War cum political strategies used in the *Mahabarata* as a paradigm to stimulate strategy formulation for business management – a mental modelling approach

T A Pushparajah and M Manobavan
Department of English, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya.

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on any organization striving to establish itself in the dynamic business world of present times needs to be ready to flex and diversify its conduct through the apt strategies. Optimum use of all resources - in the right blend, and reacting to external shocks in the right manner are possible only if the exact strategy is formulated. Hence, effective strategizing is considered a pivotal part of management of business entities. The knowledge base in management science in this regard can be furthered by the use of paradigms which can be used as a mental modelling exercise to stimulate the development of management strategies. So, mental modelling is the right paradigm that can be used as an effective tool to train managers, in strategy formulation and planning. We present a case study of the epic *Mahabarata* as a paradigm to the present-day business world. A mental modelling investigation of various war cum political strategies used by the *Pandavas* under the guidance of *Lord Krishn,* reveal that strategies such as niche taking, fragmenting the opposition before taking over their territory, dawn-raiding and counter-strategies to block the enemy's progress; if planned well and executed on-time, can be effective game-winners. Moreover, we use the paradigm of the *Mahabarata* war to explain the dynamics of organizational behaviour in the present day business world context. It is emphasized that "effective and timely implementation of the mentioned strategies as highlighted in the *Mahabarata*" are important if an organization is to thrive in the dynamic world of modern business. We conclude that, the epic *Mahabarata* can be used as a paradigm to teach mental modelling for management science.

Key words: mental modelling, strategy, implementation, paradigm, case-study