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20 Educating the Professional Military:  
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22 Civil-Military Relations and Professional Military Education in India  
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33 **Abstract:** This article analyses the ways in which civil-military relations shape professional military education.  
34 Its main argument is that military education benefits from a civil-military partnership. In doing so the article  
35 examines the role of civil-military relations in shaping professional military education in India. While  
36 describing the evolution of military education in India, it analyses its weaknesses and argues that this is  
37 primarily due to its model of civil-military relations, with a limited role for civilians. Theoretically, this  
38 argument challenges Samuel Huntington's notion of 'objective control'—which envisaged a strict separation  
39 between the civil and military domains. Conceptually this paper argues for a greater dialogue on military  
40 education among civilians, both policy makers and academics, and military officers and not to leave it to the  
41 military's domain—as is currently the practice in most countries.  
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7 What role, if any, should civilians play in shaping professional military education (PME)?

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9 This paper engages with this topic and argues that civilian intervention and a civil-military  
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11 partnership is crucial to the development of PME. In doing so the paper examines the role of  
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13 civil-military relations in shaping PME in India. This is a topical issue with an ongoing  
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15 debate generated by the imminent establishment of an Indian National Defence University  
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17 (INDU). India's experience and the broader conceptual arguments about PME should  
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19 therefore be instructive for countries which are at various stages of establishing defence  
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21 universities and anticipates a growing trend of ties between civilian universities and military  
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23 educational institutions (Libel, 2016). In addition, as one of the few post-colonial  
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25 democracies with firm civilian control India offers insights to countries struggling with, or  
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27 recovering from, praetorian rule. PME has also fetched attention in democratizing countries  
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29 due to its ability to embed democratic norms—and is considered a core subfield of security  
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31 sector reforms. Insights from this paper therefore apply for PME in other countries—both  
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33 developed and developing.

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35 The main conceptual argument put forward in this paper is that effective PME  
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37 requires *informed and well-intentioned* civilian intervention arising from a civil-military  
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39 partnership. Effective PME, as discussed later, refers to a system that is geared towards  
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41 education and not training and intellectually prepares military officers to deal with future  
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43 uncertainty. 'Informed' civilian intervention is meant to emphasize that civilians need to  
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45 know about the purpose and system of military education. Such knowledge comes from  
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47 partnering with the military. The term 'well-intentioned' is used to differentiate instances of  
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49 civilian intervention that is motivated by either enhancing military effectiveness or for  
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51 building better coherence between military means and political purposes. As discussed later,  
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53 such types of interventions have occurred in countries like the U.S. and in U.K., among  
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55 others. At the same time, the paper cautions against the dangers of parochial or ideologically  
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7 motivated civilian intervention which can hurt military professionalism.

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9 The argument that civilians should help shape military education has important  
10 implications for the theory of civil-military relations. It challenges Samuel Huntington's  
11 notion of 'objective control' which assumed that military autonomy maximizes its  
12 effectiveness. Instead, military autonomy in PME may not be desired as the military is more  
13 likely to focus on training instead of education. In this regard, Janowitz's (1960, pp. 428-429)  
14 ideas turned out to be more prescient when while observing that "most military schools  
15 remain service oriented" he called for a more broad based approach to military education.  
16 Such a sentiment of 'broadening military education' is supported by more recent scholarship  
17 (Warren, 2015).  
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26 There are two main arguments emerging from this study of PME in India. First,  
27 civilians have had almost no role in shaping it—either as policymakers or professional  
28 educators. To be sure, the Ministry of Defence, almost exclusively staffed by civilians, has  
29 some financial controls as their approval is required for creating a new facility, like setting up  
30 a war college, or for additional budgetary outlays. However, civilians have not used their  
31 powers to shape the content or process of military education. Second, as PME has been left  
32 almost entirely to the services, the military has tended to focus more towards training and  
33 operations and not on education. This omits the kind of broad-based education needed by  
34 senior military leaders at the strategic level of warfare (Warren, 2015).  
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43 At the outset it is important to differentiate between military education and training—  
44 a nuance missed by most (Johnson-Freese, 2012, pp. 136-138). The U.S. Joint Staff defines  
45 education as learning which focuses on "the cognitive domain and fosters breadth of view,  
46 diverse perspectives, critical analysis, abstract reasoning, comfort with ambiguity and  
47 uncertainty, and innovative thinking, particularly with respect to complex, non-linear  
48 problems" (U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2009, p. A-1 and A-2). Training, on  
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7 the other hand, focuses on technical skills “designed to deliver discrete, well-defined  
8 knowledge and skill sets essential to performance of specific tasks/jobs” (U.S. Chairman of  
9 the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2009, p. C-3). To illustrate, education would instruct a commander  
10 to handle organizational change, strategy and policy whereas training would impart the  
11 necessary technical skills to effectively operate hardware. According to oft repeated  
12 colloquialism, ‘one trains for certainty whereas education is for handling uncertainty.’ This  
13 paper examines military education, not training. Admittedly, differentiating training from  
14 education is easier said than done—and there is a “cognitive tension or dissonance” between  
15 the two (Gleiman and Zacharakis, 2016, Metz, 2013). However, focusing on the curricular  
16 content and the qualifications of the faculty, civilian and military, provides some insights into  
17 whether the focus is on training or education. This is the approach taken in this paper.  
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28 The paper begins by examining the characteristics that constitute an effective system  
29 for PME. Next it explains the conceptual rationale, based on Clausewitz, for civilian  
30 intervention and involvement in military education. Thereafter it examines civilian  
31 motivation for intervening in military education and discusses case studies including the U.S.  
32 and U.K. The following section describes the evolution of PME in India. Next, it analyses  
33 weaknesses in its system of PME. The penultimate section cautions against the danger of ill-  
34 advised or ill-motivated civilian intervention. The conclusion lists some of the larger  
35 implications of this paper and identifies avenues for future research. It is important to note  
36 that at junior officer levels it is appropriate for PME to focus on tactical competence and for  
37 the balance between education and training to shift toward the latter. The arguments in this  
38 paper therefore apply mainly, but not exclusively, for education at war colleges. The  
39 methodology consists of primary interviews combined with secondary research and has  
40 gained from access to less widely circulated documents on PME in India.  
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### Designing an Effective System for Professional Military Education

How can we differentiate between an effective and weak program of PME? First is the provision for civilian faculty. It is essential that civilian faculty function as core members for the provision of PME. Only then can military officers potentially get a well-rounded education. It is more likely that civilian faculty would be able to challenge prevailing organizational narratives and instill the habits of critical thinking and intellectual curiosity in their students. Without this provision the faculty would usually consist of military officers' most likely serving on a rotational basis. This is problematic for a number of reasons. Military officers are essential for teaching subjects related to military operations however they are rarely in a position to teach non-military subjects. As a result the curricula, the importance of which is discussed later, would probably lean more towards training than education. In addition, it would be difficult for a serving officer in the faculty to challenge organizational myths and narratives and therefore even harder to instill critical thinking skills in their students.

