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Abstract:	While the understanding of organizational innovation has dramatically improved since March and Simon first wrote Organizations in 1958, a lack of understanding of wartime innovation and the role of the senior military leader in innovation remains. This study fills this void by examining cases of innovation by the U.S. during the Iraq War with a focus on the senior military leader's role. Existing models for wartime innovation, based primarily on peacetime cases, fail to explain the innovations during the Iraq conflict. This study's major finding and its greatest contribution to the literature is the critical role that the senior military leader plays in wartime innovation. His adoption of an innovation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for innovation to occur. For innovation to occur, the senior military leader must employ the right influence tactics during the formulation, adoption, and implementation phases of the innovation process. During formulation, he must facilitate the development of innovative ideas, during adoption he must garner necessary policymaker support, and during implementation he must overcome internal resistance. Technical expertise and creative problem-solving skills are the two most important traits for leaders of innovative efforts. The second significant finding is new insight into the differences between wartime and peacetime innovation. The major differences have to do with the civil-military dynamic and the impetus for innovation. During peacetime, civilian policymakers take a more active role in military affairs and thus, they are more likely to influence innovation. In war, they are more likely to defer to military experts and can best be described as steadfast supporters of the military's innovative efforts. The source of the innovation is different as well. In war, innovation primarily results in response to a demonstrated capability gap. During peacetime, a perceived gap may spur innovation, but so may a number of other factors, such as a competition for resources between different services or branches. In war, services and branches who are already strained rarely seek additional responsibilities. Together, these insights lead to a number of recommendations as to how to produce a military that has a greater innovative capacity in war.
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