



# The Study of the Trend of NCOs' Professional Military Education and Training

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**Abstract.** Noncommissioned officers are “the backbone of the army”. US Army’s stronger development cannot be separate with the high quality of NCOS. American NCOs developing trend study provides beneficial enlightenment for other countries NCO PEM system. Viewing from the development of US NCOs’ education and training, referring to its’ characters, the trend of US NCOs can be studied. Through the development of education and training, develop the future of NCO Corps. Especially with the rapid development, NCO common core competencies are the most important. Education and training are life-long career, the trend of education and training is the key point of NCO common core Competencies. US army are more focus on the close combination of military training and education, completing modernized training support system.

**Keywords:** Non-commissioned officers; Professional military education; Training; Trend

## 1 Introduction

Noncommissioned officers are “the backbone of the army”. US noncommissioned officers is a group that reflects America’s Army flourishing and represents the values that formed in history, which make the nation powerful—diligent, responsibility, selflessness, determination, honor and compassion. Developing noncommissioned officers (NCOs) is of great advantage for defending U.S. nation and developing U.S. Army. [1] NCOs conduct the mission and operations; they are the basic power for forces and without their devotions a unit will be a failure in achieving its targets. Successful NCO leaders have continually guarantee that what the soldiers want and desire in their unit are satisfied exactly. No matter what the duty location is and what occupational specialty is, or what is their job position, all NCOs must be taken as celebrities of the army, strong-mindedness, strong passion, a progressive vigilance, and a willingness by the military members to sacrifice their own lives for their country if necessary. NCOs can

realize their personal value by living the army core values, developing enduring leadership abilities to conduct the unit's tasks, while taking care of unit's personnel. [2]

NCOs are the backbone of the army in any force. Their duties in the force are to maintain good order and discipline, to carry up small group or technique work and to train soldiers to command single soldier technique. They are the direct monitor of force. NCOs' professional military education and training has been accomplishing with the world trend. For nearly 200 years building, NCOs' professional military education and training system has met the needs of wars with clear military character and with the character of openness and concreteness. Viewing from the development of NCOs' professional military education, it presents the innate close relationship between education and training, the distance minimization between officers and NCOs. The trend of strengthening the joint qualities of cultivation is more and more apparent. America's flourishing can not be separate with the high quality of NCOS. American NCOs developing trend study provides beneficial enlightenment for other countries NCO PEM system.

## **2 NCOs Development Strategy**

NCOs development is of great importance to any Army's development. Leadership members determines nearly all things that the Army involves. The accomplishment of the investment in NCOs can ensure the soldiers are ready when their country needs. The Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS) explores the approaches, ways and results to realize an Army of competent and committed NCOs of character with the skills and attributes necessary to meet challenges of the 21st century and future. With the rapid development of science, technology, and the new trend AI, especially the sharp change in operation form, the soldiers face more challenges that the science and technology take. How to meet the challenges that is essential to improve NCOs' potential learning ability. Forces should make education more adaptable to the change.

### **2.1 What NCOs Development is**

NCOs development is a process that combine training, education, and experience to a synthetic body, which prepare NCOs who are not just make preparation for the NCOs current occupation, but also accumulate abilities for their duties as well. The cultivation is a flexible, life-long, and advanced process, which cultivate soldiers as competent, committed, professional. The NCOs development can be achieved by the approach of mix of training, education, and experiences acquired through institutional area, operational area, and self-development part, supported by peer and development relationships.

### **2.2 The Qualities of NCOs**

NCOs are demanded to conduct tasks independently. NCOs development strategy pushes the Army to take part in frequent training and continuous education by referring

to technology and adapting training approaches to imitate real combat situation. Therefore, the NCOs must be:

Be able to show NCOs' common core competencies and able to face challenge in the Army they settle.

Be capable of performing operational tasks across the range of beyond military operation.

Be able to show NCOs abilities in the battle situation, with the ability to operate in JIIM environment.

Be able to be familiar with the socio-economic surroundings and be familiar with any culture, so as to carry mission in unfamiliar, unsure environment successfully.

Brave enough to seek and explore chances or opportunities in the tough, complicated combat situation.

