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FOCUS ON DYNAMICS AND POTENTIAL OF MILITARY ROUTINES

In this study I examine the internal dynamics and potential of military routines. The aim is to broaden our understanding of these dynamics and potential and thereby to contribute to the development of the organization and leading of learning and teaming in the military context.

ROUTINES IN THE MILITARY

Military and other high reliability organizations create and develop routines preparing them to meet unknown challenges as well as to adapt and bounce back from adversities. Routines help (multi)national military personnel to work effectively together. Routines have also a stabilizing role in rapidly changing and sometimes chaotic situations.

AMY EDMUNDSON'S THEORY OF ROUTINES, TEAMING AND LEARNING

In Edmondson's theory, which has been used successfully to study the military¹; "teaming is a way to get work done while figuring out how to do it better; it's executing and learning at the same time"¹. However, teaming is different in different contexts.

In a *routine context*, operations are seen to be efficient. Routines are generally understood to be repetitive and recognizable patterns of interdependent actions, which are carried out by multiple actors¹. In this context, learning is understood as a means to improve performance. In *complex operations* it is important to assess the risks, identify a problem to be solved, and brainstorm alternatives. Learning about perspectives, concerns, and experiences of others is critical to solve the problem, lower the risk, and make appropriate choices and decisions.

According to Edmondson's theory, routines as improved performances have been the primary targets of research. However, less attention has been paid to the dynamics and potential of routines.

RESEARCH SITE: CJSE (Combined Joint Staff Exercise)

This annual 10-days exercise is organized by Swedish Armed Forces, and the Finnish National Defence University (teachers and students) participates in the exercise. CJSE is practice-based pedagogical training programme for individual and team learning.

The exercise aims to prepare participants to meet the challenges of international peace and crisis management operations and to educate them to be part of a multinational staff. The objective is to train staff procedures and processes at the operational and tactical level.

In this study staff procedures are defined as routines.



ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

I use ethnography as the methodological basis in order to understand the routines of staff work. I joined the Special Staff team in a gender adviser role. Data consist of my fieldnotes and official documents. Data have been collected in April 2015 and will be continued in April 2016.

REFERENCES

¹Hedlund, E. & Österberg, J. 2013. *Team Training, Team Learning, Leadership and Psychology Safety: A Study of Team Training and Team Learning Behavior during a Swedish Military Staff Exercise*. *Sociology Mind* 3, No. 1, 89-98.

¹Edmondson, A. C. 2012. *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 74.

¹Feldman, M. & Pentland, B. T. 2003. *Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines as a Source of Flexibility and Change*. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 48, 94-118.

