

Chapter 6 – INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

by

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The data collection at the KFOR HQ, Pristine, Kosovo was conducted over a five-day period, October 11 – 15, 2010, including both surveys and interviews. While the survey results were presented in Chapter 5, the interview results are presented in the current chapter. A total of 15 people in key positions (from now on referred to as Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs)) were interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured and each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. The SMEs were interviewed one at a time, by two researchers from the NATO RTO HFM-163.

6.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS

In this section, the responses for each interview question are summarised. Also, the identified relations between input factors and operative goals are presented.

The interview questions were deduced from the model created by the HFM-163 team. The model may not be exhaustive, that is, there is a risk that some constructs that are of importance to organisational effectiveness in the KFOR HQ were not included in the interview protocol. Several issues emerged during the interviews. In particular, the differences between day-to-day business versus the general picture of the HQ, influence political sensitivities and novel cross-cutting tasks nuances the way the factors are spelled out in the HQ. There are also nuances with regard to what the consequences of the input factors are for the output factors.

6.1.1 Organisational Structure: J-Structure or Other

With regard to the question of how the HQ was organised, specifically whether or not a J-Structure¹ is used, there were mixed opinions. Some thought it was a J-structure, while others saw it as either a J-structure undergoing change or something other than J-structure.

A number of the SMEs went to some length at explaining the J-structure in the HQ and what it entailed. It was mentioned that the J-structure was given by “Standard operating procedures”. One SME with a logistics background described it as having three pillars in their own unit: “LOG PLANS, LOG OPS, and LNOs (Liaison Officers)”.

The interview results gave at hand that the deviations from traditional J-structure were mainly related to logistics. J1, J4, and J-engineering had recently been merged into a “resource package”. The transfer of location of support from Skopje to Pristine was also thought to have resulted in some structural changes. Another deviation from J-structure mentioned was the MCA division that was now a separate section, while it was formerly a section within the J4 branch. The MCA division was regarded by SMEs as separate from the J-branches.

Formation of ad hoc teams from different J-structure sections was also mentioned as an example of deviation from traditional structure. These ad hoc teams were set up for certain focus areas, and targeting was mentioned as such an area.

¹ The majority of NATO operative HQs are organised according to the J-structure, in which the HQ is divided into 9 branches – J1 – J9. J1 – Manpower and personnel, J2 – Intelligence, J3 – Operations, J4 – Logistics, J5 – Plans and Policy, J6 – Communication and Information Systems, J7 – Training and Exercises, J8 – Budget and Finance, J9 – Civil-Military Co-operation. The J stands for Joint indicating that the HQ consists of multiple services.

6.1.2 Organisational Structure: Hierarchical or Flat

The general opinion from the SMEs was that the HQs had become flatter in its organisational structure than before, although it was still hierarchical. A minority thought that it was hierarchical to a large extent. One of the SMEs emphasised that structure was influenced by functional areas rather than the flat-hierarchical axis.

Those who viewed the structure to be flatter than before mainly related this to decreased manning due to the recent personnel reduction of the HQs and to changes in the type of skills needed to perform the various tasks. Some of those who had this view also emphasised that flatter was better for a smaller organisation, in that a shorter chain of command resulted in faster response times and increased flexibility. One respondent viewed the structure as flat on a day-to-day basis while remaining generally hierarchical overall.

Those who viewed the HQs as primarily hierarchical also viewed this as detrimental to work. According to these SMEs, this hierarchy made it more difficult to reach goals and coordinate efforts between branches, slowing down work as communication between branches was more difficult.

In relation to the model, the SMEs indicated that there was a certain amount of hierarchy associated with the different operative goals. However, no relationships were seen between this factor and other input factors (see Figure 6-1).

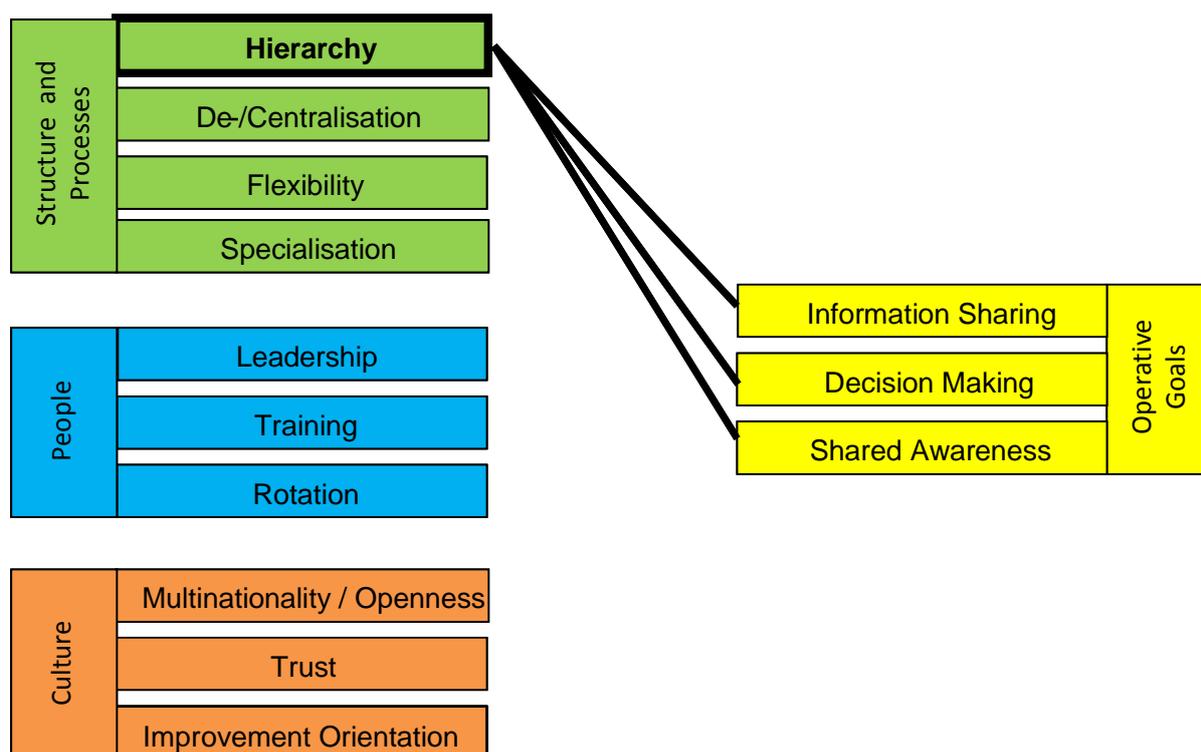


Figure 6-1: The Relationship Between Hierarchy and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

With relation to the model, interview results showed that a flat structure may **positively impact**:

- **Information sharing**, where a flat hierarchy facilitates information sharing and cross-flow communication.
- **Decision making**, in that a flat structure results in shorter chain of command, thus faster responses.

- **Shared awareness**, due to that a flatter structure results in a more direct communication between branches.

According to the interview results, a flat structure may **negatively impact**:

- **Information sharing**, if cross-flow of information is missing.

6.1.3 Centralised or Decentralised Command Processes

Some respondents viewed the command processes as too centralised, while others argued that processes were too decentralised. Centralisation was thought to be characteristic of how higher echelons of the HQ made decisions, while in day-to-day business, command processes were viewed as more decentralised.

Those who viewed the HQ as too centralised meant that it was causing bottlenecks in information sharing and decision making. As an example, one SME expressed that the need to get authorisation for everything was a problem which is linked to centralisation.

Those with the opposite opinion, the HQ being too decentralised, meant that the decentralisation could cause problems if the J-heads were not qualified. More centralisation was emphasised as important and necessary due to political sensitivities (i.e., the decisions should be in accordance with NATO strategy).

A third set of opinions centred on a division between day-to-day business and long-term decisions. One respondent emphasised that the HQ was centralised in reporting but decentralised in daily work. Another respondent in the MCA division pointed at his branch as decentralised.

In relation to the model, the SMEs to some extent related centralisation to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-2).