The second important characteristic of a strong PME relates to curricula development. Simply put, PME should focus on subjects that instill critical thinking skills—a commonly cited goal (Barno, et al. 2013, Wilton Park 2013). This is easier said than done. Perhaps the only way to do so is to broaden the horizon of the military and inform them about larger political, social, organisational and economic considerations (Rapp, 2015). PME should therefore be focused more towards statecraft, diplomacy, international relations, domestic and international law and organizational theory, among other topics. According to Wakelam (2016, p. 60), to achieve its goals military education becomes a “largely intellectual action” which “requires more liberal education than it does training.” Necessarily, the curricula should also include study of military history, essential to the intellectual development of the officer cadre (Evans, 1998). However most militaries are suspicious of what they consider

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7 dated historical knowledge and are more interested in applied knowledge attached to the  
8 concept of a “usable past” (Carter, 2010). As a result if curricula development is left to the  
9 military one would expect to see less of an emphasis on military history.  
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12 **(Insert Table 1 Here)**

14 Table 1 summarizes the desired characteristics for an effective PME. To enhance  
15 professionalism, military education needs to be grounded in two things: operational realities  
16 and academic freedom. Military practitioners must work alongside academics to enhance  
17 curricula development. The education component is best provided by developing a  
18 partnership between professional military leaders and civilian academics. PME needs to be  
19 developed from both perspectives – and not one at the expense of the other.  
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22 The best way forward then is the idea of a *civil-military partnership* wherein civilians  
23 (policymakers and academicians), work together with the military leadership to enhance  
24 PME. This is one of the main ideas put forward in this article but it is a very tentative one  
25 requiring further research. The crucial role of civilians has been acknowledged by others. As  
26 Kennedy and Nielson (2002) argue, “one of the key points brought to light here is the  
27 indispensable role of civilian educators in pointing the military in the right direction and  
28 being a vital part of any successful process.” However, as discussed in the next section,  
29 civilians rarely intervene on this issue.  
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32 **Forging the Sword: Civilian Intervention and Professional Military Education**

33 PME in most countries is usually considered to be in the exclusive domain of the  
34 military. This is primarily due to norm and a lack of expertise. By norm the military usually  
35 controls PME. This should not be surprising in countries where the military is a politically  
36 powerful actor. However, this is also the case in countries with strong civilian control. For  
37 instance, in the U.S. the Skelton panel reforms that reshaped military education was the “first  
38 comprehensive congressional review of PME in the 200-year history of the Congress” (CSIS,  
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7 1997). Another factor that works against civilian involvement in PME is the lack of expertise.  
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9 As few civilians possess the experience and the knowledge of military affairs therefore in  
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11 most countries (with the exception of some in Europe) the content, structure and conduct of  
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13 PME is left to the military.

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15 This seems entirely in keeping with Huntington's preferred model of 'objective  
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17 control'—that envisaged a strict separation between the civilian and military domains.  
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19 Huntington assumed that granting military autonomy over its own 'domain' will maximize its  
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21 effectiveness (Huntington, 1957, p. 83-85, Nielsen, S. 2005).<sup>1</sup> "The essence of objective  
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23 civilian control," Huntington writes, "is the recognition of an autonomous military  
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25 professionalism" (Huntington, 1957, p.83). Following this logic, military education therefore  
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27 should only concern military leaders.<sup>2</sup>

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29 However, objective control has its share of critics. Schadlow & Lacquement (2009)  
30  
31 dismiss it an "abstract construct" that "unduly narrows the focus of military leaders to  
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33 operations and tactics... [and] would direct the military's attention away from strategy and  
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35 the concepts of victory that link military actions to overarching national policy aims." There  
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37 is indeed a strong notion that military education should inform officers about political  
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39 objectives and help in "developing strategic mindedness" (Rapp, 2015, p. 14). Richard Kohn  
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41 captures another set of criticism that the objective control model, "decreases civilian control  
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43 over military affairs" (Kohn, pp. 3-4). Perhaps a more fundamental challenge has come from  
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45 scholars like Barry Posen (1984) and Eliot Cohen (2002) who have shown how civilian  
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47 intervention is, at times, necessary for military effectiveness.

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49 The main theoretical justification for civilian 'interference' to shape military  
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51 education comes from Clausewitz's famous dicta: "policy is the guiding intelligence and war  
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53 only the instrument, not vice versa. No other possibility exists, then, than to subordinate the  
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55 military point of view to the political" (Clausewitz, C. 1976, p. 605). If war is fought for  
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7 political purposes then military officers—at the operational and strategic level, must be well  
8 acquainted with the larger political goal. Suzanne Nielsen’s reading of Clausewitz argues, “at  
9 the highest levels, the idea of a purely military opinion ... does not make sense” and instead it  
10 is imperative that senior officers have a “thorough understanding of national policy and act  
11 accordingly” (Nielsen, S. 2001, pp. 17-18). Binkley (2016) specifically repudiates objective  
12 control based on a close study of Clausewitz. Moreover in a democracy it is even more vital  
13 that civilians should retain the right to shape officer education and thereby officer  
14 perceptions. If instead this function is left entirely at the discretion of the military then it *may*  
15 adopt militaristic or even anti-democratic views.  
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#### 18 Civilian Motivation for Intervening in PME

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There are many potential drivers for civilian policymakers to intervene in PME. It offers a powerful tool to shape perspectives within the military. Another reason could be to save financial resources by forcing the services to consolidate their training and education activities. In addition, it could be in response to demographic change, alliance pressures, emergence of epistemic communities or in response to pressures to attain university accreditation—as has happened in Europe, and elsewhere (Libel, pp. 15-16, Paile, 2010). Finally, it could be aimed at enhancing military effectiveness. While all these drivers are important, and not necessarily mutually exclusive, this article focuses on the aspect of military effectiveness as the primary justification for civilian involvement.

