vigilance over the enemy's plans, schemes, and actions is perpetually necessary" (Graduation Ceremony of Islamic Republic of Iran Army (AJA) Students of Officers' Academies, 2019/10/30).

Among the key indicators of a threat are "intensity, priority, timing, duration, and geographical scale." In the analysis of threat factors, meticulous attention must be paid to "the motive of the threat, the context of the threat, the objective of the threat, the type of threat, the instruments of the threat, the mechanism of the threat, the timing of the threat, the probability of threat occurrence, the probability of threat success, the will behind the threat, the tolerance for the threat, and the management of the threat." It is imperative to consider these points, and based on the threat assessment, priorities must be determined, military exercises defined, and force deployments, among other actions, should likewise be executed according to the threat assessment. Generally, the effective factors in discerning the seriousness of a threat are:

- The clear identification of the threat's identity;
- The imminence of the threat, both in terms of time and location;
- The probability and intensity of the threat's occurrence;
- The extent of the threat's operational scope and its potential consequences after subsiding;
- The historical circumstances and conditions that lead to the amplification or attenuation of the threat.

The most perilous capabilities conceivable for an adversary only transmute into a serious threat when that adversary harbors the intention to utilize these capabilities (Pourshasb et al., 2023).

16) The Principle of Intelligence Dominance

Hypothesis: Military forces, when possessing intelligence dominance over the adversary, will achieve optimal performance (Afshordi, 2023).

Intelligence dominance is posited as a fundamental and primary prerequisite for sustainable security. "Intelligence dominance refers to all the efforts and actions by which an intelligence system gains complete oversight and control over past, present, and future events and developments in its surroundings. This is done to prevent, repel, and counter potential threats and vulnerabilities, thereby providing essential information for decision-makers." In essence, intelligence dominance entails the generation of opportunity and timely action to achieve triumph across diverse political, military, economic, and cultural arenas, alongside reducing vulnerability to various forms of threats. The distinct levels of intelligence dominance encompass three tiers: the strategic and international level, the regional level, and the national level. A deficit in strategic intelligence inflicts irreparable damage upon the vital interests of a government. Regarding the necessity and imperative of intelligence dominance at the regional level, it is essential to possess a superior level of intelligence concerning surrounding and neighboring states. This intelligence dominance empowers political leaders and military commanders to adopt policies of confrontation, engagement, or competition with respect to those states, enabling them to implement principled and sound positions in their decisions. Pertaining to the imperatives of intelligence dominance at the national level, the government and state must possess a thorough awareness of their national power resources and factors. These resources include military, political, and economic capacities, levels of technology, and educated and efficient human resources for the management of the nation and its populace, among many other subjects. The most salient characteristics of intelligence are: (1) accuracy; (2) relevance; (3) timeliness; and (4) accessibility (BoulHassani et al., 2023).

Research Methodology

Given that applied research seeks to achieve principles and rules applicable in real-world, practical situations to enhance the efficiency of executive methods, and considering that this research aims to explain the principles of military readiness and their impact on the performance of armed forces, this study is thus classified as applied research. The required data for this research are qualitative, hence the research approach is qualitative. The researchers analyzed the qualitative data using document review and interviews with relevant methods. In this regard, the data collection tools included library research, reference to documents, field methods, and interviews with 10 experts and specialists related to the research topic. These interviews were conducted using a judgmental sampling method, comprising 5 Army generals and 5 IRGC commanders. The results of these interviews were analyzed using MAX.QDA qualitative analysis software, and the findings were presented to achieve the article's objective.

A. **Validity of Interviews and Documents:**

Initially, after each interview, primary codes were extracted in the open coding phase using MAX.QDA software. Subsequently, the interview questions were presented to the next interviewee, and their responses were analyzed again. This process continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. In other words, in this research, interviews with experts proceeded until the researcher encountered data that was repetitive and similar opinions were being received. The use of valid documents and evidence in the research domain, which would lead the researcher to the study's objectives, was crucial. For this purpose, existing documents in libraries and research centers, along with all books and articles compiled on the research topic, were utilized.

B. **Reliability of Interviews and Documents**

The reliability of the interviews was established by increasing the number of interviewees to 10. After achieving theoretical saturation, several additional interviews were conducted with experts to confirm this saturation. Furthermore, this research utilized valid and up-to-date documents and evidence pertinent to the research topic.

Data Analysis and Research Findings

The transcribed text from theoretical foundations and interviews was analyzed using structural analysis and communicative analysis techniques, employing MAX-QDA software. The results of the interview analysis are as follows:

First Stage

Following the review of theoretical foundations and after each interview, initial codes were extracted during the open coding phase using the aforementioned software. This process continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. In other words, in this research, interviews with experts were conducted until the researcher encountered data that was repetitive and similar opinions were being received. Nevertheless, even after theoretical saturation was reached, several additional interviews were carried out with experts to confirm this saturation.