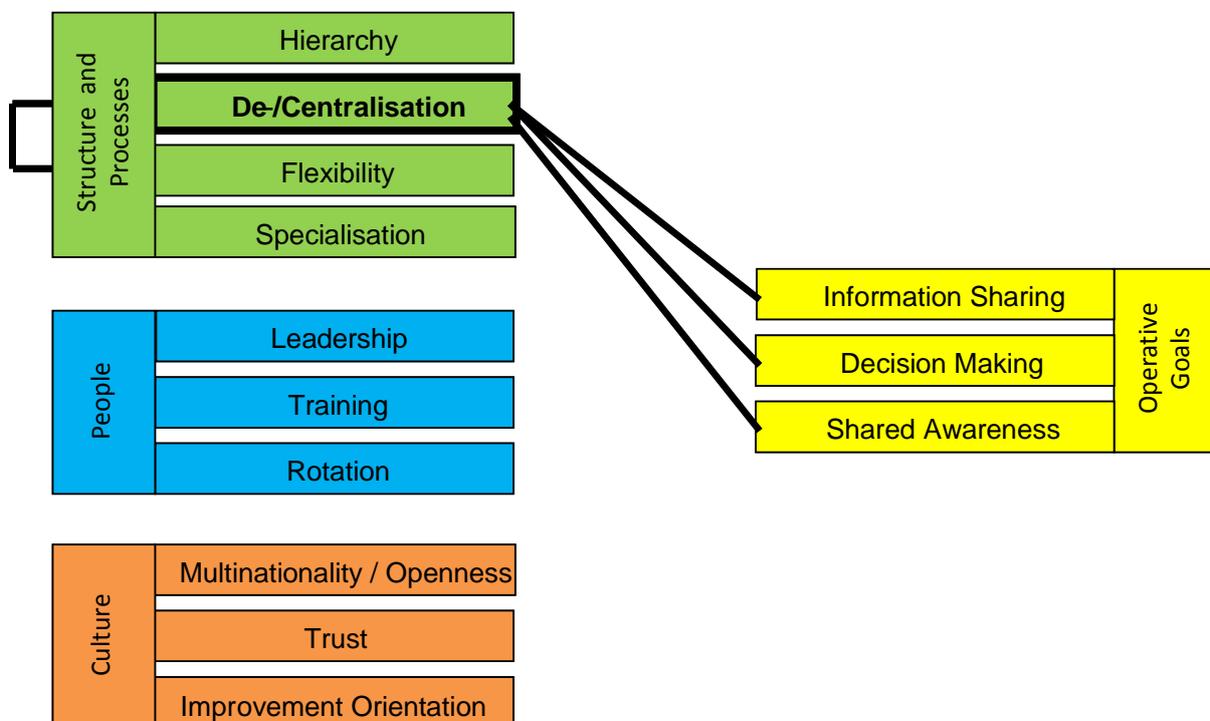


Figure 6-2: The Relationship Between Centralised/Decentralised Command Processes and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Regarding the model, interview results showed that centralisation **positively impacts**:

- **Decision making**, because it guarantees that decisions are made in accordance with NATO strategy.

Centralisation **negatively impacts**:

- **Flexibility**, because the time to react on sudden events is longer.
- **Information sharing**, since bottle necks are created and information flows slower in the system.
- **Decision making**, because subordinates need to get authorisation for everything, and it makes decisions slower.
- **Shared awareness**, since decentralisation facilitates horizontal coordination.

6.1.4 Flexible or Rigid Work Environment

The work environment was thought of as flexible to some degree by most of the respondents. Some viewed their own unit as more flexible than the HQ as a whole and that there was more room for flexibility the lower the hierarchical level. There were a few respondents who viewed the environment as quite rigid. The respondents gave different examples of what could enhance or hamper flexibility. Factors facilitating flexibility related to personal attributes, common goals, experience, and information sharing. When asked what could hamper flexibility, respondents mentioned personality, bureaucracy and administration, lack of access to information systems and factors relating to multi-national issues, such as the lack of language skills and culture awareness.

Most of the SMEs believed that flexibility was a crucial aspect of an efficient HQ. One respondent expressed that for short term issues, a lack of flexibility was not detrimental to organisational effectiveness. However, in long-term situations where more complex solutions are demanded, flexibility is crucial to organisational effectiveness. Still, units should not do things completely on their own. In some units, due to small staff, flexibility was viewed as necessary for the unit. Conversely, flexibility was not seen as positive in all contexts. For example, a more rigid process was viewed as important in order to avoid confusion and maintain focus in some contexts. Some pointed out that the work environment was rigid in appearance but flexible in practice.

In relation to the model, the SMEs to some extent, related flexibility to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-3).

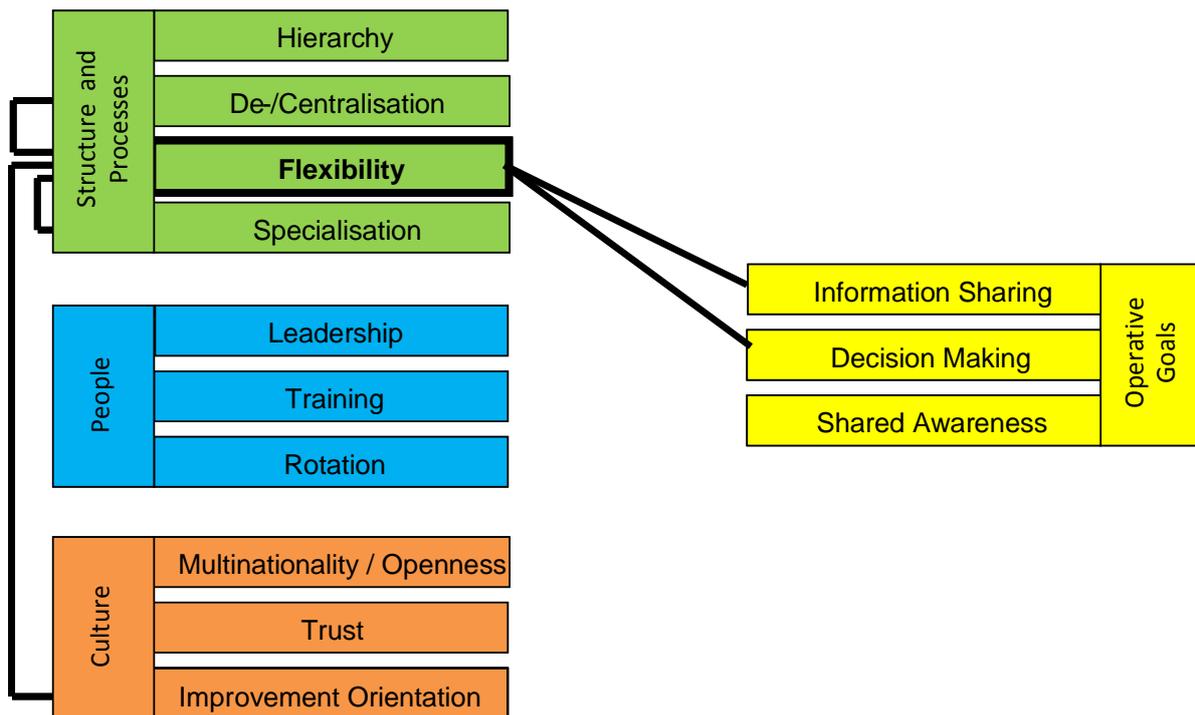


Figure 6-3: The Relationship Between Flexibility and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Flexibility **positively impacts:**

- **Improvement orientation**, because a flexible organisation allows improvements.
- **Information sharing.**

Flexibility is **positively impacted by:**

- **Overlapping roles**, due to that the system is more redundant when roles overlap.
- **Information sharing.**
- **Decision making.**

6.1.5 Specialists or Overlapping Roles

All SMEs viewed the roles in the HQ as specialised rather than overlapping which was generally described in positive terms. For example, “specialisation demands a person to be focused, which is good”. A few SMEs expressed a need for more overlap within the HQ. One of the SMEs expressed the need for more overlap because people new to the HQ are too specialised and do not recognise what is going on in other branches within the HQ. Another SME expressed the need for overlap by saying that “people do not consider others work and are heads down”. A few of the SMEs also expressed a preference to have more overlaps since the HQ needs to be more flexible. One of the officers noted that there are situations where specialists are missing (for vacancy or on leave), and this puts more demand on those already in the HQ. In one of the branches that contained both civil and military personnel, the civilians, due to longer terms at the HQ, had more specialised roles than the military personnel due to their shorter terms at the HQ which resulted in more overlapping roles. This was considered as a good mix by the SMEs.

Views on how the downsizing of the HQ had affected the specialisation diverged. One SME said that as a result of downsizing, roles had become more specialised, which reduced the flexibility within the HQ.