That PME is an important factor in military effectiveness is widely accepted in the literature (Brooks, R. 2007, p.22; Toronto, N. 2015). According to Leonard Holder and Williamson Murray, “the history of military innovation and effectiveness in the last century suggests a correlation between battlefield performance and how seriously military institutions regarded officer education” (Holder, L. & Murray, W. 1998, p.90). Due to this relationship, civilians have justified ‘intervening’ in what has traditionally been considered the military’s

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7 domain. Civilian ability to influence military education has played out differently in different  
8 countries—indicative of the political power of civilians and the military. However in the  
9 1990s, the advent of jointness—the ability of the three services to operate together, has  
10 provided the main intellectual justification for civilian intervention to re-shape military  
11 education. This comes across clearly in the subsequent discussion of case studies.  
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16 Civilian intervention and partnership of the kind argued for in this paper has been  
17 most pronounced in the case of the U.S. The Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 and  
18 subsequently the Ike Skelton Committee on PME in 1989 dramatically transformed the U.S.  
19 military especially with respect to joint education (U.S. House of Representative Committee  
20 Report, 1989). These civilian led initiatives however faced considerable opposition. The  
21 military feared a loss of power and the “individual services fought to maintain their autonomy  
22 even though the overall defense system suffered in terms of effectiveness” (Bruneau, T. 2013,  
23 p. 198). However civilians in the legislative branch, in partnership with reformist military  
24 officers—serving and retired, and the executive branch forcefully intervened in what was  
25 previously considered the military’s domain to change military education. To a considerable  
26 extent they were helped in this endeavor by the efforts in the early 1970s of Vice Admiral  
27 Stansfield Turner—who transformed curriculum and education in the Naval War College  
28 (Johnson-Freese, 2013, pp. 5-6). By the 1990s jointness emerged as the primary intellectual  
29 justification for civilian intervention in reshaping military education. One of the architects of  
30 Goldwater-Nichols reforms, Arch Barret, admitted that they viewed “changes in education as  
31 the means to change the culture of the organization of the U.S. armed forces” (quoted in  
32 Bruneau, T. 2013, p. 199).  
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49 As a result of these interventions, there were a number of changes in military  
50 education. First, the Goldwater-Nichols Act strengthened the office of the Joint Chiefs. The  
51 Joint Staff, in turn, re-shaped PME by ensuring that all military education institutions adhere  
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7 to the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP). This policy document serves  
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9 as a guiding document for military education and is revised periodically. Second, the Skelton  
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11 committee emphasized the importance of civilian faculty singling out the Naval War College  
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13 for praise calling their civilian faculty “especially noteworthy” (Skelton, 1989, p. 147). A  
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15 major recommendation of this committee was for “amending present law to facilitate hiring  
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17 civilian faculty” (Skelton, 1989, p. 3, Stiehm, 2002, p.174). Gradually, this led to an increase  
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19 in quality and quantity of civilian faculty at all the war colleges. Third, the process of  
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21 accreditation—both to the joint staff and civilian institutions of higher education, for grant of  
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23 degrees at PME institutions forced greater academic rigor and standardization. As war  
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25 colleges’ became degree granting institutions this forced them to pay attention to the  
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27 demands of civilian institutions of higher education and emulate civilian graduate schools.  
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29 Fourth, these developments led to a growing civil-military partnership in the field of PME.  
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31 This becomes evident when examining curricula development—a process shaped by the  
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33 OPMEP and the deliberations of the Military Education Coordination Committee (MECC)—  
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35 composed of representatives (both civilian and military) of the different war colleges.

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37 To be sure there is still some criticism of the American system of military education.  
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39 However the scale of the problems and the issues that they face appear to be of a different  
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41 magnitude, in comparison to PME in other countries (U.S. House of Representatives  
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43 Committee Report, 2010, Lamb & Porro, 2015). Significantly, for the main argument made in  
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45 this paper, those calling for reform of military education are in favor of greater civilian  
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47 involvement (Kelley & Johnson-Freese, J. 2014).

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49 Similarly in the U.K., civilians in partnership with reformist military officers were at  
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51 the forefront of efforts to reshape military education. In 1997 they overcame opposition from  
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53 the services and combined their single service staff colleges into a Joint Services Command  
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55 and Staff College (JSCSC). The 1998 Strategic Defence Review emphasized the creation of  
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7 'modern forces' to meet future challenges—a euphemism for enhancing military  
8 effectiveness (U.K. Ministry of Defence, 1998, p. 10). This emphasis was stressed upon by  
9 the *Defence Training Review*, undertaken in 1999. The review was conducted by an  
10 integrated team of civilians and military officers. Its report aimed at reforming military  
11 education and training with the assumption that the military needs to “shift to joint,  
12 multinational and inter-Agency operations” (U.K. Defence Training Review. 2001, p.6). This  
13 led to the establishment of the Defence Academy in April 2002. As a result the services no  
14 longer had exclusive control over military education and it led to a much greater role for  
15 civilians.  
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24 Perhaps equally important were the efforts at partnering academics and universities  
25 with military education. Till the 1980s “the number of academic specialists in defence and  
26 strategy was small” (Freedman, L. 2016). However in the 1990s, Kings College was given  
27 the contract to provide academic support to the new Joint Services Command and Staff  
28 College. This arrangement was further strengthened with the “partnerships between the  
29 Defence Academy and both Cranfield [University] and King’s College...to provide the  
30 academic content” (Kiszley, 2004, p.37). This created a demand for civilian faculty for PME.  
31 In addition, as Kings College and Cranfield University grant accreditation for PME this  
32 forced the military to work with academics and educators like never before. As a result they  
33 cooperate and consult closely together on the issue of curricula development (Interview,  
34 Geoffrey Till, 11 November 2016). According to Kate Utting (2009, pp. 311-315) the all-  
35 round improvement in military education occurred due to a partnership between civilians,  
36 including officials in the Defence Ministry and academicians, and the military.  
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49 In sum, in these two countries civilians have intervened in PME and currently civilian  
50 academics play a prominent role. There is also varying levels of civilian intervention in other  
51 democracies, like Canada and Australia (Peterson, G. 2012). The motivation for this differs  
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7 but with the advent of jointness, military effectiveness is increasingly cited as a goal. From a  
8 theoretical point of view contrary to Huntington's recommendation of civilian non-  
9 interference, in reality, these represent instances of civilian intervention in PME to maximize  
10 the military's effectiveness.  
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14 However, these countries along with some others in Europe represent an exception  
15 rather than a rule. In most democracies civilians have almost no role to play—either in  
16 deciding upon the curricula or as educators. As noted by Thomas Bruneau (2013, p.196), in  
17 “Latin America, Africa, and South East Asia, the militaries themselves control the content of  
18 their forces education.” This is in keeping with what has been characterized by Peter Foot  
19 (2002) as the “in-house” approach to military education. This approach assumes that “its  
20 most talented officers” should be taught by “fast track, uniformed individuals” and that  
21 “participation in the course is essential for promotion” with “little or no role for a permanent  
22 academic staff.” In addition, “outsiders, whether government officials or visiting academics  
23 ... [can] participate....but the weight of activity is service oriented and inward-looking,” and  
24 that students should conform to the “staff solution—a set of “answers” drafted by and for the  
25 military directing staff.” As the following discussion shows, India closely adheres to this “in-  
26 house” approach.  
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#### 39 Huntington's Prescription: Civil-Military Relations in India

