STRATEGOS

Team leadership and teamwork in the Croatian Navy – Maritime Interdiction Operations Teams

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Abstract

This paper deals with the topic of teamwork, and application of the theory of team leadership to the example of Maritime Interdiction Operations Teams (MIT) and transfer of teams, in composition of the Croatian Navy. The paper presents the key topics and issues of the theory of team leadership: influence of the leadership process on the team's processes and ultimately on performance, distributed leadership within the team, influence of the context on leadership and success. By researching boarding teams, their structure, leadership processes of such teams, processes performed by teams and the way in which such teams carry out their tasks in context of the military organization, the Croatian Navy and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia were elaborated. Peculiarities of the team leadership and team processes from cognitive, motivational, coordination, and emotional categories were determined. Characteristic activities of the transition phase of the team as well as the action phase, and peculiarities of performance of the boarding teams, were determined. Scientific contributions of the work, and contribution to military organization, as well as a wider social contribution, are the result of the aforementioned findings.

Keywords

transshipment teams, leadership, team leadership model, structure, Croatian Navy, vessel interception procedures

Introduction

Leadership of small groups of people and work teams in various organizations has risen to one of the most popular areas in leadership research and theory, which is rapidly developing. Teams are purposefully organized groups, composed of members who share common goals and must coordinate their skills and activities in order to achieve those goals (Hill, 2016).

Examples of these groups are project management teams in an organization, various work groups or work units, committees, quality teams, development teams, etc. In the military sense, there are various teams for special purposes depending on the nature of the task for which they are trained. Within the Croatian Navy (CN), in order to achieve necessary maritime interception capabilities, the so-called MIO boarding teams (Eng. Maritime Interdiction Operations; teams for vessel interception and transshipment operations) which are organized according to NATO standard ATP-71 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005). These teams represent the focus of our interest in researching team leadership and teamwork in the Croatian army.

Regarding the phenomenon of leadership itself, modern times represent a significant challenge for leadership in the military context and military practice. In order to adapt to dynamics of the environment, military commanders must foster a competitive atmosphere. Advanced commanders as leaders strive to support individuality and teamwork, ensure flexibility and efficiency, balance creativity and discipline, encourage the development of subordinates, and enable soldiers to reach their maximum (Kark, Karazi-Presler & Tubi, 2016).

Considering the development of leadership theory throughout history, the dynamics of continuous opening of new theoretical directions and orientations is evident. For example, Mango (2018) identifies over twenty theories of leadership, starting with the theory of the great man, the approach of "leadership traits", and all the way to team leadership, strategic leadership and ethical leadership, as recent theoretical directions. The use of teams in a wider organizational context has increased over the past decades, and theoretical research has begun to focus increasingly on the role of leadership in encouraging team success (Morgeson, DeRue & Karam, 2010).

After identifying importance of the role of leadership in teams (small groups), there followed a period of research regarding improvement of the teams and success of leadership through interventions in real work teams. A new change in the development of the theory of team leadership took place by focusing on the norms and goals of teams, and by affirming the concept of quality. Continuous improvements, quality and global competitiveness are the main concepts at the turn of the two centuries (Porter & Beyerlein, 2000).

Recent findings indicate that in the 21st century, consideration of team leadership includes a greater number of team components (Ilgen et al., 2005; Hill, 2016). Contemporary research analyses the success of virtual teams in a hybrid model (Zhang & Fjermestad, 2006) and through various computer simulations (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014). This mainly confirms the thesis that participation of all members in leadership, i.e., joint leadership of the team, is significantly related to performance and success of the team. Namely, in the very postulates of the theory of team leadership, there is an approach of participation of all team members in leadership (Horner, 1997), and according to the contained concept of sharing leadership ("shared leadership"), team leadership is unique.

The next important feature of the team leadership referred to by theorists is "team development and team performance", and is reflected in the articles by Larson and LaFasto (1989), Horner (1997), Hill (2016), etc. Model of team leadership includes the leadership process as the key element of team success. All team members participating in the leadership process should develop an appropriate mental map that helps them recognize team problems and find adequate solutions. The leader should build the model, considering resource limitations and challenges of the environment, and regarding the team's tasks and possible solutions.

Leadership within the public sector, whether military or civilian, occurs within a unique environment of the state administration and is characterized by political uncertainty, bureaucracy, and resource constraints. Such an environment creates leadership challenges that are somewhat different from those faced by team leaders outside the public sector (Ferguson et al., 2016).

When comparing the development of leaders in the military and civilian sectors, it can be seen that military officers spend at least twice as much time in classrooms and training activities than their civilian equivalents. According to the Ulmer Jr. (2005), one of the important different background characteristics between the U.S. Army brigadier generals and their corporate counterparts (managers) is that 95 per cent of the generals have a master's degree or higher, while only about 35 per cent of the company leaders have attained that level of formal education. By positioning research of the team leadership in domain of the military organization, we firstly focused on the Croatian Navy, as the bearer of protecting interests of the Republic of Croatia on the Adriatic Sea. At the same time, we also single out the Coast Guard of the Republic of Croatia (illustration in Figure 1), a unit within the Croatian Navy.