Another interviewee noted that roles had become more overlapping due to fewer people being available to conduct the tasks. It might be that different branches were affected in different ways by the downsizing of the HQ. The general impression of the SMEs on specialisation can be summarized in the quote, “there is specialisation in the structure, but you have to be pragmatic case-by-case”.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related specialisation to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-4).

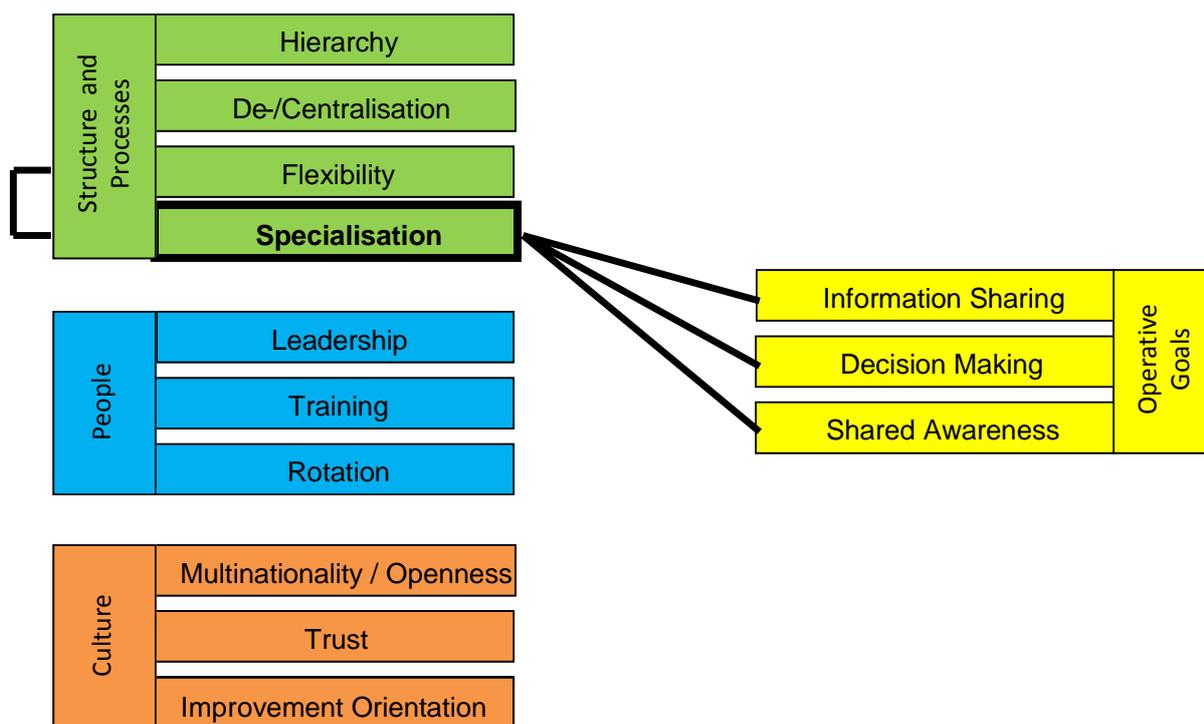


Figure 6-4: The Relationship Between Role Specialisation and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Overlapping roles **positively impacts:**

- **Flexible** structures and processes of an HQ, because the system is more redundant when roles overlap.
- **Information sharing**, since overlapping roles reduce stove-piping tendencies.
- **Shared awareness**, because overlapping roles also lead to a broader understanding of others’ tasks and responsibilities.
- **Decision making**, since some decisions impact several areas, it is good to have people with interests/ knowledge within/about overlapping areas contributing to these decisions.

6.1.6 Leadership

The leadership of the current HQ was viewed very positively by the SMEs. To this end, the SMEs’ answers to questions about leadership need to be considered carefully, since some SMEs may have been worried about their opinions about the leadership reaching their superiors. However, since the leadership was described quite similarly by the SMEs independently of each other, the result is considered reliable. The leadership at the highest level of the HQ was described as rather formal and quite typical for a military HQ with clear rules and a chain of command. This was seen as a positive rather than a negative

trait of the HQ. Within the branch, leadership was described as less formal. The leadership was characterised as “comfortable”, “inclusive”, “open and friendly”, “respectful”, “supportive”, “professional”, and “effective”. Several participants stressed that the superiors are approachable and listen to the opinions and suggestions of the subordinates before making the decisions. Discussion is allowed and the superiors give guidance and enough time to solve tasks. There was the belief that “open discussion could be had without rank dominating these discussions within the HQ”. However, one of the SMEs felt that the civilians in the HQs were not accepted by the military and that this led to communication problems between the civilians and military personnel.

As an example of good leadership, some of the participants mentioned the commander’s daily briefings created a common view of priorities, understanding of commander’s intent and a forum for information sharing. Several SMEs mentioned information sharing and interaction as critical aspects of leadership. One of the SMEs perceived information sharing as better in a multi-national HQ than in a national HQ and that it needs to be better due to the frequent rotations in a multi-national HQ.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related leadership to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-5).

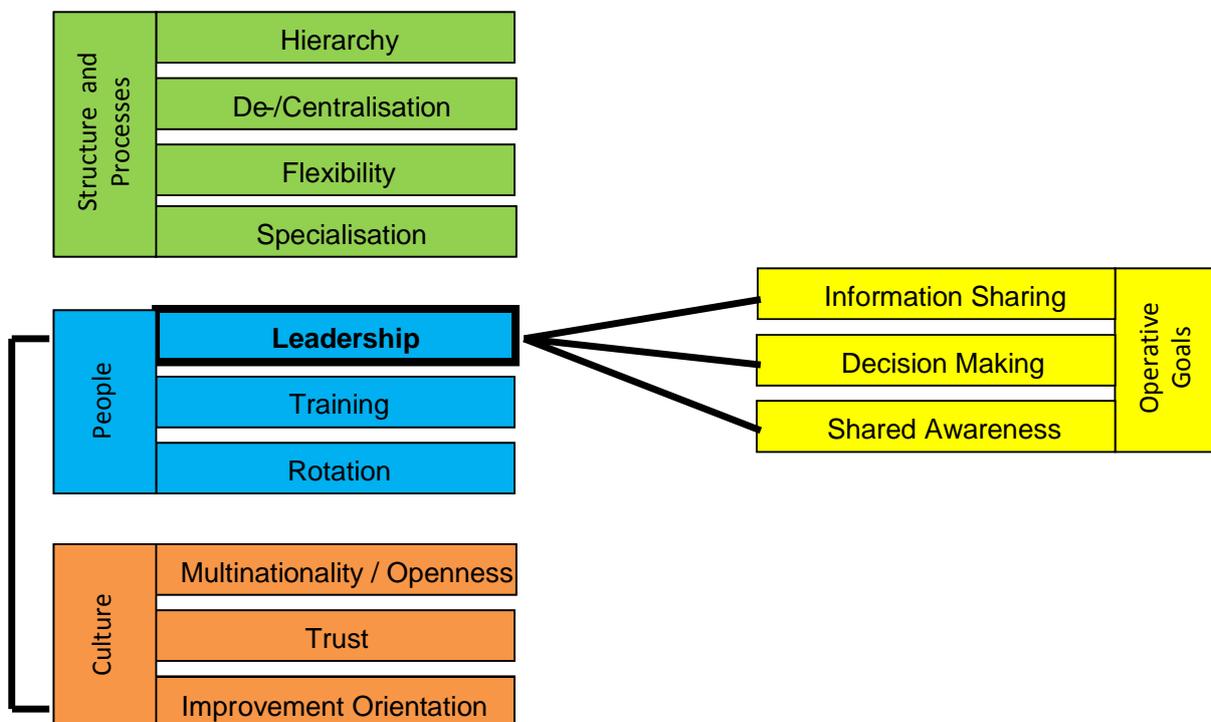


Figure 6-5: The Relationship Between Leadership and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Good leadership was characterised by the SMEs as a leadership that **facilitates**:

- **Improvement orientation**, since SMEs appreciate leadership that is approachable and listens to the opinions and suggestions of the subordinates.
- **Information sharing**, through common meetings.
- **Decision making**, in terms of openness to suggestions by subordinates, enough time to solve tasks, and formalised.
- **Shared awareness**.

