



The 7th International Scientific Conference
**“DEFENSE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
IN THE 21st CENTURY”**
Braşov, November 15th 2012



**ADDRESSING THE NEED OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL IN
DEFENSE INDUSTRY: THE TURKISH CASE**

Ebru CAYMAZ*

Fahri ERENEL**

* Marmara University, Department of Organization and Management, Istanbul, Turkey

** Asst. Prof., (R) Brig. Gen. TU A, İstanbul Kemerburgaz University, Department of International Logistics, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract:

As it could clearly be seen in previous experiences and studies, having a sophisticated defense industry is essential in order to be ready against unconventional threats. However, it is a well known fact that all kinds of technology, products and services could be imitated in a considerably short span of time. Thus, the importance of qualified human resource gradually gains significance in terms of creating and maintaining strategic superiority in defense industry. The aim of this study is to call attention to the lack of academic publishing in Turkish literature and present both the current situation and necessary steps to be taken for the targeted HR success of the Defense Industry in Turkey, which holds 52% of self sufficiency at present. In order to present that, the legal implementation of the current personnel employment, training processes of Turkish Defense Industry and academic publishing related to this field have been examined. Obtained data is analyzed by using the methods of descriptive analysis, document and discourse analyses. In conclusion part, a training program is tried to be put forth to address the need of qualified personnel in defense sector.

Key words: HR Management in Defense Industry, HR in Turkish Defense Industry, Qualified Personnel, HR Management.

1. Introduction

In today's world, which has been transformed into a global market, investments on technology, research-development and marketing are not sufficient enough to create an authentic industrial difference for a long time [1]. These services could be imitated and/or bought from the rival companies [2]. All products, services or technologies are imitated in a very short span of time in our day. At this point, the significance of human resources emerges as a suggestive approach to create a unique and authentic difference [3]; [4]; [5].

Moreover, the meaning and the source of threat has changed dramatically and thus, providing absolute security of a nation has become a highly controversial question. As it could clearly be seen in previous experiences and studies, having a sophisticated defense industry is essential in order to be ready against unconventional threats [6]; [7]; [8]; [9]; [10]; [11]. Thus, the importance of qualified human resource gradually gains significance in terms

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of creating and maintaining strategic superiority in defense industry as well [12]; [13]; [14]; [15]; [16].

The aim of this study is to call attention to the lack of academic publishing in Turkish literature and present both the current situation and necessary steps to be taken for the targeted HR success of the Defense Industry in Turkey, which holds 52% of self-sufficiency at present [17].

2. The Importance of Human Resources (HR) Management in Defense Industry

It is a well known fact that personnel management has been transformed into human resources management in our day. In this process, employees are considered as strategic assets and for this reason human capital is positioned beyond the work [18]. Therefore, companies are required to retain qualified human capital in order to survive and create advantage. Current technological, economic and social developments lead companies to give more significance to human capital [19]; [20]. As a result, the position of employees has become highly important in terms of preparing more distinct action plans and keeping up with the globalization and information age [21].

Having a qualified human capital is also mentioned in detail within the most current strategic document of Undersecretariat for Turkish Defense Industry, 2012-2016 Strategic Plan. In this plan, employing qualified personnel, providing training and substructures to increase personnel performance and retaining that capital is explained as highly significant. Therefore, the need for an appropriate and applicable human resource management strategy has been arisen [22]. As it could clearly be seen in literature review, the issue of having qualified defense personnel has been dealt seriously by the authorities and supported by the strategic documents but how could these people become qualified and what kinds of trainings they are supposed to receive, still remain as unanswered questions.

3. The Importance of Training Qualified Defense Personnel And Current Implementations in Turkey

Although the global financial crisis and economic collapses experienced in 2008, increase in defense expenditures has continued. However, it is envisioned that the countries which experience serious budget deficit, would cut down on their defense expenditures. For instance; developed countries such as the U.S.A, England, France and Germany has decided to cut down on 30 % of their defense expenditures gradually by 2015. As defense resources are strictly controlled due to public pressure, planning and managing defense resources has become more complicated hence the employed personnel in this field are supposed to have an interdisciplinary training [23]; [17].

In literature review it is pointed out that, globally successful countries have high technology because their university education system is in line with their industry [24]. Consequently, Turkey has founded a number of technology development centers which are directly integrated into defense industry as well. In order to enhance cooperation between universities and defense industry, TUBITAK-MAM (Marmara Research Center), ODTU-BILTIR (Automation-Robotics-Electrical-Electronics Unit), MODSIM (Modeling and Simulation Research and Application Center), Defense Technologies Application and Research Center at Atilim University have been founded [25]. Besides, a master program in defense technology at Istanbul Technical University started to accept graduate students (iris.fbe.itu.edu.tr). However, the targeted success has not been achieved yet [26]; [10].

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In order to produce authentic national technology and dominate technological changes and transformations in defense industry, training of qualified personnel gains significance. In current strategic documents and journals this issue has been mentioned as “training of value driver human capital”[8]; [23], [27]; [28]; [6]. As both the literature and defense experts point out, restructuring an appropriate training program becomes highly significant.

4. Conclusion

In literature review, it is seen that the emphasis is mainly on developing new technologies in defense industry and the dimension of management sciences is generally disregarded in Turkey. Defense Industry and Technology Training Center Command is the leading training institution in Turkey but when its training programs are examined, it is seen that both quotas and training contents are limited. Besides, personnel, who becomes qualified enough to carry complicated executive tasks, may be sent on a different assignment so efficiency rate decreases in direct proportion to it.

In order to prevent that negative situation, based upon the legal strategic documents, a new training program, which is open to civilian student participation, is definitely needed in Turkey. This program should be integrated directly into the defense industry and supported by a legal implementation. Besides, its curriculum should pay extra attention to management sciences. According to current applications and defense expert opinions, the curriculum is tried to be put forth as below:

TERMS	LECTURES
1.Term	Introduction to Economics
	Security and Security Strategies
	Management and Organization
	Introduction to Information Technologies
	Communication Skills Training for Executives & Managers
	Financial Reporting and Analysis
	Managerial Finance and Economic Analysis
2.Term	Strategic Management
	Defense Economy
	Planning and Management of Defense Resources
	Statistics
	Operational Research
	Modeling and Analysis
	Supply Chain Management
	National Security Policy (Elective)
3.Term	Comparative Economic Systems
	Cost Management
	Defense Projects Management
	Contract Management
	International Law and Organizastions

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	Interpersonal Communication Management (Elective)
4. Term	Student Project

Table 1: Defense Resource Management Curriculum for Turkey

This program is constituted as a master program and includes four terms. Students are supposed to take theoretical lectures (and most of these lectures consist applied trainings as well) till the fourth term and they are supposed to prepare a term project at the end of this program. This term projec

It would be prepared according to the needs of defense industry and under the guidance of defense experts.

Furthermore, a shorter version of this training could be integrated into the training programs of the major defense companies and universities conducting researches in defense field. Also it could be extended and developed according to the defense needs. However, if this program is not supported by a legal implementation, the efficiency of the training would become questionable. Creating a research platform on which both civilian and defense experts would come together and giving importance to the outcomes of this platform is very important in terms of efficiency so providing cooperation among the institutions and utilizing concrete outcomes are the key terms for the training of qualified personnel and thus enhancing defense industry in a successful way.

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