Figure 1. Fast inflatable boat VHB-46 in the Coast Guard of the Republic of Croatia (Mišić, 2020)

Since accession into full membership of NATO in 2009, the Republic of Croatia has confirmed itself as a committed and reliable member of the Alliance. The Croatian Armed Forces (CAF) continuously invest the greatest efforts in raising and preserving the level of achieved capabilities in accordance

with the norms and goals of the NATO alliance. The fleet of the CN realizes its declared maritime interception capabilities, including the so-called MIO boarding teams[1] that are organized according to the NATO standard, ATP-71 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005). Over the past several decades, maritime operations that have come to be known as maritime interception operations (MIOs) have grown into a well-established operational activity for navies around the world (Fink, 2016). Teamwork and the theory of team leadership in MIO boarding teams as part of the CN is a topic that is useful to investigate, and which contributes to organization of the defence and security system in the Republic of Croatia.

Previous research

Leadership and teamwork in general

Over the last couple of decades, scientists have systematically studied organizational work groups and teams. At the same time, they developed appropriate performance standards, i.e., indicators of excellence. These indicators, which point out to the state of performance and excellence, are most often directly trackable, and can be used to evaluate the team's performance. Earlier, we highlighted the critical functions of team success, which can be described as "team development (team maintenance) and team performance (achievement)", which was addressed through specific contributions in the papers by Larson and LaFasto (1989), Horner (1997), Zaccaro, Rittman and Marks (2001), Yukl (2008), Yammarino et al. (2010), Hill (2016) and Mango (2018).

According to Hill's (2016) observation, characteristics of the team success were well identified by Larson and LaFasto (1989) working with real successful teams. According to these authors, regardless of the type of the team, excellence can be associated with eight characteristics: a clear and motivating goal; structure appropriate to the objectives; professional team members; shared commitment; collaborative atmosphere; standards of

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1   Boarding team – this term means a team for transfer to another vessel.

excellence; external support and recognition; principled leadership. For a goal that is motivating and stimulating, and therefore its setting makes sense, it is necessary to define the most appropriate team structure. Teams should be distinguished here (Hill, 2016), especially in terms of the organizational hierarchy, because top-management teams in companies work with issues of strategy and power, production teams are interested in technology, and tactical and military teams are interested in success in specific missions. It is important to point out that, according to the Oldham and Hackman (2010), the use of teams is not appropriate for certain types of tasks. It is about the context of applying the specialized expertise and skills of individuals in a sophisticated way or extremely creative composing of ideas from previous partial works, and the like.

When building and using teams, they need a structure that emphasizes a culture or a climate of trust. The need for trust is deemed to increase in the presence of specific situational factors. It should be emphasized that in addition to team leadership, for similar circumstances the situational theory of leadership is also present as a special theoretical direction (Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Graeff, 1997). Thus, problems of trust for members and the leader come in consideration in situations involving risk, vulnerability, uncertainty and interdependence. Interdependence within a team is a key factor that leads to trust, as there would be no need for trust without one's own outcomes being somehow dependent on another person (Adams &Webb, 2002).

In terms of success, team members must possess key knowledge and skills, which certainly include the ability to do the job and overcome obstacles. The theory of skills necessary for successful leadership was formulated by Katz (1974), but within team leadership, professional knowledge and skills are relevant for team members and not only for the leader. They should possess characteristics important for teamwork, such as a positive attitude, support, openness, and action orientation (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). In practice, there are examples of the teams composed of capable individuals but with poor performance due to destructive and long mutual discussions. Even very capable individuals make mistakes, not taking into account what their colleagues do or suggest, having an excessive preoccupation with

avoiding conflict, or trying to destroy offered solutions by focusing on their shortcomings (Bumbuc & Paşca, 2017).

Team members can remain task-oriented and take risks only in an appropriate atmosphere, which must have the characteristics of collegiality. For this purpose, an orientation towards cooperative behaviour is necessary, as well as a similar view and understanding of the situation. This enables easier prediction of the behaviour and needs of other people. Thus, good coordination of the team members is achieved (Boies & Howell, 2009). In order to build an atmosphere that promotes cooperation, it is necessary to develop relationships of trust based on openness, consistency, mutual respect and honesty (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Effective group norms are also important for team functioning, and team members should be required to respect these norms. The team leader can enhance this process by insisting on results, checks and controls, providing feedback to followers, and rewards and recognition for successful performance (Hill, 2016; LaFasto & Larson, 2001). The award should go primarily to teamwork.

Good team leadership is closely related to team performance. According to Zaccaro and Klimoski (2002), as well as Hackman and Walton (1986), the main task of the team leadership is to motivate team members to work for benefit of the team. Leadership, as the main driver of the team success, affects the team by creating four categories of processes: cognitive, motivational, emotional and coordinating (Zaccaro, Rittman and Marks, 2001). In principle, leadership implies the development and practice of promoting values by leading people. As stated by Hill (2016), in a large study by LaFasto & Larson (2001), several key effects caused by behaviour of a successful team leader were determined: setting priorities, creating an atmosphere of cooperation, strengthening safety of the members-followers, a more permanent focus of the team on the goal, managing team performance, demonstrating own technical expertise. The first decision that every team leader has to make concerns the dilemma: observe or act? (Hill, 2016). Observation of internal problems can lead to perception of the group deficiencies, while observation of external problems leads to prediction of changes in the environment (Hackman and Walton, 1986). When a leader acts on internal problems, then

he/she takes appropriate measures, and by acting on external problems, prevents undesirable changes.