6.1.7 Pre-Deployment Training

Pre-deployment training is a national responsibility, and therefore the quantity and quality of training received differed between the SMEs. Some personnel had received national training only, while others received both national and multi-national training. Most of the military SMEs had attended the two-week KFOR Key Leader Training course located at the KFOR HQ prior to their deployment. This was considered to be very good in that it made the start of the deployment easier and many of the SMEs stated that this course should be mandatory. The need for training was considered depending on personal experience and whether the position was a staff or field position, where field positions were regarded as requiring more training. Less training is needed for second or third deployments, but training is always needed since the HQ changes so fast. In terms of what should be included in pre-deployment training, the SMEs mentioned cultural training, situation/culture/complexity of political situation in Kosovo, structure and operations of KFOR, time management and operational planning cycle, language skills (for non-native English speakers), and learning how to use the technical resources.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related pre-deployment training to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-6).

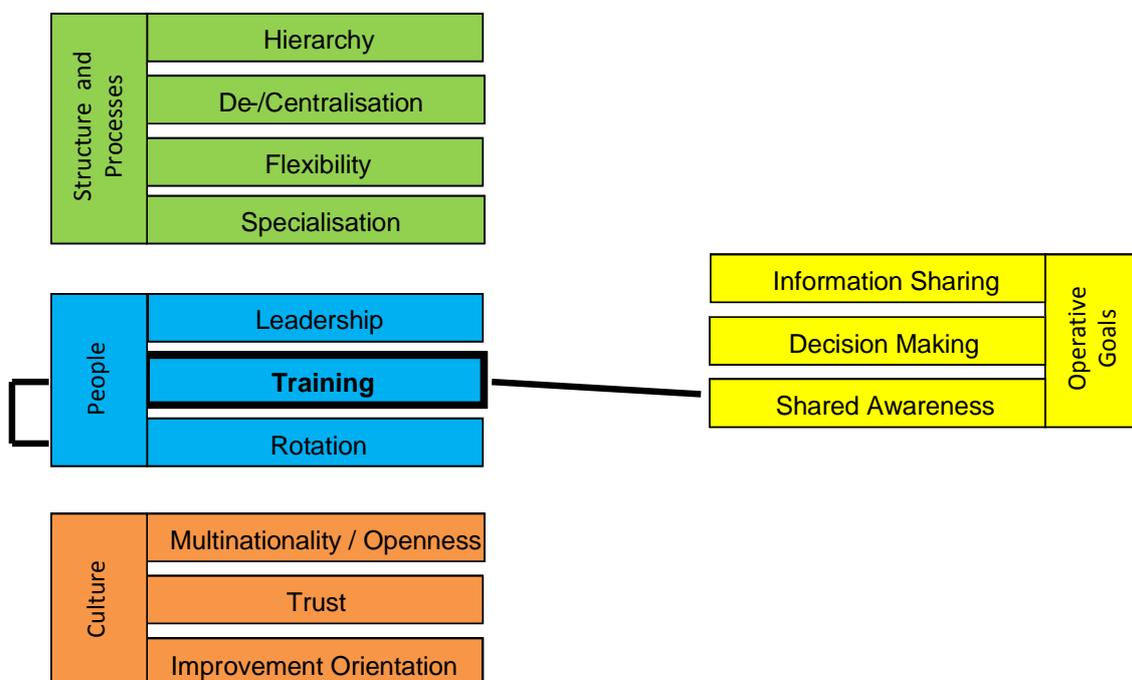


Figure 6-6: The Relationship Between Pre-deployment Training and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Pre-deployment training **positively impacts**:

- **Rotation**, since it will reduce the loss in effectiveness during the handover/takeover period.
- **Shared awareness**, because it creates an understanding of the procedures and structures of the HQ (especially the on-site key leader training).

6.1.8 Personnel Rotations and Handover Process

Most SMEs had experienced a Handover-Takeover (HOTO) period of 1 – 2 weeks. For those having a two-week HOTO, typically, the first week the successor had a “back-seat” role, (i.e., mainly observing what

the predecessor was doing and the second week they swap places letting the successor do most of the work supported by the predecessor). However, the process and time committed to HOTO varies between Nations. Two weeks was considered sufficient, however, some thought that one week could be enough if the successor has experience from earlier deployments. One of the SMEs stressed that administrative in- and out-processing issues also takes a lot of time, so that if there is a two-week HOTO, half the time is spent on administration.

A general opinion expressed by the SMEs was that the HOTO process together with the short rotation cycle reduces the effectiveness of the HQ, by impeding institutional memory, which in turn increases the amount time it takes to learn the work. This was particularly stressed by the SMEs in the MCA division, since they are dependent on personal relations with the members of Kosovo Security Forces. The SMEs felt that developing this relationship is particularly difficult to achieve because Nations do not always send personnel having the required competencies according to the job descriptions and that the assignments are too short. However, as one of the SMEs expressed, “in a multi-national HQ there is nothing you can do about the dip in effectiveness”. One person also expressed that rotations are positive in that “new eyes and new solutions” are brought into the HQ. However, opinions diverged on whether rotations should be concentrated to a few periods per year or be spread out evenly by branch. In the MCA division, evenly spread rotations were considered as necessary due to the need to maintain good relations with the Kosovo Security Forces. Others believed that efficiency would be improved if the rotation periods were more concentrated. One of the SMEs mentioned that the chief and the deputy should not rotate at the same time.

Well-trained personnel who match the job descriptions, earlier experience, and a well-planned and sufficiently long handover/takeover period were considered as most critical for maintaining efficiency in the HQ although personnel are continually changing.

In relation to the model, the SMEs to some extent related rotations to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-7).

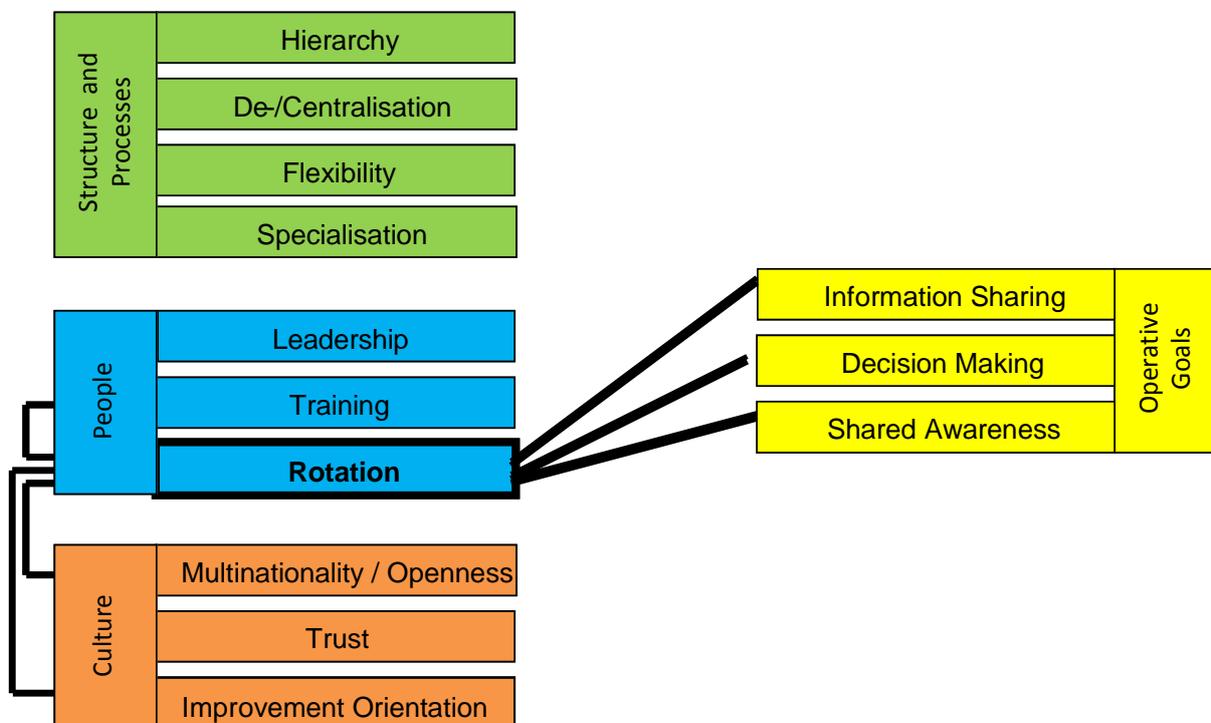


Figure 6-7: The Relationship Between Rotations and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Rotations **positively impacts**:

- **Decision making** in that new eyes and solutions are brought into the HQ.