Professionals who are grounded in Army Values and the warrior ethos. [3]

### **2.3 The Army's NCOs 2020 Strategy**

To be the leader of soldiers, to train the soldiers and to take care of soldiers and equipment has always been the roles and responsibilities for the NCOs while enforcing standards. Army must have outstanding NCOs as trusted professionals who devote in conflict, adapt, and to be success in a complex world. The Army's NCO 2020 Strategy is very important, which provides the approaches, means and results to cultivate a professional, well-trained, and well-prepared NCO corps. It can maintain the world's premier fighting force. 2020 Strategy is to promoting NCO abilities for the 21st century and to seek for more flexible with regard to when, where, and how Soldiers accept education. The desirable NCOs are as the follow:

Cultivate more adaptable, resilient NCOs for the Army;

Applying professional education, reasonable training, and expertise in education;

Educating and promoting challenge and extremely strict leader growth training, education and experiences;

Mattering learning responsibilities and demands across the three different learning areas (school, institution or academy, operational, and self-accomplishment) and mixing these factors into a synchronized, effective, and efficient development system;

Increasing NCOs professional military education models and learning courses so that Soldiers and leaders can agree the progress, or proposed revising, focus on the whole learning period, set foresights, and verify the behavior or performance to identify and advance NCOs' ability to work at operational and strategic grades;

Ensuring each level of force including NCOs are satisfied with development programs and performance policy;

Ensuring doctrine and programs fully support life-long learning environment and the total force. [4]

### **3 NCO Military Training and Education Trends**

Training has been being a part of American force, while education is not. American force has not focus on NCOs education until WWII. After WWII, NCO's affluence on the war became more important and the number increased sharply. Thus the NCO's cultivation attracted the force's attention. Since the trend of the development of NCO has changed. Based on the development strategy and the core competencies the new time NCO needs, the trend shows the following changes.

#### **3.1 Focus on the Close Combination of Military Training and Educational Objectives**

In America, for military training, it has two implications. One is the ability to conduct special military obligation and duty for a single person. The other is the ability to improve the combat readiness for a single person or multi military units. Military training and education are closely related, which are the two different concepts in the category of military training. Both military training and education belong to one whole part, just two different training forms, which are mutually affected.

American army has proposed "the combined assumption of 2020", which set the strategic goals of future combined force. It points out that Professional Military Education should develop important role during the transformation and development of forces. American army takes the advantage of the combination of education and training, academy and force. education and training, academy and force are mutually affected and can be improved through combination. In America many training bases has become the bridge link training and education.

In America, Military training and education are led by national defense secretary. Personnel and Combat Deputy ministers are in charge of this, whose deputy include examine training policy and training syllabus, supervise the training and exercise of Battle Command. American force carries out the ways of combination of training and education, academies and forces take each advantage to develop NCOs' ability of synthetic cultivation and combat ability. The increasing mix of military training and education becomes more and more apparent and achieved apparent effect.

The increasing mix show in the American army real combat simulation training base like Fort Irwin & the National Training Center (NTC). NTC is the most important practice simulation training base as well as the biggest training base for US Army.

As the biggest US Army training base, the main task of Fort Irwin is to carry out simulation combat training for the heavy brigade, battalion under high pressure operation environment and conduct synthetic training. Meanwhile, army also collects and analyzes the feedback information of training. The purposes are:

- Providing the first-hand information of improving Army training;
- Providing the first-hand information of improving Army operation theory;
- Providing the first-hand data of improving Army's education program;
- Providing the first-hand information of improving Army's equipment;
- Increasing the effect of combination of training and education.

US Army accumulated education experience from real combat in the anti-terrorist wars. From these experiences, they adjust their education program. Benefits are:

- Improve operation methods;
- Completing education program.

### **3.2 Focus on Completing Modernized Training Support System**

In order to provide complete arrangement and run the products well, serve to executors, detailed, considerable and enduring programs are listed, and US army also focus on the following five programs making. [5]

#### **3.2.1. The Sustainable Range Program**

The sustainable range program is the US Army's vital way to complete the strategy, supervision, function, and long-term support of ranges. This program includes two central programs. They are:

- The range of program.
- The training land program.