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41 India is among the few post-colonial states with a tradition of firm civilian control.  
42 This is testament to the wisdom of its political leaders, both past and present, and its  
43 military—which has embraced the notion of being ‘apolitical.’ However, its model of civil-  
44 military relations operates on a simple compact—civilians have eschewed interfering in what  
45 is considered the military's domain in exchange for unquestioned political control. As Srinath  
46 Raghavan (2009, p. 167) observes this arrangement came into place after the 1962 war as  
47 both politicians and civil servants, “came to believe that the military must be given a free  
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7 hand...[and] a convention was established whereby the civilian leadership restricted itself to  
8 giving overall directives, leaving operational matters to the military.” This arrangement can  
9 be imagined as one of different domains—with civilians exercising firm control over some  
10 matters, like nuclear weapons, and the military enjoying autonomy in others, like training,  
11 doctrine, operations, planning, etc. Moreover civilians—both politicians and bureaucrats, are  
12 hampered by a lack of expertise. Hence, according to the charter of duties, the Joint  
13 Secretary (Training) in the Ministry of Defence is the nodal officer dealing with all matters  
14 pertaining to education and training. However this post is held by an official from the Indian  
15 Administrative Services (I.A.S), which is a generalist cadre, and has little subject matter  
16 expertise (Cohen, Stephen P. 2002). On paper therefore while this official wields  
17 considerable financial powers in practice and by norm they do not use their powers to re-  
18 shape military education. Instead PME is considered to be within the military’s domain.  
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21 From a theoretical perspective, as argued by Stephen Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta  
22 (2010, p.163), “India maintains a Huntingtonian form of “objective” civilian control— each  
23 side has its own responsibilities and expertise, and the line between them is rarely if ever  
24 crossed.” Indeed, military officers have frequently referred to Huntington’s theory to justify  
25 their autonomy and resist civilian intervention (Prakash, 2014, pp. 5-6, Shukla 2012). The  
26 lack of civilian participation and the military’s autonomy becomes clearer in the next section,  
27 which examines the historical evolution of PME in India.  
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#### 29 30 Evolution of Professional Military Education in India

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32 PME for officers in independent India began with the establishment of the Defence  
33 Services Staff College (DSSC) in 1947 at Wellington and the National Defence Academy  
34 (N.D.A.) in 1949 (Raina, T. and Bakshi, G.D. 2008). Both of them educated officers from all  
35 three services and were among the first joint services institutions of its kind. The emphasis in  
36 the early years was on capacity building. Accordingly, in 1959 the National Defence College  
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7 (N.D.C) was established which runs a 47 week course for officers of the rank of a Brigadier  
8 and was meant to replicate the British Imperial Defence College (renamed as the Royal  
9 College of Defence Studies). It was initially functioning under the Chiefs of Staff Committee  
10 but in 1976 it was brought under the control of the Defence Ministry (Shastri, R. 1995). Even  
11 so in practice Defence Ministry bureaucrats play a negligible role in the functioning of this  
12 institution and leave it to the Commandant, who has always been a service officer. According  
13 to one former Commandant “there is minimal interference or instructions from the Ministry”  
14 (Personal interview, New Delhi, May 04, 2011).  
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22 Over time, arms and branch specific courses were established in all three services. In  
23 1959 the School of Land and Air Warfare (S.L.A.W.S) was created in New Delhi and was  
24 later shifted to Hyderabad and renamed as the College of Air Warfare Studies (C.A.W.S). In  
25 1970 to teach modern management techniques an Institute of Defence Management was  
26 established at Secunderabad (Ministry of Defence, 1971, p.14). This is currently called the  
27 College of Defence Management (C.D.M). Indicative of the idea that the military “owns” its  
28 education this college did not recruit faculty from the numerous (and well established)  
29 management schools in India and instead chose to, as it still does, retain military officers for  
30 this purpose. Some of the courses started by the Services showed that they were responsive to  
31 combat experiences and attempted to fix organizational shortcomings. For instance, the  
32 “Higher Command Course” was introduced in 1971 ostensibly as a result of the experience of  
33 the 1965 war (Ministry of Defence, 1971, p.13). In 1972, feeling the need for civilian faculty,  
34 the Commandant of Staff College “sought the induction of three civilian professors, one each  
35 for International Affairs, Applied Economics and Defence Management” (Pillai, S. 2015,  
36 p.51). However the Chiefs of Staff Committee—for reasons not entirely clear did not accept  
37 this proposal.  
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53 In all these matters civilians had little influence on the military education process—  
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7 either in what was taught, who was teaching and how it was taught. The role of the Defence  
8 Ministry was confined to granting financial approval for establishing new schools. The  
9 Ministry was largely supportive of establishing new training and education establishments as  
10 it reduced the requirement to send officers for courses of instruction abroad, thereby saving  
11 precious foreign exchange (Ministry of Defence, 1967, p. 14). However the Defence Ministry  
12 lacked the authority, knowledge and mandate to shape military education. Instead they  
13 examined proposals purely on its financial implications and not on its technical, intellectual  
14 or logical merit. This was understandable as civilians lacked expertise and moreover deferred  
15 to the military as officer education was considered within its domain.  
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24 In December 1986, reflecting a general trend for widespread restructuring and  
25 reexamination of the services, a Committee for the Review of Training of Officers for the  
26 Services (CORTOS) was set up to examine officer training “starting from the N.D.A right up  
27 to the N.D.C” (Hiranandani, G.M. 2000, p. 282). Consisting of officers from all three services  
28 it had two primary aims—to increase the technical content of services training and to increase  
29 inter-services interaction, or usher in jointness. Among its major recommendations was the  
30 establishment of a Naval War College, changes in the curricula at Defence Services Staff  
31 College and a recommendation that the last legs of the respective higher command courses of  
32 the three services should be conducted together (Hiranandani, G.M. 2000, pp. 282-283).  
33 Some of these measures were adopted, for instance a Naval War College was established at  
34 Karanja (it later shifted to its current location in Goa) and the war colleges conduct a 6 weeks  
35 Joint Capsule. However, in overall terms the implementation of the recommendations made  
36 by the committee, according to one of its members, was “tardy, ineffectual and overcome by  
37 changing events” (Personal interview, Vice Admiral Barin Ghosh, Gurgaon, June 25, 2011).  
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51 CORTOS was a civilian directed attempt to reexamine officer training and education  
52 and was inspired by Minister of State for Defence Arun Singh, a technocratic politician who  
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7 attempted a number of other reform initiatives. However, CORTOS suffered from a lack of  
8 civilian participation and advice—either from professional educators or policy makers (it did  
9 not examine the Ministry of Defence or even seek their views on this subject). As it was  
10 composed entirely of military officers it made recommendations convenient to the services,  
11 like creating an additional war college. In that sense it was a missed opportunity. While Arun  
12 Singh's attempt to reform officer training and education was ahead of its time, he did not  
13 envisage a role for civilians—whether as faculty or as educators. To be fair he was unable to  
14 see many of his reform initiatives through on account of a falling out with Prime Minister  
15 Rajiv Gandhi—as a result of which he resigned in August 1987.