The handover process **negatively impacts**:

- **Improvement orientation**, due to the loss in institutional memory.
- **Information sharing**.
- **Decision making**, especially if chief and deputy are rotated in an out simultaneously.
- **Shared awareness**, because it takes time to learn who does what in the HQ.

The handover process **interacts with**:

- **Multi-nationality**, since frequent rotations is a part of the system of a multi-national HQ.

6.1.9 Multi-Nationality

Most SMEs spoke positively about multi-nationality in the HQ, and preferred to speak about “challenges” rather than “negative aspects” regarding the fact that the HQ was composed of personnel from 30 different countries. A common opinion was that multi-nationality, in general, is positive in that it brings different perspectives and solutions to problems. It is also good for the individual, who becomes more open-minded by learning about other Nations, cultures, and perspectives. Furthermore, some SMEs mentioned that a multi-national HQ is more powerful due to perceived view that it is more neutral than a national HQ. Still, the SMEs generally believed that a multi-national HQ is less effective than a national HQ. Arguments for this view were based primarily on the reality that people are on shorter assignments in a multi-national HQ, and the communication problems that arise due to varying English language skills. Furthermore, national caveats were mentioned as a problem by two of the SMEs. However, some of the SMEs believed that individual effectiveness is improved when working in a multi-national HQ since you want to make a good impression of the country that you are representing.

In relation to the model, the SMEs to some extent related multi-nationality to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-8).

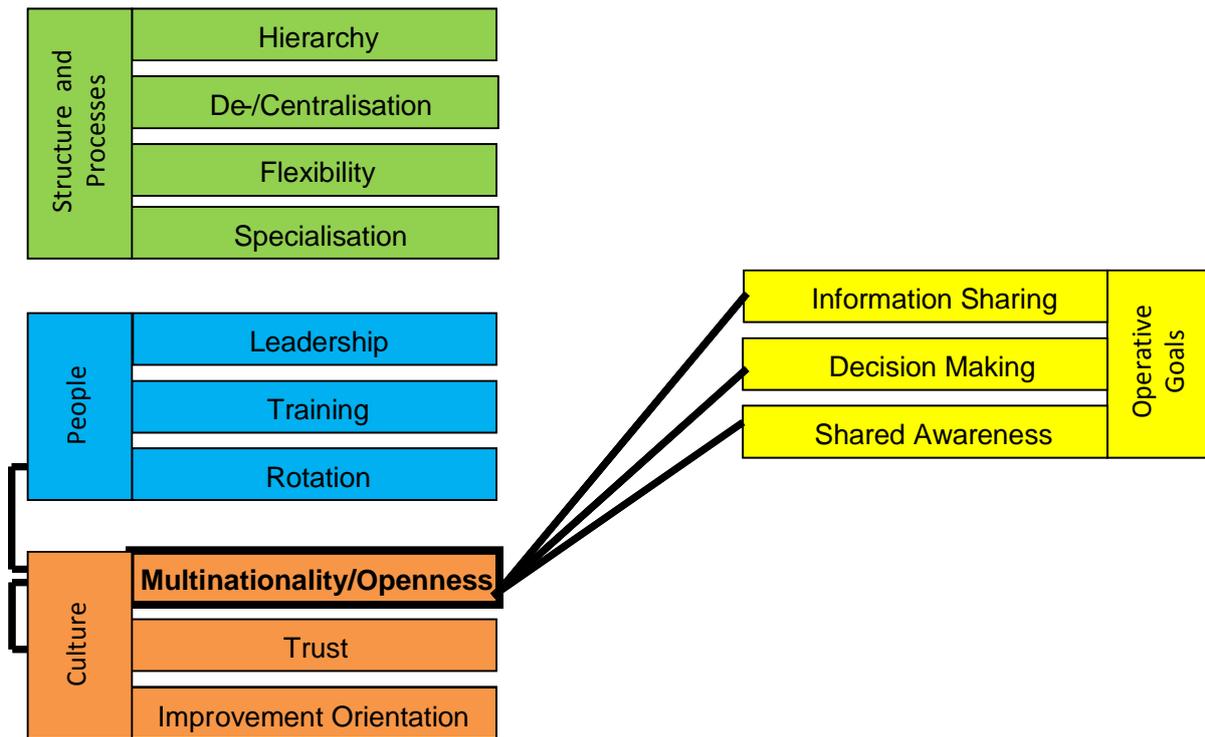


Figure 6-8: The Relationship Between Multi-Nationality and Openness to Diversity and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Multi-nationality **positively impacts:**

- **Decision making**, since new perspectives and solutions to problems are brought into the HQ.

Multi-nationality **negatively impacts:**

- **Information sharing**, if it generates communication problems and misunderstandings.
- **Shared awareness**, because differences in the national training, methods and procedures may make reaching a common understanding of methods and procedures difficult.
- **Shared awareness**, because national interests and hidden agendas may lead to different aims.

Multi-nationality **interacts with:**

- **Rotations**, because frequent rotations is a part of the system of a multi-national HQ.
- **Trust**, since trust may be a sensitive issue in a multi-national HQ.

6.1.10 Trust

The SMEs indicated that there was a quite high level of trust in the HQ, although one expressed that he had become more conservative during his time in KFOR. There were mainly two themes concerning trust, which could relate either to personality of the SMEs or on the definition of the term. Some of the SMEs expressed that they trusted other members of the HQ by default, they trust a person until the opposite is proven. Two of the SMEs related this to the military structure, there is a job description and a rank, and trust is based on the person adheres to their job description and rank. “I always trust in soldiers until I realize somebody does not deserve trust.” The other opinion was that trust has to be established, based on informal relationships, and on daily work (products). Two of the SMEs talked about differences between organisational/official trust and

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

individual trust. “Official trust is there from the beginning, while individual trust has to grow, like in families or friendships.” Since the question was not specified to a certain type of trust, a reason for these different opinions might be that some referred to official trust (based on organisation, formal role, job description) and others individual trust (related to a person). These different types of trust are also reflected in the SMEs’ views on what is critical in order to establish trust:

- Informal information sharing;
- Face-to-face-meetings;
- Openness and acceptance of differences;
- Complying with rules; and
- Delivery of requested products on time.

The way a situation of mistrust was handled within the HQ differed between the participants. One SME said, “I supervise and give feedback on how to improve”. Another SME stated, “When I realise I cannot trust someone, I go to someone else, there is no time to give a second chance”. One SME believed that there are cultural differences in how a situation of mistrust can be handled; “some people feel uncomfortable by feedback”. Finally, trust may be a sensitive issue in a multi-national environment, and can cause dilemma situations.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related trust to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-9).

