

**ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE IN A QUASI-TOTAL INSTITUTION:
THE U.S. ARMY ENGAGES THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION**

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the United States Army's adaptation and organizational resilience as it faces the phenomenon of what is commonly assumed to be the drastically different millennial generation of potential recruits, soldiers, and future leaders. Millennials are arguably the most unique generation to date when compared to their predecessors, mainly due to the significant technological advances of the past few decades and their ubiquitous use of technology. This study is distinctive because it addresses organizational resilience and generational gap issues from a cultural maintenance versus an adaptation and resilience viewpoint within what the author argues is presently a quasi-total, rather than total, institution.

The study results refute important claims in the existing literature, which label the U.S. Army a total institution. That designation is no longer accurate because the modern U.S. Army has changed drastically. The 'total institution' label for the modern U.S. Army is only true during certain periods of the soldier's experience, such as during onboarding or deployment. Thus, the label quasi-total is a better descriptor of the modern U.S. Army. Still, the U.S. Army's need to change, so that it can recruit, train, accommodate, and retain this younger generation as an employer, must be balanced with preserving the organizational ability, culture and identity essential for the U.S. Army to function. That constant need for balance between accommodation and maintenance of core values and processes has mitigated the 'total institution' mindset of old. That is a major finding of this study.

This study is an exploratory investigation using formal theme statements in an interview format given to the top 1% of the 1% of the U.S. Army's leadership, as well as to lower

ranking millennial soldiers. In this it is rare, if not unique. It is a problem-solving exploratory effort.

In addition to a review of existing literature on related interdisciplinary topics, the study collected and analyzed empirical data in the forms of semi-structured interviews of senior grade non-millennial officers in Part 2, and, in Part 3, interviews of junior grade millennial generation soldiers who are currently serving. The study took a holistic approach to understand relevant views of different generations presently in the service and harvested the experiences and perspectives of senior leaders who have witnessed the U.S. Army's transition firsthand.

The findings indicate that several junior millennial respondents had contrary views and values to the assumptions society makes about them. Nor did they identify with the stereotypes of common views and biases about their generation. Amid signifying that not all millennials are alike, this discovery more importantly implies that assimilation to a strong organizational culture can transcend and/or alter presumed generational characteristics and norms, thereby demonstrating the U.S. Army's resilience at the organizational level.

The study showcases the uniqueness of the U.S. Army: as a 'quasi-total institution' it differs from others so labeled because it becomes much less total as the member spends more time in it. As an organization, the U.S. Army is different from most others because it must retain its talent since it has to grow leadership internally. Finally, its strong culture is essential to daily operations. Despite those facts that make the subject organization unique, parts of the study are relevant to many businesses globally which

face similar issues of organizational adaptation versus resilience enfolded their multi-generational millennial versus non-millennial workforce.

This original research contributes to the fields of organizational culture (system of shared values and beliefs), organizational behavior (human behavior within an organizational setting), total and quasi-total institutions, leadership behavior, strategic management, resilience, change management, and positive psychology.

Keywords: Organizational Resilience, Organizational Culture, Organizational Behavior, Total Institutions, U.S. Army, Military, Millennials, Generational Gap, Leadership, Management, Recruiting, Training, Retention.

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CHAPTER 1: PART 1

Chapter 1 contains the completed study done during Research Project (RP) 3 described as Part 1 of the entire dissertation. This chapter includes the motivation for the research identifying the opportunity and the need for this study, a comprehensive literature review, and the pilot study which validated the protocol used for the empirical data collection in the subsequent parts. Additionally, this chapter covers necessary definitions in the context of this work, the research question, the guiding questions, and the conceptual framework.

Research Motivation

Generational gap differences have always caused issues in leadership and management. Those issues stem from a different set of values and beliefs that are characteristic of a generational cohort (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). Millennials are arguably the most unique generation to date when compared to their predecessors, largely due to the significant technological advances of the past few decades and their ubiquitous use of it. Edgar Schein's *Organizational Culture and Leadership* is widely considered one of the most influential works in the field of organizational culture. The book is now in its fifth edition and the author elaborates on how different the world is since the fourth edition was written a decade prior in 2008. The principle reasons for this change cited in the foreword are millennials in the workplace and advances in technology (Schein, 2017). There are some studies referencing that even millennial brains are developing differently than that of the previous generations' because the brain develops based on how it is used. "Studies show

the average millennial spends 18 hours per day using any type of digital media” (Zachos, 2015, p. 1).

The U.S. Army has to recruit, train, accommodate, and retain millennials because the Generation X or older senior leaders are aging out. Millennials are the current recruits and junior leaders; they will become the future leadership of the organization. An important element in retention is that the U.S. Army cannot go outside the organization to replace leadership in the same manner a civilian company could; therefore, it must retain quality individuals to groom into those positions. Additionally, because the technology of the U.S. Army is evolving at a rapid rate, these young soldiers are most poised to adjust well because they were raised on technology. Their technology skills and adaptive thinking are desired by the U.S. Army, other militaries and non-military organizations (Barno & Bensahel, 2015). These facts showcase the unique position of the U.S. Army as a quasi-total institution because the inability to recruit externally¹ strengthens the ‘total’ aspect, whereas the rapidly evolving technology and its immersion into the modern U.S. Army coupled with the organization’s operational integration into broader society, weakens it.