The next doubt that the team leader faces concerns his/her orientation, whether he/she will be dedicated to the task (work) more than to relationships (atmosphere, cohesion), or vice versa. The first successful contingency model, that included leader traits and situational variables, as reported by Vroom and Jago (2007), was created by Fiedler (1967). He divided leaders into two categories, relationship-motivated and task-motivated. Fiedler considered effectiveness of these opposite leader's orientations for situations of different states of the following variables: relationship between the leader and group members, structure of the task, position of the leader from the aspect of power. After this model, appearance of the theory of the path to the goal has been highlighted, an approach to leadership that focuses on the leader's behavioural style and at the same time respects circumstances of the situation, providing recommendations that enable achievement of the goal (House & Mitchell, 1974).

Effective leadership processes represent one of the three essential factors that contribute to success of the teams (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001), while the remaining two factors are adaptive operational functioning and team processes. Leadership processes include information seeking and structuring, using information to solve problems, and managing human and material resources. The mentioned leadership processes directly affect processes within the teams. Research by the authors of the path to goal theory determines the impact of the leadership processes on team performance, and according to another division, leadership processes include: setting performance goals, defining individual and joint expectations, assigning roles, ensuring team development, obtaining resources, and removing obstacles (House & Dessler, 1974; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002).

In team leadership, when behaviour and performance of the leader is in accordance with complexity of the situation, it manifests the "necessary diversity", i.e. the set of behaviours crucial for responding to needs of the team or group (Drecksel, 1991). Successful leaders, observing the team's functioning, can create a perception of potential challenges that the team

may encounter, and take preventive actions to solve these challenges. The team leader is responsible for functioning and performance of the team.

Within this framework, leadership is understood as team-based problem solving in which the leader strives to achieve team goals by analysing internal and external situations. After that, the leader selects and implements adequate procedures. Leaders must use freedom of decision in terms of judging which situations require intervention, and which solutions are the most optimal (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001).

The leader can also use the survey as an instrument for judging the team and judging him as a leader. The leader and team members should complete the questionnaire. Over the years, research has shown that team leaders often overestimate their ability and performance, and generally, their self-assessments are better than group members' assessments (LaFasto & Larson, 2001). When comparing results, the leader gets all necessary information to be able to determine which segments of the team or characteristics of the leader need to be improved.

The effort of the team members, on the other hand, is reflected in successful incorporation of these individuals' own personal skills into joint efforts. All team members have some characteristic and unique roles, where realization of each individual role contributes to the team's success. This means that reasons for the team's failure can arise not only from weakness of the team members, but also from their collective failure to harmonize and coordinate their individual skills and actions. In coordination, the leader helps to integrate the team's activities by matching the skills of the individual members to their roles. In addition, he/she should establish clear performance strategies, monitor feedback and create adaptation to changes in environment (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001).

Leadership and teamwork in the military

The organizational context of leadership influences leadership processes and this is especially evident for conditions of the military environment (Halpin, 2011). The new reality for teams of the U.S. Army is clearly marked by

complexity that manifests itself in domain of the tasks they need to perform, the adversary they need to prepare against and the roles that individuals will need to assume (Leonard et al., 2006). Goodwin, Blacksmith and Coats (2018) have researched military teams and theoretical knowledge about them for the last 60 years, and their first claim is that "teams represent the basic building blocks of the military". Collective skills and actions of the teams enable the military to effectively execute missions (Shuffler, Pavlas & Salas, 2012). The significance of teamwork and training of the military teams is investigated by Salas et al. (2008), Sanjeev Vakil (2019) and others.

The basic military principle is to achieve goals by engaging professionals organized in a hierarchical manner, which implies that the commander is part of the defined hierarchy and that the organizational structure in the army, which shapes leadership practice, is mainly based on rank and the chain of command (Kark, Karazi-Presler & Tubi, 2016). With team leadership in environment of the military organization, the leader needs to create a model regarding the team's tasks and the most appropriate solutions at a certain moment, taking into account possible development of the events, and with organizational limits and resources. As role models, military team leaders must lead "from the front", on the front lines, and show courage in order to motivate their soldiers. An acceptable level of self-confidence is desirable, but excessive egoism is not. In the team, the "I" perspective should be reduced, and success comes because of the soldiers' trust in their leader, and the result of the created ability to work together to achieve the goal (Roberts, 2018).

Effective military leaders ask the right questions and think strategically, and draw conclusions based on good information that enable action. Responsibility includes caring for the well-being of all team members, developing individual talents, recognizing and rewarding success to create a unified team, self-reliant to accomplish the mission. The imperative to find a solution to a perplexing problem often requires an unbreakable will to keep going and search for answers. Leadership in the field in a situation of real danger depends on the leader's ability to withstand difficulties (such as lack of sleep, etc.) and to continue to command people on the battlefield energetically and in a good mood (Hill, 2008). Such strong leadership then creates trust among members and in the team's skills (Norwich University,

2019). Leadership within military organizations, as well as training itself, should emphasize the need to adapt and overcome adversities (Yardley & Neal 2007). Although, researching the topic of uncertain tasks and mission execution in a maritime context, Krabberød (2014) cites conclusions presented in work of the author Avolio (2007), who claims that leadership theory and research has focused excessively on change of the leader and "**...** "much less attention is paid to leader interaction, followers and context."