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24 The next major development in the field of officer education occurred after the 1999  
25 Kargil war. As a result of large scale defence reforms, a committee was created under K.  
26 Subrahmanyam for creating the Indian National Defence University (INDU). The report of  
27 this committee observed major shortcomings as described in Table 2:<sup>3</sup>

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32 **(Insert Table 2 Here)**

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34 The Committee on the National Defence University (CONDU) was the first attempt at  
35 reviewing military education by a committee comprising both civilians and military officials.  
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37 INDU has been projected as the intellectual hub that would consolidate education in all three  
38 services while integrating civilian officials from other ministries to promote a whole of  
39 government approach to national security. Setting up the university is a work a progress and  
40 is expected to be functional by 2018-19. Significantly the INDU cell, which is in charge of  
41 writing the mandate and terms of reference of this university, functions under the military. It  
42 is not assured then that it would recommend a larger role for civilians either in shaping the  
43 curricula or to serve as faculty in existing PME institutions. This therefore can only be known  
44 once this project finally takes shape.

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53 Another development has been of institutional affiliations between civilian  
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7 universities and institutes conducting PME. This relationship is captured in Table 3. As can  
8 be seen there are some glaring incongruities. For instance, Osmania and Mumbai University  
9 do not even have a department of defence studies but they still award degrees in that subject.  
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12 **(Insert Table 3 Here)**

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14 Civilian universities that grant degrees for PME have a role to play in curricula development  
15 but they do not significantly shape it.<sup>4</sup> Instead, their role is limited to five activities: ensuring  
16 contact hours adhere to university guidelines, a three day capsule explaining research  
17 methods, conducting viva and evaluating dissertations written by student officers and offering  
18 advice on dissertation topics. Admittedly, this generalization glosses over the variation  
19 among different PME institutes. For instance, the College of Defence Management teaches  
20 concepts closer to management studies and therefore, similar to technical schools has greater  
21 inputs from civilian faculty. However, apart from specialized subjects the curricula are  
22 shaped largely by the military. According to Professor Utham Kumar Jamadhagni, the Head  
23 of the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies at Madras University—which grants  
24 degrees to students from the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), the formal interaction  
25 between them and the military is “limited to civilians handling a few capsules like Research  
26 Methodology & International Relations besides lectures by eminent persons, as the DSSC  
27 have their own emphasis and *own their curricula*” (email to author, November 21, 2016,  
28 emphasis added). Crucially, the faculty still consists of serving military officers.  
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43 In sum, the history of the officer education process in India has been largely driven by  
44 the military and the civilians have had a negligible role. Civilian involvement has mainly  
45 been in granting financial approval for establishing new facilities or for sending officers to  
46 attend courses abroad. On this aspect according to Air Marshal Matheswaran, former Deputy  
47 Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, “the Universities do not interfere in the curriculum. That is  
48 left entirely to the [PME] institutions.... [The role of the Ministry of Defence is limited] to  
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7 administrative aspects, policies, budgets and specifically approvals for foreign visits, students  
8 from foreign countries etc. They have no role, nor do they have any expertise to contribute to  
9 the content of courses” (personal communication, 28 October 2016). As explained in the  
10 following section, this arrangement has resulted in significant weakness in PME.  
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#### 13 Weaknesses in India’s System of Professional Military Education