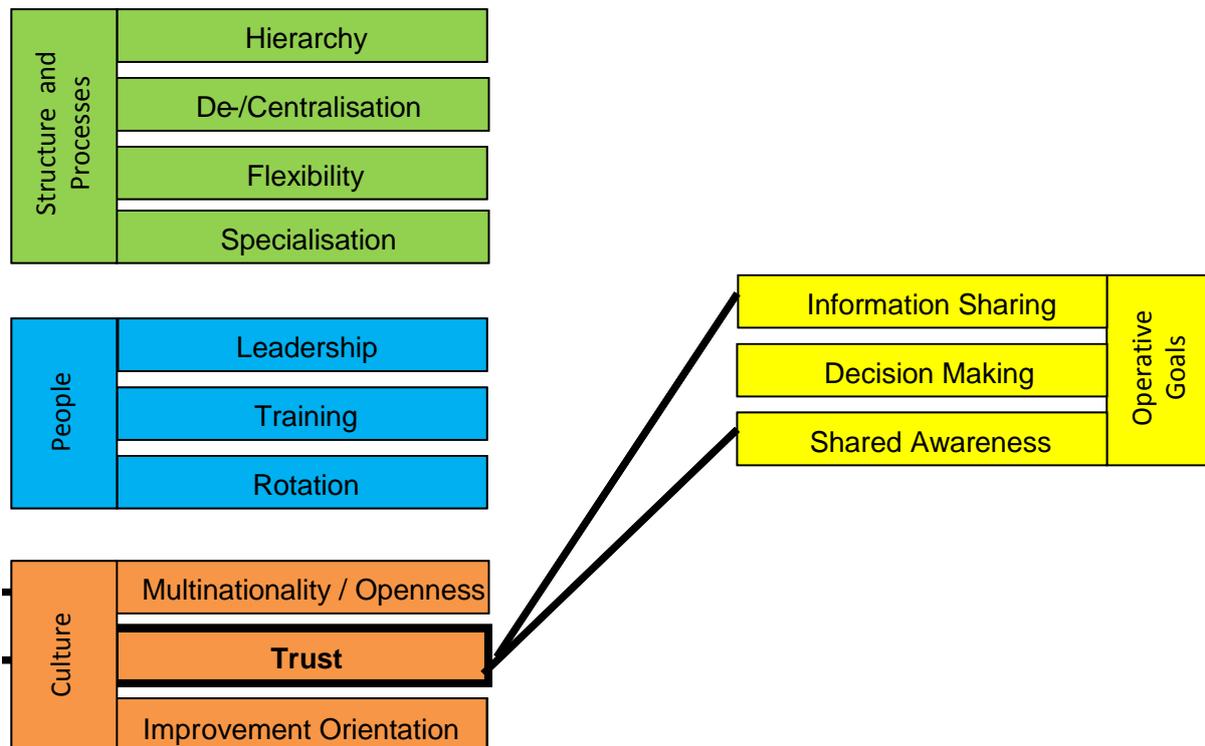


Figure 6-9: The Relationship Between Trust and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Trust is **positively impacted** by:

- **Information sharing**, since information fosters trust.
- **Shared awareness**, since trust may be based on knowing about others' tasks and responsibilities.

Trust **interacts with**:

- **Multi-nationality**, since trust may be a sensitive issue in a multi-national HQ.

6.1.11 Improvement Orientation

To be improvement oriented is to allow initiatives to improve work, processes, and routines. It has both advantages and disadvantages. It can either lead to improvements or it can generate mistakes. We asked our SMEs how improvement oriented they perceive the KFOR HQ, whether there exists formal procedures for improvements and if they have concrete examples in mind.

The respondents were of different opinions—some believed the HQ was improvement oriented, some believed it was not. “I would say ideas are accepted and the HQ tries to improve wherever they can and are asked to do so”, said one SME. “No, I think it is about maintaining the status-quo. [...] And it’s probable that it [improvement orientation] doesn’t happen because people don’t have time in their course of rotation”, stated another SME. These ambivalent opinions might be caused by different leadership styles as stated by another SME, “Sometimes yes, sometimes no. It depends on the persons who have the leadership of this HQ”. It was noted that there definitely is a need for improvement and innovation to manage all the new and complex tasks. It was also mentioned that proactivity is possible and allowed: “Everyone, in his own area of responsibility, has the authority and also the possibility to prepare something and to provide his proposals for improvement or whatever”. Crucial for this proactivity and improvement orientation in general is information sharing. In terms of the formal procedures required for improvement orientation to occur, the SMEs specified Lessons Learned (LL), regular revisions of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), After Action Reviews (AAR), and monthly Assessment Cycles. But the impact of these procedures has been met with doubt: “But I am not sure if they have much influence on the improvement. It’s more a consequence of the rotation. When you leave and get your AAR too late, the new crew has to start again. I don’t think my experience will have an influence on the persons that come after me”. Some SMEs could not give any examples for formal improvement procedures, however apart from formal procedures several people also described informal ways to improve work in day-to-day life: “We change our working routines when we see that there are some weaknesses or gaps. Furthermore, we always try to find a way to make the work easier and better. That’s always in our minds and we are trying to improve our procedures and make things run smoother.”

In relation to the model, the SMEs to some extent related improvement orientation to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-10).

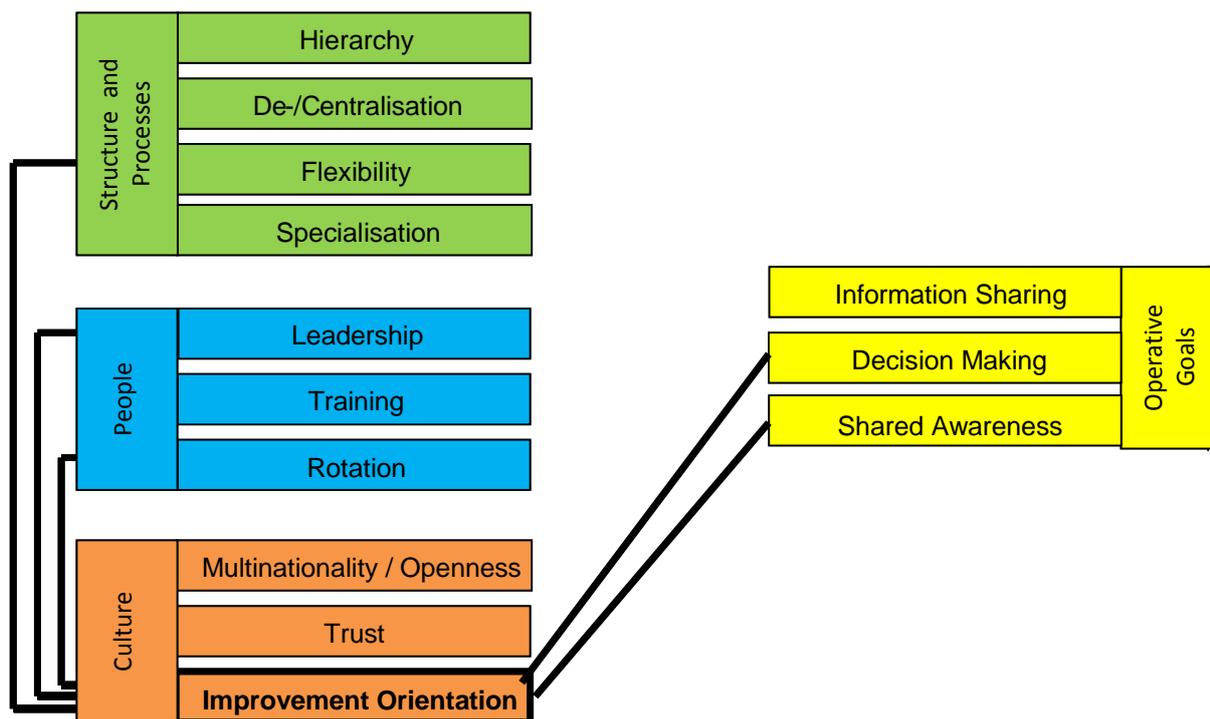


Figure 6-10: The Relationship Between Improvement Orientation and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Improvement orientation is **positively impacted** by:

- **Flexible** structures and processes of a HQ.
- **Leadership** that is described as approachable and that listens to the opinions and suggestions of the subordinates.
- **Shared awareness** because you need to know how tasks and responsibilities are related before an attempt to improve the organisational work is undertaken.
- An effective and timely **formal and informal information flow**.

Improvement orientation is **negatively impacted** by:

- High rotation of staff because leadership style changes and organisational memory gets lost.

6.1.12 Information Sharing

Managing information is the HQ’s way of handling information or knowledge. We wanted to know how the information sharing in the KFOR HQ works, what the most critical aspects are that influence information sharing and how it can be improved.

Most of the SMEs thought that information was available and easily accessible in the KFOR HQ. “There is a lot of information inside this HQ, but the sharing is not the problem, the information is out there in the different computer systems or anywhere else. The main problem is to get the right information. [...] There is so much information that the control of the information is very difficult.” This information overflow is mentioned by several others: “All information is available. There is too much information. The problem is how to select the proper information.” “It’s like the internet: You have all information there. I think there is no deficit or lack of information. But you have to know where you have to go, where you get it. Sometimes I have to go to the counterpart face-to-face to get the information. Sometimes the information

is just in the net on the data base”. Therefore, the critical issue about information sharing is more about knowing where to look for and get the relevant information than there being a lack of information. “To know what information you need and where to get it, to know which rights and power you have. It’s about knowledge of the system.” Hence, one critical factor that influences information sharing is knowledge of the system. Other factors mentioned were persons being proactive about and willing to share information (e.g., “A proper system is just the underlying basis for efficient information sharing. However, it is not enough to have rules and tools in place; people must be motivated to share information and understand the value of doing so”), combining formal and informal information sharing, a flat structure, and technology (e.g., “The flat structure we have here as well as the modern technology facilitates the efficiency of our information flow”).