Sharing leadership in a team is a phenomenon where leadership is distributed among team members and is not reserved exclusively for the leader, and it includes decentralization and sharing of power and influence, primarily for the purpose of achieving efficiency (Carson, Tesluk & Marrone, 2007; Pearce, Conger & Locke, 2008). In the military domain, team engagement in hazardous environments was investigated by Yammarino et al. (2010), concluding that shared leadership can ensure teams to succeed in hazardous environments, in extreme situations. There are also other papers, and for example, Ramthun (2013) applied, in addition to the mentioned problem, the "Social Network Analysis" technique, among other things.

Research gap and research questions

The ships of the CN have been participating in the "Sea Guardian" (NATO) operation for more than four years, thus directly contributing to global security and stability. In this research, the intention was to establish the peculiarities of teamwork and team leadership of the boarding teams. The research is based on knowledge of the successes of the CN Fleet, which realizes maritime interception capabilities, including MIO boarding teams. They also refer to capabilities of the Coast Guard of the Republic of Croatia (CG), which has organized MIO boarding teams on its routine inspections of vessels.

In relation to previously discussed closely associated research topics, Krabberød's (2014) work should be highlighted, where the concepts of "task uncertainty" and "mission management" are analysed in the maritime context (Norway), and for military teams Shuffler, Pavlas & Salas (2012) as well as

Ramthun (2013). Therefore, we believe that there is an obvious research gap, because there are certainly no recorded studies of the application of the team leadership model in the CN, nor in teams within the Croatian Army. The main research question is:

"What are the main characteristics of the teamwork and application of the team leadership model in transshipment teams within the Croatian Navy?"
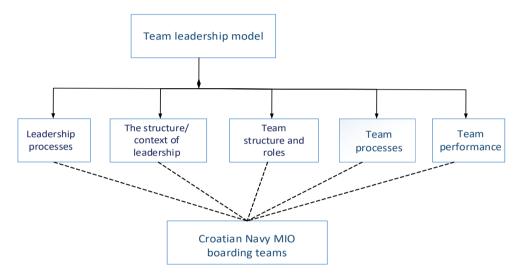

Figure 2. Research of the team leadership model for MIO boarding teams.

Analysing the previous research, we established the main categorization of the contained topics, towards which research of the theorists strive (Figure 2). The application of the method of qualitative research on theory of the team leadership and empirical research on practice of the teamwork and leadership in the CN teams should provide an answer to the research question. Decomposition of the research topics of the teamwork and team leadership pointed to the domain of the necessary analysis of the characteristics of team leadership in the CN boarding teams, which was made in the paper.

Leadership research in the CN boarding teams

On February 5, 2021, the Republic of Croatia declared an exclusive economic zone, which includes the maritime area on the Adriatic Sea, from the outer border of the territorial sea in the direction of the open sea to its outer border permitted by general international law. The area of the exclusive economic zone, under sovereign rights of the Republic of Croatia, is 25,207 square kilometres (Croatia. *Decision on the Proclamation of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea 2021*). When sailing in the Croatian exclusive economic zone, vessels are obliged to comply with generally accepted international regulations and standards, as well as Croatian regulations on combating sea pollution with ships and pollution caused by sinking or submarines. Geographically, borders of the economic zone of the Republic of Croatia would be on average about 70 km from the coasts of our outer islands (Maritime Code 2004 HR).

The area of the Adriatic Sea under sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia is 31,757 km², while on a large part of the Adriatic Sea, outside the state territory, the Republic of Croatia exercises certain sovereign rights and competences (exclusive economic zone). It is of utmost importance to monitor such a huge area in an organized and efficient manner. It is an important economic resource of the Republic of Croatia, and the basic duties and tasks of the CG are protection of the interests and sovereign rights of the Republic of Croatia and implementation of the Croatian jurisdiction in the mentioned area (Barić Punda et al., 2017).

Over the sea area under the sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia, the CG can provide assistance to port authorities, maritime police and customs, if it proves necessary (Amižić et al., 2010). During regular patrols in the area of the exclusive economic zone, the CG performs routine inspections of the fishing vessels and all other suspicious vessels. For this purpose, it has organized teams on its ships for transshipment of the mentioned vessels during mentioned controls in the area under jurisdiction of the Republic of Croatia. These teams are organized on the principle of boarding teams in accordance with the NATO standard, ATP-71 (2005). To succeed in the tasks of surveillance and control of the Adriatic Sea, it is necessary to achieve continuous monitoring of the

maritime situational picture above surface of the sea, the transmission of data in the shortest possible time and ability to act after data transmission.

Context – the broader structure of leadership

The team leader must have the ability to unite efforts of a wide variety of forces and direct all their abilities towards execution of the task through a strictly defined "chain of command". All members have some specific and unique roles, where the performance of each role contributes to collective success (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001). The chain of command of the boarding team varies depending on the specific operational area, as well as according to political objectives of the MIO, but it resembles the basic structure described throughout the text (Figure 3). Similar to the allied armies, the CN focuses on building sailors and officers as leaders of character, with operational abilities, as well as those for acting in wartime circumstances, and special attention is given to intellectual and social characteristics (Barry et al., 2021). The team leadership model is most often applied to boarding teams in NATO navies, where each member must possess certain skills that complement the team's effort.
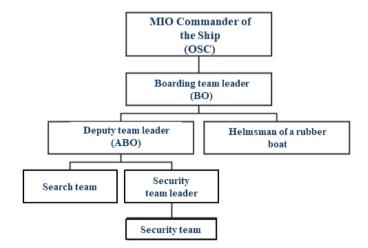
Figure 3. Boarding team command structure
(North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005: p. 27).