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16 Before analyzing weaknesses in India’s system of PME it is important to understand  
17 what it considered its main strength—the focus on preparing students for military operations.  
18 As the Indian military is operationally active—along the borders with Pakistan and China and  
19 against numerous insurgencies, the senior leadership of the military emphasizes operational  
20 readiness. According to Lieutenant General Narasimhan, former Commandant of the Army  
21 War College the biggest strength of India’s PME is that it is “operationally/job oriented to  
22 prepare the person for the next assignment” (Personal Interview, 08 September 2016).  
23 Perhaps inadvertently this also reveals a weakness—a tendency to confuse training with  
24 education.  
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29 Based on our previously defined metrics (see table 1), India’s approach to PME is not  
30 effective. This is mainly due to two reasons. First, the Indian military does not allow civilian  
31 faculty to teach at its war colleges.<sup>5</sup> The faculty instead consists of serving military officers—  
32 usually outstanding students from the previous courses. As career officers most of them find  
33 it difficult to challenge organizational myths. Critiquing the narrow focus of the Higher-  
34 Command Level Courses Lieutenant General Prakash Menon, former Commandant of  
35 N.D.C, argued strongly in favor of inducting civilian faculty (Menon, P. 2015, p.61). This  
36 idea resonates even among serving officers but has not been accepted by the military (Pillai.  
37 S. 2015). Perhaps as a way to compensate the various schools have constituted a system of  
38 guest lectures delivered by eminent personalities, serving officials or selected academics.  
39 However, even these are typically skewed more towards military speakers, both serving and  
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7 retired, than civilians. For instance, an analysis of the course syllabus (which is given a  
8 security classification of Restricted) for the Army's Higher Command Course Serial HC-38  
9 conducted between July 2009 and April 2010 indicate that civilians lectured only for 279  
10 contact hours out of a total of 1552hours— just around 18%. This excludes the 990 contact  
11 hours which are devoted to visits to field formations and foreign area tour. The syllabus not  
12 only indicates a lower priority for civilian lecturers but also a higher focus on operational  
13 training as evident from its emphasis on field visits.<sup>6</sup>  
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20 Second, the curricula development for PME is almost entirely left to the discretion of  
21 the military. As a result the focus is more towards operations and training than education—an  
22 aspect noted by almost all studies of PME in India. According to Prakash Menon (2015, p.49)  
23 military education in India is “weighted towards the tactical level in all stages of professional  
24 development”. As a result senior officers are rarely exposed or educated on the higher  
25 direction of war and on strategy. According to Major General Dipankar Banerjee (2001,  
26 p.29), “national security is first taught at the National Defense College, for brigadiers, after  
27 28 years of service, barely a few years before retirement.” Another analyst, a former Colonel,  
28 criticized the “tactical orientation of instruction during formal teaching that focuses on rote  
29 learning rather than holistic understanding of issues” (Chadha, 2015, p.76; also see Pant,  
30 2014.p. 29). These criticisms are not service specific as Misra (2008), an Indian Air Force  
31 Officer, assailed the service for confusing training and education in its system of PME.  
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43 An unfortunate byproduct of leaving curricula development to the military has been  
44 the neglect of military history. Considered the bedrock of strategic studies, military history is  
45 not emphasized in PME in India. It is a subject for the Staff College entrance exam—a  
46 competitive process to select students who attend the course, but beyond that it is not  
47 subsequently taught as a discipline to military officers (Gautam, 2011). As a result war  
48 colleges do not cultivate or engage with military historians. In fact there is a broader  
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7 disconnect between the military and academia, a fact admitted by two official reports—the  
8 Group of Ministers (GoM) Report and the CONDU Report (Government of India, 2001;  
9 Ministry of Defence, 2002, pp. 24-27).  
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12 As military officers—either those posted as Commandants or faculty members at the  
13 different war colleges, are not professional educators they usually focus on what they know  
14 best—operations and training. Hence non-military subjects like international relations,  
15 strategic studies, political science, area studies, organizational theory and human resources  
16 are either taught by military officers or not emphasized at all. Lamenting this state of affairs,  
17 a former instructor at Army War College argued that “there is a total absence of high caliber,  
18 qualified academic faculty to cover strategic issues relating to broader subjects concerning  
19 international and national security” (*Blinded*).  
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### 30 India’s Civil-Military Relations and Professional Military Education

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32 India’s pattern of civil-military relations is suited to the idea of domains—wherein  
33 the civilians enjoy primacy in some fields and the military in others. According to this  
34 arrangement education falls in the military’s domain. Civilian bureaucrats are also hampered  
35 by a lack of disciplinary expertise. Therefore civilians have no mandate *and* knowledge to  
36 influence military education. It is unlikely therefore to imagine a civil-military partnership of  
37 the kind that has been argued for in this paper. This model of civil-military relations most  
38 closely resembles Huntington’s objective control—with clear demarcation between the two  
39 domains. Weakness in military education will have deleterious consequences on the  
40 effectiveness of the Indian military, however examining that is beyond the scope of this  
41 article.<sup>7</sup> The lack of civilian intervention in what is perceived to be in the military domain in  
42 India is also supported by other examples. For instance, jointness between the services is  
43 problematic because of a lack of civilian pressure.  
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7 Is it possible for the Indian military to address weaknesses in PME without civilian  
8 interference? Arguably, reformist officers in the military can reshape military education—by  
9 creating positions for civilian faculty, engaging with professional educators while developing  
10 the curricula and emphasizing education instead of training . However, so far, there has been  
11 no evidence of any such effort. This should not be surprising and is and is borne out by the  
12 experience of other countries. For instance, one study of the U.S. Army War College argued  
13 that it was impervious to change from within and that “major changes seem to require a  
14 powerful, external influence such as the end of a war, an act of Congress, or a congressional  
15 report” (Stiehm, 2002, p. 180).  
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#### 24 The Dangers of Ill-Informed and Motivated Civilian Intervention

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26 In making the case for greater civilian involvement in military education it is also  
27 important to sound a cautionary warning about the danger of ill-informed or parochially  
28 motivated civilian intervention. Civilian intervention in military education should be made  
29 for the ‘right’ reasons—ideally on the grounds of enhancing military effectiveness or, if so  
30 required, saving fiscal resources or for educating military officers with larger political-  
31 military strategies or for a combination of the above. If however civilian intervention is  
32 prompted by factors other than these then it has the potential to hamper military  
33 professionalism. For instance, civilians may wish to embed a particular political or religious  
34 ideology—as is common in authoritarian states. In China for instance there is a long history  
35 of “intervention” by the Chinese Communist Party in military education in the People’s  
36 Liberation Army (PLA)—most disastrously during the Cultural Revolution (Bickford, T.  
37 2008, p.21). Similarly, the Iranian military performed poorly in the Iran-Iraq war in part  
38 because the clerical regime emphasized “ideological indoctrination rather  
39 than...opportunities to develop and hone military skills” (Talmadge, 2015, p. 172).  
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53 This can be a problem even in democratic countries. In Sweden, for instance, in 1999  
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7 civilians intervened and adversely shaped officer education policies in a manner so that the  
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9 “armed forces became more of a civilian bureaucratic career organization than a military  
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11 force” (Hedlund, E. 2013, p. 143). Similarly, in Slovenia, civilian control over the education  
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13 process has had “possible negative impact on military effectiveness and professionalism”  
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15 (Furlan, 2012, p.444). Due to its ability to shape the officer perceptions military education is  
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17 a powerful tool that needs to be handled with care.