The targets of sustainable range program is to maximize the capability, availability, and accessibility of ranges and training lands to support doctrinally based operational and institutional training demands, mobilization, and the arrangement under different conditions.

#### **3.2.2. The Mission Command Training Support Program**

Mission command training support program afford a practicing environment in support of arms training including NCOs. Mission command training support program replicates joint, multinational, intergovernmental operations in contemporary operation fields, including worldwide regions. Campaign quality should be developed. Through generated training, joint and expeditionary mission command develop from training. [6]

#### **3.2.3. NCOs and Soldiers Training Support Program**

NCOs and Soldiers Training Support Program conclude individual NCO and Soldier through peer level and active TSC and TADSS, and electronic simulation training equipment. It also deals with TADSS titles and training parts and relative things, which can enable individual to operate the above TADSS and TSC.

#### **3.2.4. Combat Training Centre Modernization**

This program focus on the updating and life recycled of the maneuvers in support of Army reforms, renewing of old facilities and modernization. It provides equipment to present an imitating true training environment for Army basic combat trainings in simulating combat and imitating real situations.

### **3.2.5. Training Information Infrastructure Program**

This program provides the visible, invisible, and communications systems, in accordance with both Joint and Army architectures and standards that enable the progress, saving, retrieval, delivery, and management of training information for uses by personnel, small group, and institutions worldwide. This program includes two main parts:

- Training information system;
- Delivery system.

## **3.3 Focus on Cultivating the Common Core Competencies**

NCOs professional military education has undergone sharp reforms and experience from a new melting education and training combination way to apply and expand education ideas and doctrines. The change indicates the abilities that focus on NCOs' education which means the synthetic knowledge to improve their technical skills. In addition, it would be adjusted in accordance with the time and situation change.

US NCOs use every daily training chance to make assessment and increase their ability level to guide soldiers' education and training. They take the chance to study and accumulate experiences in the leader competencies. [7] They also look for new learning platforms, think a lot, seek solutions, explore training methods, and seek performance analyses. The lifelong learning habits can ensure the NCO leaders remain outstanding as a progressive NCO.

The learning areas proposed in 2019 are:

- Leaders and professional area;
- Task Command;
- Operation;
- Training referring to general learning outcomes.

The leadership and army profession's desired outcomes are to accomplish the mission and improve organizations. [8]

Mission command's desired outcomes are to conduct tasks to acknowledge and monitor army organizations.

Operation's desired outcome is to conduct operations to accomplish the mission.

Training's desired outcome is to train to improve army readiness.

The Army's education is a lifelong, advanced, and meditative process forming professional military education and the noncommissioned officer professional education develop system. Education not only support adult learners, assisted by military personnel with the latest operational facts. [9] NCOs common core competencies serve to strengthen the army learning areas considering the aspect of current rank and skill degree. The NCO C3 together with ALA present the education outline required to enforce NCOs professional military education and training to 2030 and far more. The frame elements of NCO common core competencies subject areas are as follow:

- Preparation;
- Leaders;
- Training arrangement;
- Communication;
- Conflicts;

Program arrangement.

The above six aspects planed in NCO Professional Military Education are common to all NCOs neglecting military's occupation, rank, or occupation. The elements of NCO common core competencies subject areas are very important in their career.

## 4 Conclusions

The complicity of current society and future battle fields place tremendous cognitive requirements on army professional military education and training. NCOs needed demands a greater width and proficiency of knowledge, techniques and skills. The superior teaching quality is a key driver to achieve excellence. [10] NCOs must be flexible, and consider overalls and situational about the real nature of troubles and have a valuable cognitive knowledge of a definite environment and be familiar with some certain culture, language, technique, flexible ideas that influence battles. NCOs must be able to think fully, critically, develop alternative solutions to complex and complicated issues, and make decision with wisdom, strategy and huge information. In the future, the increasing rate of science and technique change, NCOs need learn, train and grow continuously as life-long learners. The successful education and training of NCOs determine how the army develops.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## Author contributions

L.H. conceived the idea of the study. X.Z. analyzed materials and wrote the paper. J.S. analyzed materials and wrote the paper.

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