A good communication plan is vital to the success of an interception operation. The complex nature of the MIO requires that all participating units pay close attention to compatibility of the communication systems. The MIO commander is responsible for creating the communication plan and coordinating all communication requirements from the participants of the operation.

Boarding teams of the CN - team structure and roles

Team leadership comes as a result of the interaction of members. The ability to achieve coordination and cooperation in the team is crucial for success of the team. A considerate and loyal atmosphere ensures focus on the task, mutual understanding, and willingness to take risks. Each team member realizes his/her role through experience and acquired skills, and contributes to leading others towards fulfilment of the group's key goals (Gonzales, 2016). In order to create an atmosphere that promotes cooperation, it is necessary to develop relationships of trust based on openness, consistency, mutual respect and honesty (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

Morgeson, DeRue & Karam (2010) distinguish leadership functions in the transition phase and in the action phase. According to their model, in the transition phase, emphasis of the activities is on establishment of the structures and processes relevant to the team. What is achieved at this stage enables efficiency in future stages of the action. Tasks of the transition phase include composing the team, structuring the roles and responsibilities of the members, defining the overall mission, goals, performance standards, and ensuring readiness of the individuals. When forming boarding teams, the CN and the CG respect international and NATO standards. According to NATO standard ATP-71 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005), the team should consist of at least 10 members who are appointed as follows:

- Transit officer (boarding team leader - BO). He needs to gain complete trust of the ship's master. This is an armed forces officer who is mature and in excellent physical condition, qualified to handle small arms (maturity, excellent physical condition and handling of small arms is also expected of other members).

- Assistant transshipment officer (deputy team leader – ABO). The supporting officer is usually also an armed forces officer who should be in training or equally qualified as team leader. This member must gain trust of the master of the ship.
- Security team leader. This team member should be a senior member of the ship's crew.
- Security team. This group is a group of five members (most often). They must be mature, in excellent physical condition and qualified to handle small arms.
- Search team. The said team is a group of the two most experienced and mature members of the boarding team (preferably senior NCOs).

The following additional boarding team members may be used as needed: photographer, the second search team, additional security team members. They have the same qualifications as the members of the security team. Composition of the crew of the fast rubber boat should be kept to a minimum of three members, in order to avoid overcrowding in the boat itself. The recommended composition of the vessel's crew is as follows:

- Helmsman. The best ship's helmsman is needed because many transshipments can be carried out at night and in all kinds of weather and sea conditions. This member must be mature and proficient with a handheld radio.
- Vessel engineer. This team member should be trained to handle a rifle.
- Bow sailor. This member should be the best deckhand available due to demanding nature of operating the vessel at night and in poor weather conditions.

Each of the team members has unique, specific roles, where fulfilment of each individual role contributes to the team's collective success. The structure of the team and the mentioned roles are important from the aspect of "sharing leadership", the approach of participation of all team members in leadership. Team leadership is understood by numerous authors through the above-mentioned perspective, and for military teams the research that have value are certainly those of Ramthun (2013), Lindsay, Day & Halpin (2011) and of other authors. Ramthun shares the realization that for military teams in

extreme situations, shared leadership can be a sustainable framework that ensures team performance.

Leadership processes of the boarding teams

Team leadership assumes that the task of the leader is to monitor the team and then act in any way that ensures success of the team (Hill, 2016). As previously pointed out, leadership processes have a significant impact on team performance. Fleishman et al. (1991) analysed details regarding those activities that the leader should practice in categories of the leadership process. For example, in activity "searching for information and structuring" (Table 1), the following dimensions are included: obtaining information, organizing and evaluating information, feedback and control. There are 13 of these dimensions in total. The previously mentioned leadership processes (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001) affect the processes within the team, namely: cognitive processes, motivational processes, emotional processes and coordination processes. Specific leadership processes, derived from the main categories (Table 1), are focused on individual processes of the transfer teams. Success in team processes is reflected in performance and efficiency.

Table 1. Leadership processes and processes of transfer teams
(according to Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001; Morgeson, DeRue & Karam, 2010).

Leadership process	Processes of interception/ transshipment teams	Team performances
information seeking and structuring	cognitive processes in the team	
using information to solve problems	motivational processes in the team	are reflected in the action phase
human resources management	emotional processes in the team	
management of material resources	coordination processes n the team	

Processes that are under the authority of the leader - integrating personal skills of members, setting clear goals, monitoring changes in the environment, monitoring feedback and adapting the team's efforts to said changes in the environment - are processes that lead to team compliance (Zaccaro, Rittman & Marks, 2001). These processes, which aim to increase efficiency of the transshipment team, are confirmed through discussions regarding the Croatian Navy boarding teams. In accordance with the theory of team leadership and the concept of shared leadership, experienced members in boarding teams also occasionally perform some leadership functions. The need for team members to share leadership is generally related to the new, complex requirements of some situations for individual teams. In this way, it is possible to better respond to challenges and interrelated requirements of more complex tasks, but also to prevent weakening of the team's performance due to strict hierarchical division of the roles and inability of the leader to cope with too demanding situations alone (Yammarino et al., 2010).