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19 The danger of motivated civilian intervention is also of concern in India. A worrisome  
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21 development would be if, under the garb of reforming military education, a particular  
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23 political ideology is embedded within the military. Indeed the Indian military has been  
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25 careful in ensuring that it remains apolitical and opening the door for civilian intervention  
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27 may make this process more difficult. In addition, higher education in India faces  
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29 considerable challenges—from politicization to excessive bureaucratization and loss of  
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31 academic autonomy (Varghese and Malik, 2016). It therefore requires careful attention and  
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33 institutional design to ensure that the ills plaguing higher education are not transmitted into  
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35 the military.

### 36 Conclusion

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38 At a broader level there are two main implications of this paper. First, from a  
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40 theoretical perspective, the analysis presented here supports the arguments made by other  
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42 scholars challenging Huntington’s model of ‘objective control’ (Burk, J. 2002, pp. 12-15;  
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44 Cohen, E. 2002, pp. 225-248). However military officers, across countries, largely prefer the  
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46 “objective control model” as it affords them significant autonomy (Gibson, C. 2009, p. 242).  
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48 As India’s case indicates, objective control may not be the optimum solution as civilian non-  
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50 involvement creates problems in military education. This debate is of contemporary relevance  
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52 as scholars continue to engage with Huntington’s ideas, and on the issue of civilian control  
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54 and military effectiveness (Furlan, 2012, Hedlund, 2013). Lately there have been calls to  
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7 move beyond Huntington's idealized and underspecified theory of objective control, however  
8 perhaps because of its elegant simplicity, the model continues to endure (Rapp 2015, Travis,  
9 2016).

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12 Second, in terms of practice of civil-military relations, this paper argues that PME  
13 should not be left only to the military. Ideally, there should be a joint approach to facilitate a  
14 dialogue between civilians—academics and policy makers, and the military. This form of a  
15 partnership has the potential to not just enhance military professionalism but also lead to  
16 healthier civil-military relations. The point here is not to civilianize military education but to  
17 propose the idea of a collaborative civil-military approach.

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20 The arguments presented in this paper suggest some avenues for future research. First,  
21 there is a need to undertake a closer study of instances of civilian intervention in military  
22 education. In how many countries and under what circumstances do civilians shape military  
23 education? What are the underlying motivations for these interventions? While in the U.S.  
24 and U.K. civilians intervened on the grounds of effectiveness and fiscal efficiency—are there  
25 other factors in play? In democratizing Spain, for instance, civilian intervention in military  
26 education occurred to strengthen democratic norms (Serra, N. 2010). One would expect  
27 military education to be closely monitored in authoritarian states however, as in the case of  
28 China, there are instances of civilian intervention in education aimed at enhancing  
29 effectiveness (Cole. B. 2001, pp.119-120).

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32 Second, what are the precise contours of the relationship between civilian universities  
33 and PME institutes in different countries? What is the role of civilians in curricula  
34 development and in PME in general? How to groom such civilian academic talent? These  
35 questions are of contemporary relevance as different countries create defence universities and  
36 thereby increase the interaction between academics and the military.

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39 A final avenue for further research could be to examine the relationship between PME and  
40 military effectiveness. The claim, largely accepted by the academic community that  
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7 the military's effectiveness is shaped by its education requires further empirical  
8 research. Admittedly finding a relationship between these two concepts is difficult in  
9 practice however the need for joint military education offers a promising line of  
10 inquiry (Keaney, T. 2002).  
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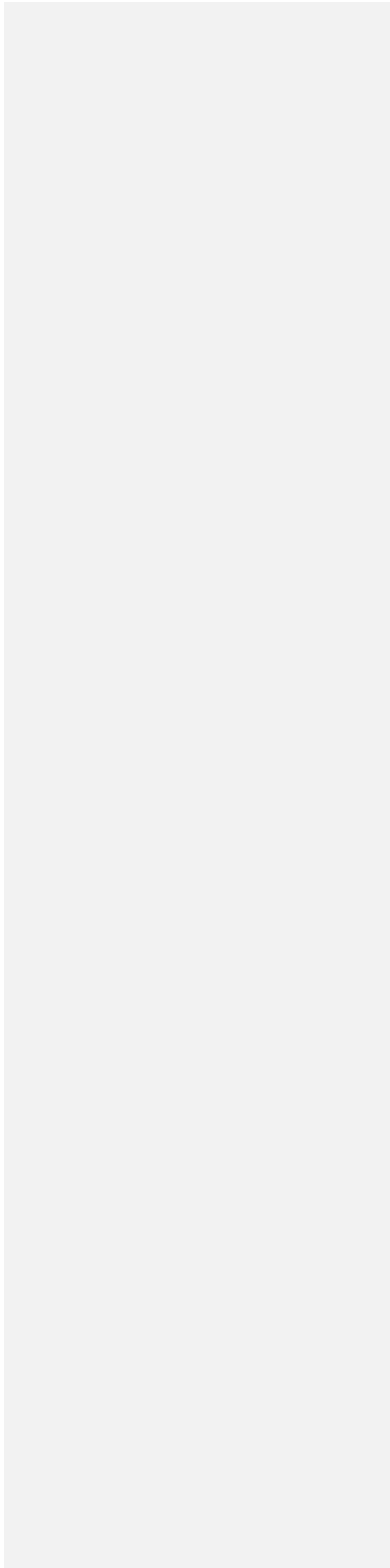
For Peer Review

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**Table 1: Characteristics of an Effective PME**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Effective PME</b>	<b>Weak PME</b>
Faculty	Civilian faculty function as core members of PME institutes	No such provision
Curricula Development and Focus	Apart from operations, education is geared towards broader subjects related to statecraft, diplomacy and the use of force including international relations, organizational theory, area studies, constitutional law, military history and security studies.	Primarily focused on training and operations

For Peer Review



**Table 2: Shortcomings as per the Committee on National Defence University**

<u>Name of Course</u>	<u>Problems</u>
Higher Command Courses in respective service war colleges.	JOCAP (Joint Capsule) “does not take adequate note of the evolving battlefield milieu, joint training and joint operational planning especially as the course is pitched at higher tactical (Division) and operational levels.”
College of Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad	“The thrust of the course varies according to service....there are no linkages with strategic decision making.”
National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi)	The “curriculum is neither as rigorous as that of a university nor is the NDC involved in any research work. The course does not provide the much desired strategic level war-gaming of national strategic issues and conflict or crisis management.”
Senior Officers Education	Present service capsules for senior officer training are too “narrowly focused” and do not promote joint service training, doctrinal and operational study.