Second Stage

The initial codes extracted from the theoretical review and from the start of interviews until theoretical saturation was reached include: principles, military readiness, operational scope, regional characteristics, quantitative self-sufficiency, qualitative superiority, complementarity of standing and popular forces and reserves, adaptability, facilities, foresight, resource adequacy, morale and spirituality, command and leadership, national cohesion and unity, creativity and innovation, flexibility, seriousness and certainty of threat, and intelligence dominance, along with their relative sub-components.

Third Stage

In this stage, the initial codes that shared a common nature and could be grouped together based on their semantic relationship were designated as main categories.

Fourth Stage

In this stage, following the final analysis, the links and relationships—derived from the influential variables of the research—were identified and explained. In other words, the identification and explanation of these factors serve to provide answers to the research questions.

Considering the aforementioned points, the theoretical foundations of the research, the qualitative data analysis, and the resulting findings, 16 principles were identified in response to the main research question:

"What are the principles of military readiness and their impact on the performance of armed forces?"

Given that all nations relentlessly pursue their national interests and endeavor to achieve their national objectives, they will inevitably encounter conflicts and clashes, both physical and theoretical, with other countries in securing these aims. To prevail in these battles, whether physical or theoretical, it is imperative to cultivate the necessary readiness within the elements of their national power, among which military power, and consequently the principles of military readiness, stand paramount.

The analysis of the research data and findings indicates that the principles of military readiness—including: the principle of operational scope, the principle of regional characteristics, the principle of quantitative self-sufficiency, the principle of qualitative superiority, the principle of complementarity of standing forces and popular/reserve forces, the principle of adaptability, the principle of infrastructure, the principle of foresight, the principle of resource adequacy, the principle of morale and spirituality, the principle of command and leadership, the principle of national cohesion and unity in war, the principle of creativity and innovation, the principle of flexibility, the principle of seriousness and certainty of threat, and the principle of intelligence dominance—are effective on the optimal quality of armed forces in the battlefield.

Levels of Human Resources	Principle of Operational Scope
Weapons, Equipment, and Logistics	Principle of Regional Characteristics
Qualified Personnel	Principle of Quantitative Self-Sufficiency
Competitive Technologies	Principle of Qualitative Superiority

Principles of Military Readiness

- Principle of Operational Scope
- Principle of Regional Characteristics
- Principle of Quantitative Self-Sufficiency
- Principle of Qualitative Superiority
- Principle of Complementarity of Reserve Forces
- Principle of Adaptability
- Principle of Facilities
- Principle of Foresight
- Principle of Resource Adequacy
- Principle of Morale and Spirituality
- Principle of Command and Leadership
- Principle of National Cohesion and Unity in War
- Principle of Creativity and Innovation
- Principle of Flexibility
- Principle of Seriousness and Certainty of Threat
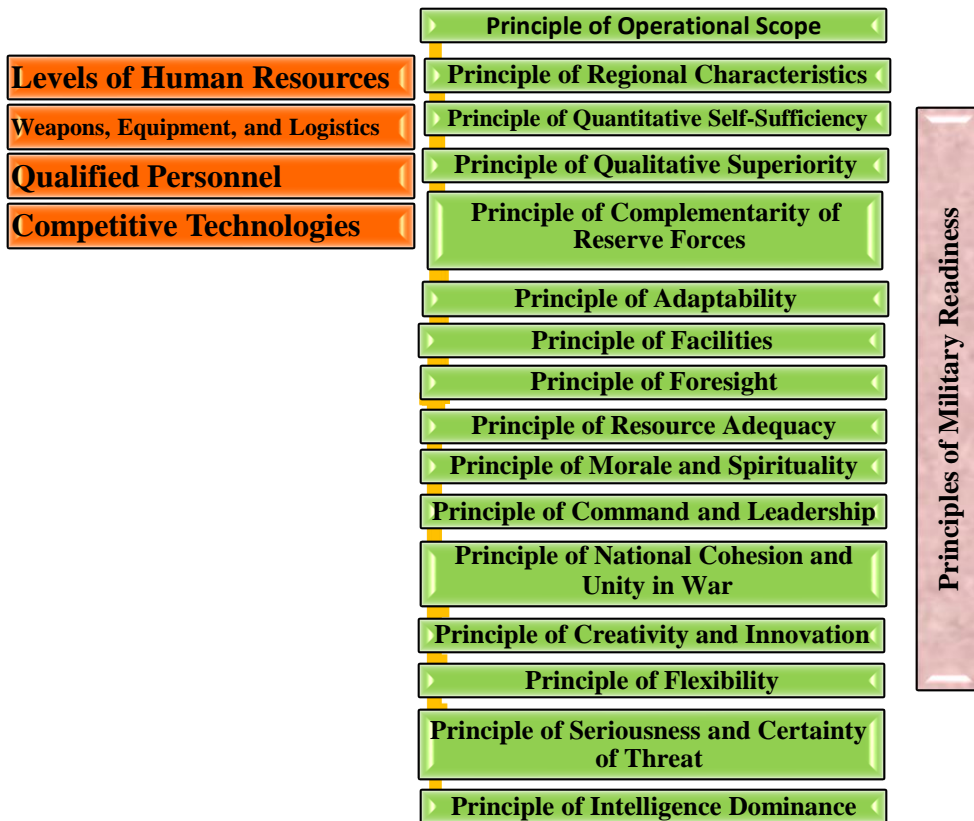- Principle of Intelligence Dominance