A team leader can improve effectiveness by demanding specific results, controlling, setting clear expectations, providing feedback when finding solutions, and adequately rewarding results and recognizing successful performance of all team members. With such specified benchmarks, members will be encouraged to make their maximum contribution (Hill, 2016). Intercepting/transshipment teams need clarity of instructions so that everyone knows what they are doing and when. In addition, all teams in Croatian Navy activities need clear roles for team members, a good communication system, methods for evaluating individual performance, and an emphasis on fact-based evaluations. The commanders are trying to make it happen. Embarked team members must be relaxed, confident and cordial, while remaining mentally and physically ready to respond quickly, if necessary. The team leadership processes in the CN are explained below. In a mission, the process begins after sighting of the suspicious vessel via radar, information received from the Naval Operations Centre or from the Coastal Monitoring Station. This is followed by establishment of the communication with the mentioned vessel and its identification, all the obtained data are checked with the Naval Operations Centre, the Maritime Radio Service, and the National Centre for Search and Rescue in Rijeka. At the moment when

criteria for inspection of the ship are met, all necessary information has been collected and structured, the preparation of the MIO team begins in order to use the above information and coordinate all individual contributions in order to achieve the safest transshipment scenario.

During the preparatory meeting, the interception and transshipment team goes through an intensive cognitive and motivational process during which the team leader presents the upcoming task, all collected information about the suspicious vessel, the tasks of all team members, and maintains a high level of the working atmosphere with a motivational speech. The phase of transshipment and search of the suspicious vessel is the most important and most dangerous phase of the MIO. The procedures for carrying out these tasks were previously designed to provide the ship's personnel with basic guidance necessary to carry out boarding operations without external assistance. Boarding and search procedures, although dangerous in nature, must be conducted in a non-threatening and non-confrontational manner. Here the role of the leader is crucial.

Regarding leadership in boarding team practice, it should be noted that boarding team members undergo several months of complex training divided by segments of the most expected task, and courses for certain skills in order to be able to deal with all challenges that boarding teams face. These challenges for the team are transshipment during day or night, depending on the size and shape of the vessel (large merchant ship, fishing boat, rubber boat, etc.). The greatest value of continuous training according to a predetermined scenario is to familiarize all team members with all things that can happen during the action, what the relationships are like and how to communicate. What is actually built during these trainings is the flexibility to adapt to almost any possible scenario. The reason for this is understandable, considering that an operation performed on site very rarely goes as planned (McGinn, 2015). New members of the boarding team, when they reach the required level of training and readiness, are introduced to execution of the transshipment tasks with mentorship of the more experienced members. In addition, "refresher" trainings are continuously on-going in order to maintain and improve high level of training and readiness for execution of the mission.

Before each assignment, full preparation is done in accordance with expected conditions. The most important part of the task before transshipment is intelligence preparation of the team, which is carried out by the intelligence officer based on all collected information about the suspicious vessel and its crew. Then the team leader works out the exact division of the roles with more experienced members, as well as the performance of the transshipment and the control of the suspicious vessel down to the smallest details. If it is a larger merchant ship, the team will split into two parts and approach the ship from both sides to avoid unpleasant surprises. The leader leads one part of the team, and the most experienced non-commissioned officer leads the other part of the team. The more leadership authority is assigned to qualified personnel, the better equipped the team can be to deal with a dynamic, fast-paced environment because leadership is not focused on one or several actors (Ramthun, 2013).

The criteria for abandoning the operation ("No-Go" criteria) were established to prevent execution of the mission in excessively dangerous or unusual conditions. If the "No-Go" criteria are met, the mission should be urgently terminated, cancelled, postponed or relinquished to a unit with different capabilities (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005). The role of leadership is particularly important here. The stated criteria must be clearly understood by all members of the boarding team. The "No-Go" criteria must be reviewed prior to each transshipment mission to a suspect vessel in case of any changes. Faced with extreme situations, team members identify with the purpose and mission of the team and become ready to make individual sacrifices for the team (Yammarino et al., 2010). Each individual must be able to recognize potential problems and be trained to resolve such a situation and/or terminate the operation as necessary. The "No-Go" criteria should be constantly assessed during all phases of the operation. Staff safety is the highest priority.

Interception and Transshipment Team Processes and Team Effectiveness

Zaccaro, Rittman, and Marks (2001) classified the processes into four categories: cognitive, motivational, emotional, and harmonizing. Through the aforementioned processes, team efficiency and performance at a particular level are achieved (Table 1). In boarding teams, emotional and coordination processes of the team leadership take place, especially during the execution of the tasks, i.e. during transfer to an unknown vessel. Until the moment when control is established over the crew of the said ship, and even after that, it is important to keep your composure and control your emotions. Likewise, if an unforeseen situation arises and the need to react quickly, all team members, through non-verbal communication[2], previous training and mutual trust, must be able to adapt to new conditions and coordinate their actions in order to maintain control over the crew and the vessel they are inspecting. Regarding the process, efficiency of the team is important.

Boarding teams are exposed to potentially dangerous situations, and boarding team members may be required to climb 10 to 20-meter pilot ladders from their ship at night and in bad weather. Therefore, excellent physical fitness of the members is required. Navy ships can have numerous transshipments in a 24-hour period, so team members must be mentally and physically alert and ready at all times. To increase safety, all members of the boarding team should be relieved of the ship's watch shifts to the greatest extent possible, especially if the tactical environment requires frequent reloads. Here, the leader's task is particularly focused in the domain of support. Small arms knowledge and formal training are key elements in the safety of all boarding team members, especially search team members.

