



SIG 14 - Conference General Track

With our theme **Exploring the Future of Management: Facts, Fashion and Fado**, we invite you to participate in the debate about how to explore the future of management. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

T14_04 - Organising for resilience in extreme contexts

Proponents:

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Short description:

This track will address a major gap in our understanding – organising for resilience in contexts that are abnormal, exceptional, or extreme. This can involve the processes of anticipating, preparing for, responding to and learning from disruptive events in order to survive and prosper. Our specific focus is on in extreme contexts where risks of severe physical, psychological harm or material consequences threaten the viability of an organisation and the safety and well-being of its organisational members. We will explore the theoretical, methodological and practical dimensions of the topic.

Long description:

This track will address a major gap in our understanding – organising for resilience in contexts that are abnormal, exceptional, or extreme (Hällgren, M et Al. 2018). This can involve the processes of anticipating, preparing for, responding to and learning from disruptive events in order to survive and prosper. Our specific focus is on in extreme contexts, which have been defined as *“a discrete episode or occurrence that may result in an extensive and intolerable magnitude of physical, psychological, or material consequences to — or in close physical or psycho-social proximity to — organization members.”* (Hannah et al. 2009: 898). While research has often focused on major incidents, extreme events also occur beyond the public gaze in organisations of all types. We will explore the theoretical, and practical dimensions of the topic, as well as addressing the methodological challenges of researching Organisational Resilience in Extreme Contexts.

The theoretical challenges

The literature on this topic is fragmented, muddled and perplexing. There is a growing body of work on resilience in business and management research (see for example Hamel and



Valikangas, 2003; Boin and van Eeten, 2013; Linnenluecke, 2015) and supply chain management (Ponomarov, et. Al., 2009) as well as traditions studying associated topics such as the ‘incubation phase’ (Turner and Pidgeon, 1997), risk management (Gephart et al., 2009), ‘normal accidents’ (Perrow, 1999; Vaughan, 1999), ‘the critical period’ (Stein, 2004), sensemaking in crisis (Weick, 1993), crisis management (Lagadec, 1997; Lalonde, 2007; Pearson et al., 2007), ‘high reliability’ organizations (Weick and Roberts, 2003; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2007), the role of public inquiries (Brown, 2000).

Researchers from these different traditions often talk across each other, resist understanding alternative perspectives and inappropriately borrow or transform concepts from other fields (Whetten, Felin and King 2009). The track will create dialogue between scholars from different fields and disciplines who are interested in theorising about resilience in extreme contexts to advance research on management organization studies.

The practice challenges

What combination of opportunities and barriers to organising arise in extreme contexts? Do those responsible for building resilience require special capabilities? Is it necessary to design tailored processes? Are interventions introduced in extreme contexts more likely to be sustained, or are they more prone to decay? A discussion of these issues will contribute both to theory and practice with regard to organising for resilience in extreme contexts, and also to the management of change in normal, or less extreme conditions, too.

Keywords:

Organisational Resilience
Extreme Contexts
Business
Management Research

Publication Outlet:

Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management
Continuity & Resilience Review

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