Figure (2): Principles of Military Readiness based on Research Findings

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Human societies have emerged from common needs, and it is conflict of interest that does inevitably lead to warfare among them. Therefore, military preparedness is a societal necessity, and its most accepted goal is the protection of individual and social material and spiritual interests. The objective of continuous military preparedness is to prevent aggression from both known and unknown adversaries

against the country's material and spiritual integrity. The forthcoming article aims to examine and analyze the principles of military preparedness to address the central question: What are the principles of military preparedness, and how do they impact the performance of the armed forces? This study is of applied type, the research methodology is descriptive-analytical and the research approach is of qualitative type. Data collection was conducted through both fieldwork and library research methods. The expert sample for interviews comprised 10 specialists with relevant expertise in the subject matter. The findings of the research indicate that the principles of military preparedness include: principle of operational scope, principle of regional characteristics, principle of quantitative self-sufficiency, principle of qualitative superiority, principle of complementarity between regular, popular, and reserve forces, principle of adaptability, principle of infrastructure, principle of foresight, principle of resource sufficiency, principle of morale and spirituality, principle of command and leadership, principle of national unity and cohesion in war, principle of creativity and innovation, principle of flexibility, principle of seriousness and certainty of threat, and principle of intelligence superiority. These principles impact the optimal quality of armed forces on the battlefield.

It is noteworthy that by examining and studying documents and library resources, along with the analysis presented in the content of this paper and the obtained results, the following points can be highlighted:

- Excellently formulated military strategies are only beneficial when military forces are properly organized, equipped, and trained for their implementation.

- Military readiness and resilience are two inseparable necessities; forces lacking resilience risk premature defeat, while simultaneously, forces that arrive too late to the battlefield are rendered useless.

- The principles of military readiness assist designers, planners, and budget setters in creating agile and efficient forces at a reasonable cost.

- Strategists who define objectives unattainable by existing force levels invariably compromise military readiness and implicitly accept severe calculated risks.

- Both excessively rapid and exceedingly slow operational tempos, if prolonged, impede continuous training and otherwise disrupt military readiness.

- Considerations for personnel readiness include: attitude, individual and collective morale, teamwork, and various other intangible factors, as well as education and training.

- Preventive maintenance, regular major maintenance, incremental improvements, and the timely replacement of aging military equipment all strengthen military readiness and the capacity for resistance.

- Future military readiness is fundamentally dependent on farsighted politicians and strategists who first determine which capabilities will be most beneficial in the next fifteen to twenty years, and subsequently develop flexible plans and implement them promptly.

Suggestions

Given the discussions presented and based on the research findings, the following suggestions are offered:

- The Deputy Directorates of Human Resources, Operations, and Intelligence & Security of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran should undertake necessary actions for planning, implementing, and actualizing these principles to enhance the comprehensive military readiness of the armed forces, considering the nation's increasing threats.

- The Deputy Directorates of Human Resources and Education & Training of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran should undertake necessary actions to manage human capital and revise and update the core content of training programs. This is aimed at developing human capital, military and scientific readiness, creativity and initiative, self-confidence, and accountability, all to enhance the comprehensive military readiness of the armed forces.

- The Ideological-Political Organizations of the Armed Forces of the I.R. Iran should undertake necessary actions to strengthen and foster the spiritual and moral growth of armed forces personnel, aiming to enhance their comprehensive readiness. The victories

in recent wars of the Resistance Front are indicative of the irreplaceable role of precisely this spirit of spiritual readiness.

- The principles of military readiness discussed in the present paper should be utilized in the planning and organization for combat in future wars.

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