The CN MIO boarding teams members participating in the previously mentioned peace support operation "Sea Guardian" underwent intensive training in self-defence and close combat techniques tailored to their job description. It involved boarding an unknown vessel and dealing with

2 Coordination mechanisms according to Mintzberg (1980) are: direct supervision, mutual coordination, and standardization (skills, work, results)

potential attacks by the crew that, after detection of illegal activities resorted to violence against members of the MIO teams. Namely, Special Forces instructors conduct various types of training for MIO teams, and recently, Israeli close combat "Krav Mage" training was added at request of the CN Fleet Command, which includes MIO boarding teams (Ministry of Defence, 2019). These demanding trainings certainly create a predisposition for high team efficiency.

Following a systematic consideration, it should be noted here that, according to the observations made in the analysis of the CN boarding teams, there is an aspiration and activities aimed at achieving team excellence, the essential characteristics of which are well defined by Larson and LaFasto (1989):

Encouraging goal - Team goals must be clearly defined, so that goal fulfilment can be analysed, and they must be motivating, so that members recognize their importance.

Structure suitable for objectives - Tactical teams, along with trust, should emphasize clarity and procedures, so all members must know their role and task at all times.

Professional team members - Teams should be made up of the correct number and mixed composition of members. Team members should possess skills and key knowledge that include the ability to get the job done and overcome obstacles.

Shared commitment - Teams are carefully designed and constructed. Through experience, successful teams create a sense of community, team spirit and a desire to identify.

Collaborative atmosphere - In a friendly atmosphere, team members remain focused on the task, understand each other, are ready to take risks and complement each other.

Standards of Excellence - Effective collective norms are essential for team functioning. Performance of the team members should be conceived through coordinated action, and the task completed.

External support and recognition - Failure often occurs when organizational teams are given a challenging task and are not provided with organizational support or rewarded for their performance.

A leader provides emotional support to the team in dealing with stressful situations by highlighting clear goals, tasks and strategies. When coordinating actions, the leader makes sure to fit all the team's activities by aligning knowledge and skills of the members with the roles, ensuring clear performance strategies, following feedback and adapting to changes in the environment. Commitment to the team and the achievement of the team's goals are the most important characteristics of the successful leadership. Successful leaders maintain team focus, build a collaborative atmosphere, foster a sense of security among members, demonstrate skills and technical expertise, and set priorities.

MIO operations are conducted to interdict maritime movement of certain persons or materials within a certain geographical area. These are usually limited to interception and, if necessary, boarding of vessels by the MIO boarding team (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005) to inspect, divert or seize their cargoes to support implementation of the economic or military sanctions. Units engaged in MIO normally exercise the right to the following:

- Examine vessels for reasons other than safe navigation,
- Send an armed MIO team to visit vessels traveling to, from or outside a certain geographical area,
- Inspect the papers and cargo of each ship,
- Search for evidence of prohibited items,
- Divert vessels that do not follow the guidelines set by the sanctioning body,
- Seize the vessel and cargo, all vessels that refuse to divert,
- Detain suspected persons and confiscate goods and property when they are authorized to do so.

As part of the operations, or the process for direct implementation of the mission of the boarding team, the aforementioned activities are included in the processes.

Results – distinguishing characteristics of team leadership and process of the cn boarding teams

MIO boarding members teams are armed with firearms and have the authority to use them. Practice has shown that the opponent often uses what is currently close at hand such as a utility knife, a hatchet, metal pipes and the like during an attack. All the doors of the ship's rooms are oval-shaped, with smaller dimensions than the classic ones, and under normal circumstances, one enters through the door with head facing forward. This, of course, emphasizes even more the need to train and exercise prevention against potential attacks (Ministry of Defence, 2019). Therefore, the MIO team members must be maximally trained to automatism due to nature of the ship's rooms, which are cramped and require certain adjustments in order to enable implementation of the classic techniques of securing the area. Authors discussed this topic in the previous chapter. Table 2 summarizes characteristics of the essential processes in boarding teams. Leadership processes influence these described processes.

Table 2. CN boarding team processes
(Based on empirical research by authors conducted in 2022)

Processes	Description of the boarding team process
Cognitive processes of the team	Before the action phase, all key information regarding the task comes from the intelligence structure. Good intelligence preparation is the key to success when implementing boarding. The safety of all team members always comes first. When all the key information about the vessel to be transhipped is known in advance, whether it is a ferry, merchant ship (tanker, container ship or something else), fishing boat or dinghy, as well as the crew structure of the said vessels, any possibility of extraordinary events is reduced to a minimum. In this phase, the boarding team prepares for the transshipment itself through the activity plan and division of roles with regard to the type of vessel and conditions that await them (day, night, height of the side of the suspect vessel, calm or rough sea, rain, wind, etc.).