**Table3: Civilian Universities and Military Education in India**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree Offered In and By</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Defence Services Staff College, (D.S.SC.), Wellington	M.Sc in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University	The oldest relationship dating back to 1978.
Army War College, (A.W.C), Mhow	M.Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Panjab University.	Relationship since 2006.
Naval War College, (N.W.C.), Goa	M. Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Mumbai University	Relationship since 2003 however university does not have a department of defence studies
College of Air Warfare, (C.A.W.), Secunderabad	MPhil degree in Defence and Strategic Studies from Osmania University	Relationship since 2006 however university does not have department of defence studies.
College of Defence Management (C.D.M) Secunderabad	Master of Management Studies from Osmania University	Relationship since 1994.
National Defence College (N.D.C.), New Delhi	M. Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University	Degrees are awarded since 2006.

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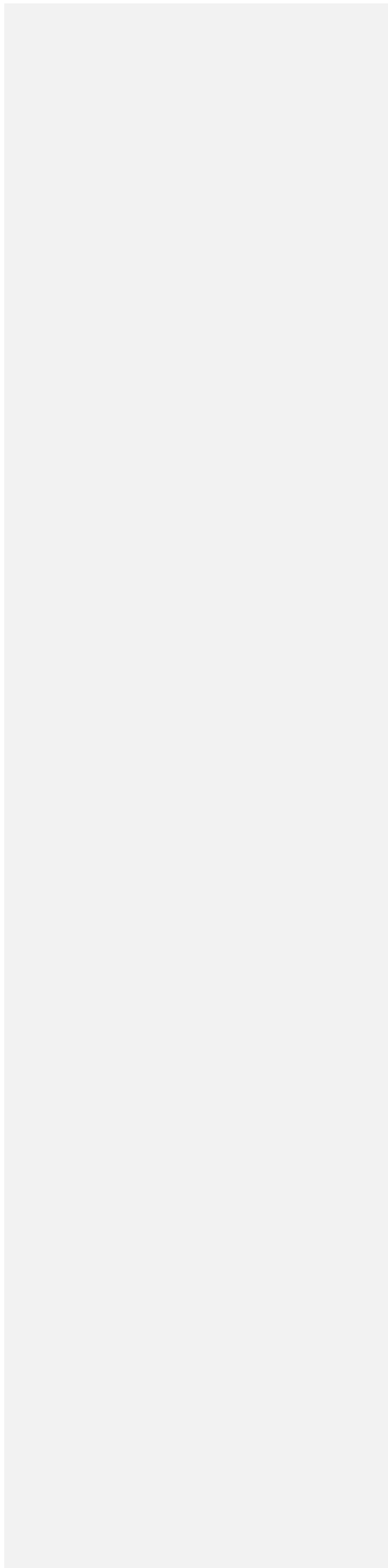
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For Peer Review



## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> To be sure Huntington did not specifically use the term military effectiveness (perhaps because the concept of military effectiveness was not at use at that time) and instead his precise words were that objective control “maximizes the likelihood of achieving military security.” However, in the prevailing academics discourse—and one which is accepted by this paper, objective control, among other measures, maximized military effectiveness. I thank a reviewer to pointing this out.
- <sup>2</sup> For more on Huntington’s views on professional military education and how it should adhere to the objective control model see Alagappa, M. 2001, p.10 and Guttieri, 2006, p. 244.
- <sup>3</sup> These are reproduced from the *Report of the Committee on National Defence University (CONDU)*, Vol. 1, 2002, 42-44. I thank a member of this committee, who wishes to remain unnamed, for sharing a copy of the report.
- <sup>4</sup> This section is based on numerous interviews with civilian faculty who are associated with PME, student officers and directing staff at PME Institutes in India. To speak frankly they all requested anonymity.
- <sup>5</sup> There are some civilian instructors at technical schools but they are focused only on imparting technical knowledge. Also there are civilian instructors for pre-commissioning training however they are not employed in any other institute for PME. For the benefits of civilian involvement in military education see Guttieri, K. 2006. 255-256.
- <sup>6</sup> Ideally one would be able to access the course syllabus for all the PME institutes and then come up with a systematic analysis however this is impossible as the Indian military does not readily share their course syllabi.
- <sup>7</sup> For more on Indian military effectiveness see Dasgupta, S. 2006.

Tables

**Table 1: Characteristics of an Effective PME**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Effective PME</b>	<b>Weak PME</b>
Faculty	Civilian faculty function as core members of PME institutes	No such provision
Curricula Development and Focus	Apart from operations, education is geared towards broader subjects related to statecraft, diplomacy and the use of force including international relations, organizational theory, area studies, constitutional law, military history and security studies.	Primarily focused on training and operations

**Table 2: Shortcomings as per the Committee on National Defence University****(CONDU)**

<b>Name of Course</b>	<b>Problems</b>
Higher Command Courses in respective service war colleges.	JOCAP (Joint Capsule) “does not take adequate note of the evolving battlefield milieu, joint training and joint operational planning especially as the course is pitched at higher tactical (Division) and operational levels.”
College of Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad	“The thrust of the course varies according to service....there are no linkages with strategic decision making.”
National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi)	The “curriculum is neither as rigorous as that of a university nor is the NDC involved in any research work. The course does not provide the much desired strategic level war-gaming of national strategic issues and conflict or crisis management.”
Senior Officers Education	Present service capsules for senior officer training are too “narrowly focused” and do not promote joint service training, doctrinal and operational study.

**Table3: Civilian Universities and Military Education in India**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree Offered In and By</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Defence Services Staff College, (D.S.SC.), Wellington	M.Sc in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University	The oldest relationship dating back to 1978.
Army War College, (A.W.C), Mhow	M.Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Panjab University.	Relationship since 2006.
Naval War College, (N.W.C.), Goa	M. Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Mumbai University	Relationship since 2003 however university does not have a department of defence studies
College of Air Warfare, (C.A.W.), Secunderabad	MPhil degree in Defence and Strategic Studies from Osmania University	Relationship since 2006 however university does not have department of defence studies.
College of Defence Management (C.D.M) Secunderabad	Master of Management Studies from Osmania University	Relationship since 1994.
National Defence College (N.D.C.), New Delhi	M. Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University	Degrees are awarded since 2006.