Aspects that were mentioned as influencing information sharing negatively were bottlenecks, rotation (e.g., “The more people rotate, the more information transfer is needed and sometimes knowledge may get lost”), and restricted access for civilians (e.g., “The fact that civilians are not granted the same access can lead to problems because they don’t get the same information even though it is relevant for them as well”). As important sources for information, the daily evening updates of the commander, the bulletin board, and e-mail were mentioned. Information that was considered missing or rare came from outside the HQ: “There is only a problem with operational information from the theatre to facilitate our assessment. [...] Problems occur mainly between the staff and where the information is collected.”

In summary, all relevant information was considered to be available and accessible. However, availability alone is not enough. Being proactive and knowledgeable of the system are the most essential aspects for effective information sharing and it is important to find the right balance between too much and too little information in terms of sharing and retrieving information. “This is an art, not a science – how to downsize to the proper level, to all the information needed.”

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related information sharing to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-11).

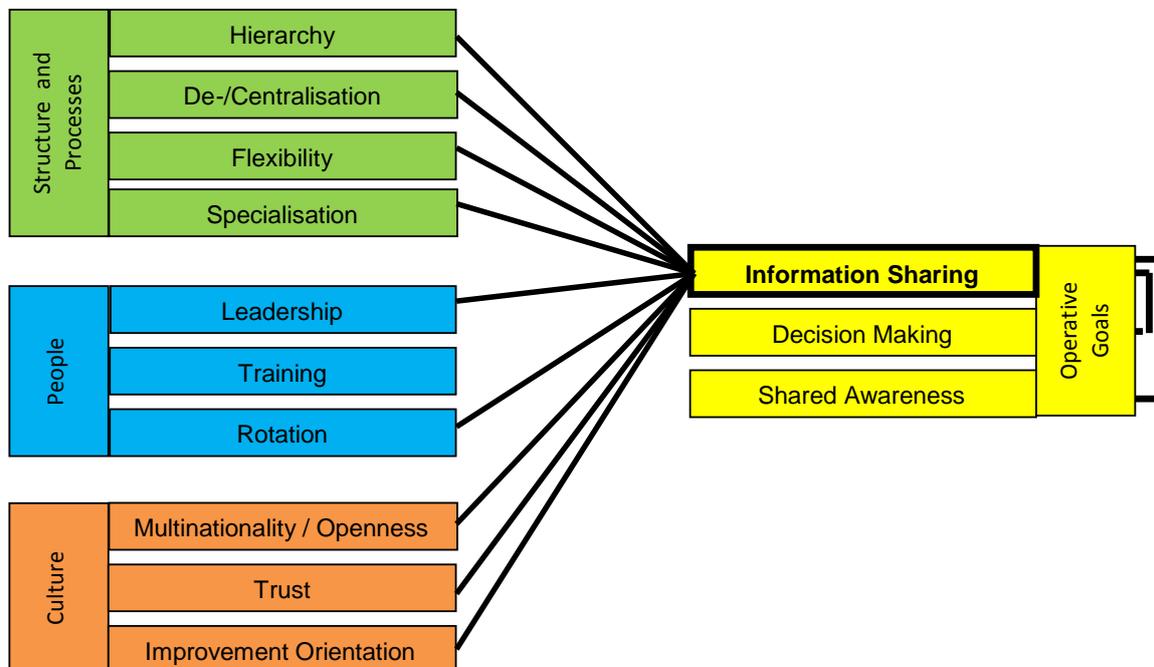


Figure 6-11: The Relationship Between Information Sharing and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Information sharing is **positively impacted** by:

- A **flat** structure.
- **Flexible** structures and processes of a HQ.
- **Overlapping roles** in a HQ.
- The **leadership style**; e.g., the commander's daily briefings are a good forum for information sharing.
- **Shared awareness** because a precondition for sharing information with others is the knowledge of the system, tasks, and responsibilities of one's colleagues.

Information sharing is **negatively impacted** by:

- **Hierarchy**, if the cross-flow is missing.
- **Centralization**, if it creates bottlenecks.
- **Rotation**, if it causes loss of institutional memory.
- **Multi-nationality**, if it generates communication problems and misunderstandings.

Effective and timely information sharing **positively impacts**:

- **Decision making** because enough information is needed to prepare good solutions.
- **Shared awareness**; e.g., regular meetings to share information enhance shared awareness.
- **Improvement orientation**.

Information sharing **interacts with**:

- **Rotation** – due to frequent rotations in multi-national HQs, information sharing needs to be better in a multi-national HQ in comparison with a national HQ.
- **Trust**.

6.1.13 Decision Making

Decision making includes identifying or creating multiple options, choosing among alternatives by integrating differing perspectives, and opinions of team members, implementing optimal solutions and monitoring consequences. The effectiveness of a HQ's decision is defined by its quality, timeliness, and effectiveness. We asked the SMEs to rate the decision making process in KFOR HQ, to tell us what works well or not so well, what the most critical influences are, and how decision making can be improved.

Overall, the SMEs believed that the decision making in the KFOR HQ was effective and timely. "There are procedures in place which also work fine in practice. If problems occur, it is rather personnel related than due to the system as such." The decision making process was described as formal, in line with regulations, flexible, and straight-forward. "The relevant aspect about decisions is to bring the problem to the floor. Each branch has to provide some information about this, and afterwards, the decision will be taken on the basis of the information, by the chief of staff or the commander." Some decisions are more complex: "[A final decision] is the result of a sequence of many decisions, discussions and assessments. Sometimes this process can be slow because the decision or part of the decision is like a diplomatic process and complex." Other people perceived the process as command-driven, linear, and tight. "It is very command-driven, which means that there is a small circle of different individuals who make up their mind to come to a decision for themselves and just issuing it instead of having the staff process where all

the specialists put together the information. This bottom-up approach thus gives the commander various alternatives to decide on.” Hence, one suggestion to improve the decision making process was to give bigger mandates to the ACOS. Additionally, the process was found to be too slow in ad hoc situations. However, centralization and clearly defined roles make communication ways shorter, the commander more easily accessible, and, therefore, decision making faster.

Critical aspects for effective decision making mentioned were: enough information to prepare good solutions, sufficient language and communication skills to present this information to the one who are in charge of making decisions, enough time to make a decision, adequate levels of awareness, knowledge and experience, and broader thinking.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related decision making to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-12).

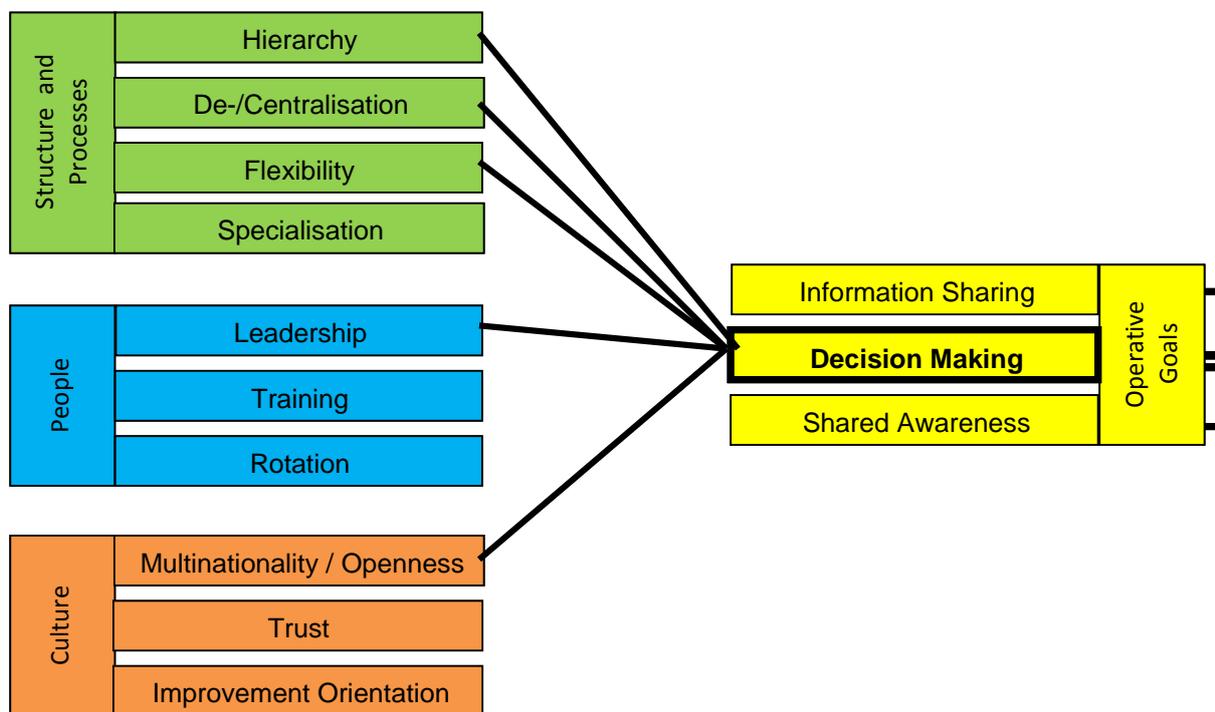


Figure 6-12: The Relationship Between Decision Making and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Decision making is **positively impacted** by:

- **Decentralization** because a flatter structure and a shorter chain of command result in faster decisions and reactions.
- **Centralization** because it guarantees that decisions are made in accordance with NATO strategy.
- **Flexible** structures and processes of a HQ, since that enables flexibility in decision making.
- **Overlapping roles**; they are important because some decisions have impact on several areas and it is good to have people linking those areas.
- **Leadership** that is described as approachable and that listens to the opinions and suggestions of the subordinates.

- **Multi-nationality** the multi-national composition of a HQ results in different perspectives and solutions to problems and therefore leads to more balanced decisions.
- **Information sharing** because enough information is needed to prepare good solutions.
- **Shared awareness** because decision making needs adequate levels of awareness, knowledge, and experience of and in the organisation. Therefore, shared awareness improves the quality and increases the speed of decision making.

Decision making is **negatively impacted** by:

- **Centralization** because subordinates need to get authorisation for everything and the process is very tight demand for bigger mandates for the ACOS and people on lower levels.

6.1.14 Shared Awareness of Tasks and Responsibilities

Regarding shared awareness, the SMEs were asked to what extent there was shared awareness in this HQ, whether it is important in the daily work, what the most critical aspects are to generate it and how it can be improved.

All SMEs believed that a shared awareness of tasks and responsibilities was very important for the effectiveness of the KFOR HQ as it saves time, improves the quality and timeliness of decision making, helps to be initiative, enables synchronization of effort and harmonizes work, and facilitates collaboration. However, the opinions differ as to whether there is an adequate awareness or not. Some SMEs believed that there was enough shared awareness. “We are all informed about tasks, if necessary, if we are affected by the task. So I think there is no problem about shared awareness.” One SME believed that it was more an issue for the civilian personnel than for military personnel because it is a standard and commonly known structure for the military personnel. Others emphasised that it is a general problem in the HQ. “I think apart from the general understanding of what branch is doing what, there is little shared task awareness. No, I think you only know it if in a specific case, you work together with different branches. But in general, every branch has its own world.” Most SMEs agreed that improvement is needed but difficult. As critical aspects for improvement, they thought of: standardization of roles and structures for all NATO Nations, flat hierarchical structure, structure like in the Naples’ HQ with knowledge development centre, etc., horizontal coordination between the branches, understanding of operational planning system, key-leader/in-theatre/national training, less rotation, military experience, regular meetings to share information, willingness to bring people together, establishing (informal) relationships, having a genuine interest in the job and expectations of others, and data base or shared work place.

In relation to the model, the SMEs, to some extent, related shared awareness to the different operative goals and input factors (see Figure 6-13).

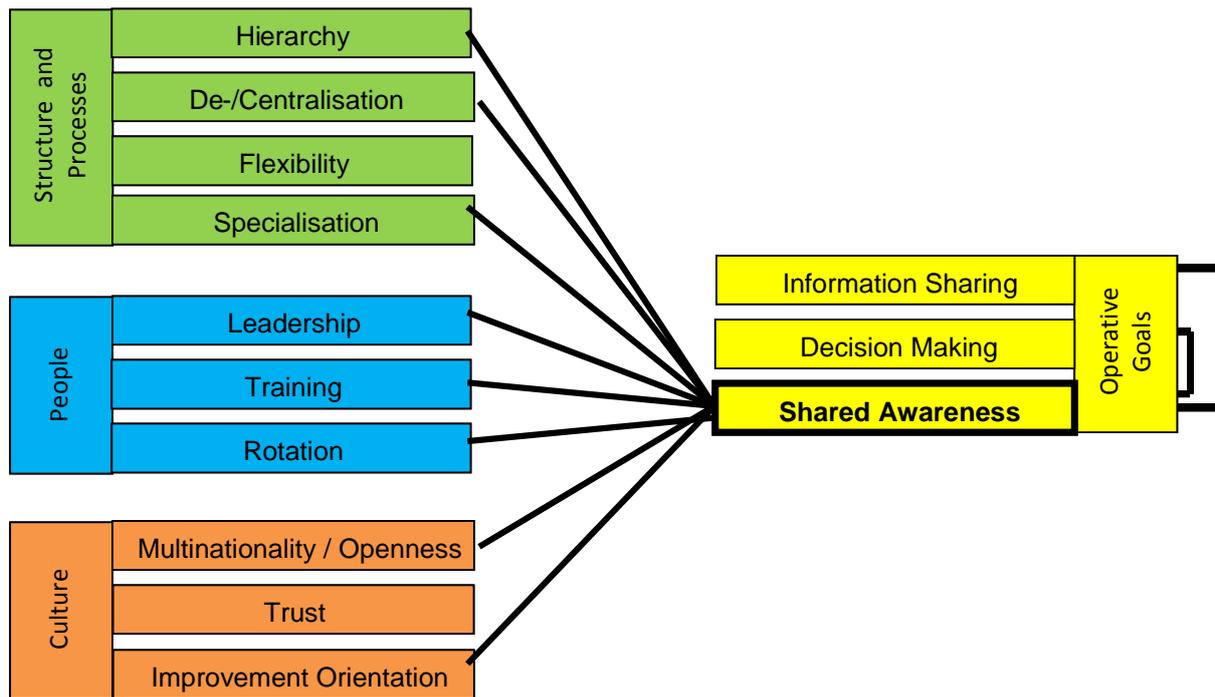


Figure 6-13: The Relationship Between Shared Awareness and the Other Input Factors and Operative Goals of the Model of Organisational Effectiveness.

Shared Awareness is **positively impacted** by:

- **Flat hierarchical structure** and horizontal coordination (decentralization).
- **Overlapping roles** that are linking different working areas and help to know what is going on in other branches.
- **Leadership** (e.g., the commander’s daily briefings create a common picture of priorities and help understanding the commander’s intent).
- **Pre-deployment training** (key-leader/in-theatre/national) in general and especially if it includes information about structure and operations of KFOR.
- **Information sharing** (e.g., regular meetings to share information enhance shared awareness).

Shared Awareness is **negatively impacted** by:

- **Rotation** because each time, it causes a loss of organisational memory.
- **Multi-nationality** because differences in the way of working make reaching a common understanding of methods and procedures difficult.
- **Multi-nationality** because national interests and hidden agendas leads to different aims.

Shared Awareness **positively impacts**:

- **Improvement orientation** and helps to be initiative.
- **Information sharing** because this process needs knowledge of the system to be effective.
- **Decision making** because it needs adequate levels of awareness, knowledge, and experience to be of the good quality and high speed.
- **Trust**.

6.1.15 Important Aspects / Summary

At the end of each interview, the SMEs had the opportunity to respond to what they thought were the most important aspects required to improve the effectiveness in the KFOR HQ. Their statements are listed below:

- To give more responsibility and freedom to act for the lower levels in the chain and command;
- To understand operational planning process;
- To have motivational meetings of the commander with key-leaders/staff where he tells his goals and says “thank you”;
- To centralize leadership;
- To man positions for at least 1 year;
- To spread rotations more evenly during the year;
- To improve training and experience;
- To send preparation packages to HQ personnel before starting deployment;
- Sufficient job experience and background;
- To select effective personnel;
- To improve formal and informal information sharing systems;
- To improve cultural interoperability;
- To better understand the environment of KFOR and Kosovo in general;
- To interact more in the local community to facilitate a better understanding of the local population;
and
- To be proactive and make assessments about the future.