Motivational processes of the team	Since boarding teams in the Croatian Navy are practically just emerging, all team members are particularly motivated by the very possibility of participating in such tasks. Acquiring new skills and abilities is an important factor in the motivational process. In addition, participation in international military missions such as "Sea Guardian", during which boarding tasks are regularly performed, encourages intrinsic motivation. For Croatian Armed Forces boarding teams, international missions are a great opportunity to test acquired skills, but also to gain new experiences.
Emotional processes of the team	When moving to each new task, which is usually different from the previous one, the team members usually "feel excitement", adrenaline is elevated and everyone is under certain positive nervousness and anticipation. It is of utmost importance to all members to show all their abilities and do their homework perfectly. In these situations, the team leader and more experienced members influence younger members with their calmness and make sure that everything is carried out professionally and safely for participants of the boarding process. The team members think through all the steps of the mission that awaits them before, but also during implementation of the transshipment itself, and thus make sure that no omissions occur.
Coordinating the team processes	The boarding team must be prepared for all possible scenarios that may occur when boarding a suspicious vessel. In the planning phase of the implementation of the task, all possible outcomes of boarding, the so-called "what if scenarios" should be tested. Then prepared responses to probable outcomes are practiced, as well as non-verbal communication and coordination during implementation. The team leader always controls and coordinates the adaptation of actions to conditions of the situation on the suspicious vessel. In this, he also relies on more experienced team members who assume their share of responsibility in leadership. The key is mutual trust between team members, their skills, and experience of the senior members who help the team leader manage the situation.

Discussion

Employment of team leadership is a challenge for teams in a military context, where strong formalism, hierarchical structure and chain of command dominate the idea of shared leadership. Nevertheless, teamwork is present and team leadership has its place, especially in actions that can lead to risky and dangerous situations (Ramthun, 2013; Yammarino et al., 2010).

With team leadership, the emphasis is on constant analysis of team performance and improvements, similar to sports teams. When the sports team wins, the coach must continue to work on the commitment and further development of the team so that there is no drop in the level of performance. The team leadership model suggests a way for such continuous analysis and improvement. Team leadership, according to Morgeson, DeRue and Karam (2010) has a transition phase and an action phase. Thus, the boarding team, which was composed and trained in the first phase, with a conscious mission, in the second phase performs tasks, is monitored and engaged in challenging new missions. The training of CN boarding teams is very demanding.

In the action phase, the most important part of the task before carrying out the interception and transshipment is the intelligence preparation of the team, After that the team leader with more experienced members works out the very division of roles, and performance of the transshipment and control of the suspicious vessel to the smallest detail. Teamwork and team leadership of boarding teams of CN is a peculiar phenomenon and research has shown this in all key subtopics: context of leadership of boarding teams, processes of team leadership, processes of boarding teams, structure and roles in boarding teams, performance of boarding teams (Figure 2). The essential processes of the team being led, in the case of the CN boarding teams, are identified and explained in Table 2.

In the CN boarding teams, sharing of leadership is practiced in such a way that more experienced team members are trained to take the lead over their part of the team at any time, in scenarios that are unwanted, unexpected or dangerous. Finally, there are also specific "No-Go" criteria. In this way, control over the situation is maintained, members are protected and the overall effect is at the required level.

Conclusion

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia continuously invest efforts in raising and preserving the level of achieved capabilities in accordance with the norms and goals of the NATO alliance. The fleet of the Croatian Navy realizes the declared capabilities of maritime interception, including MIO boarding teams that are organized according to the NATO standard, ATP-71 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2005). Likewise, the Coast Guard of the Republic of Croatia, with the formation of teams according to the same standard, is in the process of introducing of new coastal patrol ships. In that way, they will significantly improve their ability to protect the interests of the Republic of Croatia in the area of the exclusive economic zone, as well as in the area of the coastal sea.

The CN interception and transfer teams function effectively, but in seeking a more detailed description of the organizational design of the teams in accordance with the theory, it was necessary to clarify or categorize their structure, processes, members' roles, leadership style, efficiency, and dynamics over time. In this work, this is clarified. Team leadership is a team-based model of organizational action and problem solving, where the leader strives to achieve the team's goals by analysing the situation and choosing and implementing appropriate procedures. The CN Boarding Teams have a friendly environment, members are professional and ready for their roles and tasks, and for the action phase, participation of the members in leadership is carried out. In the preceding stages, teams are created, trained, necessary resources are provided and rewards for team success are planned.

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Timsko vodstvo i timski rad u Hrvatskoj ratnoj mornarici – MIO boarding timovi

Sažetak

Ovaj rad bavi se temom timskog rada te primjene teorije timskog vodstva na primjer timova za presretanje plovila i prekrcaj (Maritime Interdiction Operations Teams - MIT), u sastavu Hrvatske ratne mornarice. Kroz rad su izložene ključne teme i problematika teorije timskog vodstva: utjecaj procesa vodstva na procese tima i u konačnici na performanse, raspodijeljeno vodstvo unutar tima, utjecaj konteksta na vodstvo i uspjeh. Zatim je istraživanjem boarding timova obrađen njihov ustroj, procesi vodstva ovakvih timova, procesi koje timovi izvode i način na koji ovakvi timovi provode svoje zadaće u kontekstu vojne organizacije, Hrvatske ratne mornarice i Oružanih snaga Republike Hrvatske. Utvrđene su osobitosti timskog vodstva i procesa tima iz kategorija spoznajnih, motivacijskih, koordinacijskih, emocionalnih. Utvrđene su i karakteristične aktivnosti tranzicijske faze tima kao i faze akcije, te osobitosti performansi boarding timova. Iz navedenih spoznaja slijede znanstveni doprinosi rada, te doprinos za vojno organiziranje kao i širi društveni doprinos.

Ključne riječi

timovi za prekrcaj, vodstvo, model timskog vodstva, ustroj, Hrvatska ratna mornarica, procedure presretanja plovila