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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the paradox of power in the asymmetric warfare between United States (US) and Vietnam during the historical Vietnam War. Power paradox itself defines the contrast of where a powerful person is always likely to be the winning person can be also the one who is defeated by the inferior person because of his weaknesses. Mainly, powerful people can become blinkered and make decisions that are questionable. This study expresses the paradox of American experience in Vietnam.

The asymmetric warfare is defined as the superior power or the party which is equipped with high technology arms always finds its success in the battle field. But it collapses when weak powers have sought to avoid an opponent's strengths and instead attempt to exploit the latter's weaknesses. This application therefore explains unexplored and innovative means for attacking an adversary's weaknesses.

The North Vietnamese and Vietcong had no choice other than relying on superior military art. In the face of an American enemy with far greater resources and vastly superior technology, the Vietnamese communists avoided catastrophic defeat, mobilized the peasantry (or at least enforced their neutrality) and attacked American morale. In short, the communists confronted their American foes with a baffling package of political, psychological, economic, and military warfare. The results are achieved through the keen application of military art.

The Vietnam War has demonstrated that the overwhelming conventional military superiority of major powers is no guarantee against their defeat in wars against small nations. It has been persistently demonstrated that militarily superior states that are engaged in wars with militarily inferior states may culminate the war due to the lack of military capabilities.

Key Words : Power Paradox, Asymmetric Warfare, Vietnam War, United States, Vietcong.