On the other hand, millennials have proven less resilient when compared to previous generations, lacking the grit or fortitude to overcome adversity according to current non-millennial personnel (Grey, 2015; Hershatter, & Epstein, 2010). The U.S. Army’s mandatory resilience training program (MRT) is designed to teach life and coping skills to its members to mediate stressors. The MRT program was adopted to

¹ The U.S. Army cannot simply post an ad for a leadership position to fill a vacancy, leaders at all levels must be grown internally both in the commissioned and the enlisted ranks.

mitigate the issues facing the organization as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the rising cases of PTSD and suicide, particularly in the younger age group of 18-24 of the less resilient generation (Cantlon, 2013). Cantlon, in his U.S. Army War College paper, further emphasizes that PTSD and suicide remain the two most critical issues with nearly 104,000 diagnosed cases of PTSD stemming from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. He states “resiliency is the key to continued progress in these issues” (Cantlon, 2013, p. 2). This study agrees that resilience is the key, however, adds that the U.S. Army must also focus on resilience at the organizational level, not only at the individual level. The nature of the U.S. Army as a total institution, varying from full-on ‘total’ in the beginning of a soldier’s career to becoming a diminishing feature with time in the service, implies a greater need for individual resilience early on in a career for the soldier to cope with the mortification process of the U.S. Army’s initial entry training. This transition also better encapsulates the true nature of the modern U.S. Army as quasi-total.

What is a Millennial (aka Generation Y)?

The definition of a millennial is ever changing, multiple credible sources have decided on different ranges of birth years for various justifications. Pew Research Center says a millennial is anyone born between 1981 and 1996, whereas PricewaterhouseCoopers defines them as being born between 1980-1995, Time Magazine 1980-2000, and Nielsen Media Research 1977-1995 (Ciampaglia, 2018; Shugerman, 2018). Each organization provides their rationale for those year groups, but throughout, the themes seem to revolve around the millennial generation’s relationship with the Internet and other technologies, particularly the rapid evolution and use of mobile

devices. Furthermore, in the U.S., the 9/11 attacks and the election of the first Black President are even factored in as markers of the millennial. Consequently, the end birth year for Generation X is also adjusted by each of those organizations mentioned above but around 1965 seems to be a common starting birth year for Generation X.

Recently, there is an emerging view that another generation fits in between Generation X and millennials, a micro-generation spanning from 1977 to 1985 called Xennials with the rationale of having an analog childhood, but digital adulthood (Stollen & Wolf, 2018). Regardless of which one we assume is the most correct generalization, the reality is that a few years of birth to the fore or aft cannot possibly make a large difference in someone's personality.

Two additional age groups need to be acknowledged, there is Generation Z, which is the post-millennial demographic cohort representing those born in the late 1990s to the mid or late 2000s (with no clear consensus on ending birth year), some of whom are now becoming old enough for military service² (Ciampaglia, 2018; Shugerman, 2018). On the opposite end of the spectrum are some Baby Boomers who could still be in the senior ranks of the military³. These two categories are excluded in this study, or rather summed into the millennial and Generation X age groups respectively because they represent a very small percentage of those currently serving on active duty in either case. For the

² Although rare, an enlisted soldier can enter active duty at the age of 17 as long as he or she graduated high school, however that is usually very close to the recruit's 18th birthday. By that rule of thumb the youngest soldier in 2019 on active duty would be born in 2001, so only a part of the Generation Z is even eligible for service at the time of this study (U.S. Army, 2018b).

³ Mandatory removal date for commissioned officers varies by the rank they achieve, whereas enlisted must retire by their 60th birthdays. For the officers interviewed in this study an O-6 Colonel is limited to 30 years of commissioned service, whereas an O-5 Lieutenant Colonel (or below) is restricted to 28 years of commissioned service (U.S. Army Human Resources Command, 2018). In 2019, for the most part, there could only be Baby Boomers still on active duty who were born between 1959 and 1964.

purposes of this study, a millennial will be anyone born 1985 or later currently in the service, and non-millennial will be anyone born 1979 or earlier to ensure a sizeable separation between the two main generational categories on active duty.

The U.S. Army has, and requires, a strong organizational identity and a unique organizational culture. While that culture has certainly evolved slowly with each generation of soldiers throughout history, it has changed rapidly over the past 20 years. Even the recruiting effort reformed from the post-draft era promises of individual opportunities in exchange for serving, such as college money, marketable skills, adventure, etc. It is now focused on duty and honor, service and sacrifice attempting to appeal to patriotic and intrinsic motivators (Bailey, 2007). Millennials are less disciplined, harder to control, more resistant to hard work, and feel more entitled than the previous generations (Grey, 2015). This, along with their use of technology, has created the need for a balancing act during U.S. Army service. The generational differences create leadership and management issues that are experienced by most organizations who employ both millennials and pre-millennials⁴. The U.S. Army is unique because it had to change in order to become an attractive employer to millennials while also needing to practice organizational resilience to maintain its identity and, most importantly, to continue to accomplish its core and changing missions.

⁴ This term simply refers to any generational cohort that preceded millennials, such as Baby Boomers, Generation X, or even the newly hypothesized micro-generation Xennials.

Research Question

How can the U.S. Army recruit, train, accommodate, and retain millennials without negatively affecting its core functions, culture, and identity?

Figure 1 helps demonstrate the research question visually. It is not a model, merely a graphical representation of the ‘recruit, train, accommodate, and retain’ cycle in the research question, and its relationship with organizational resilience. Leadership and strategic management shape, drive, and influence the bullet points in each of the boxes by the decisions that are made to achieve those goals. The figure shows each step working as it should in an ideal state that is mutually beneficial to the individual soldier and the U.S. Army.

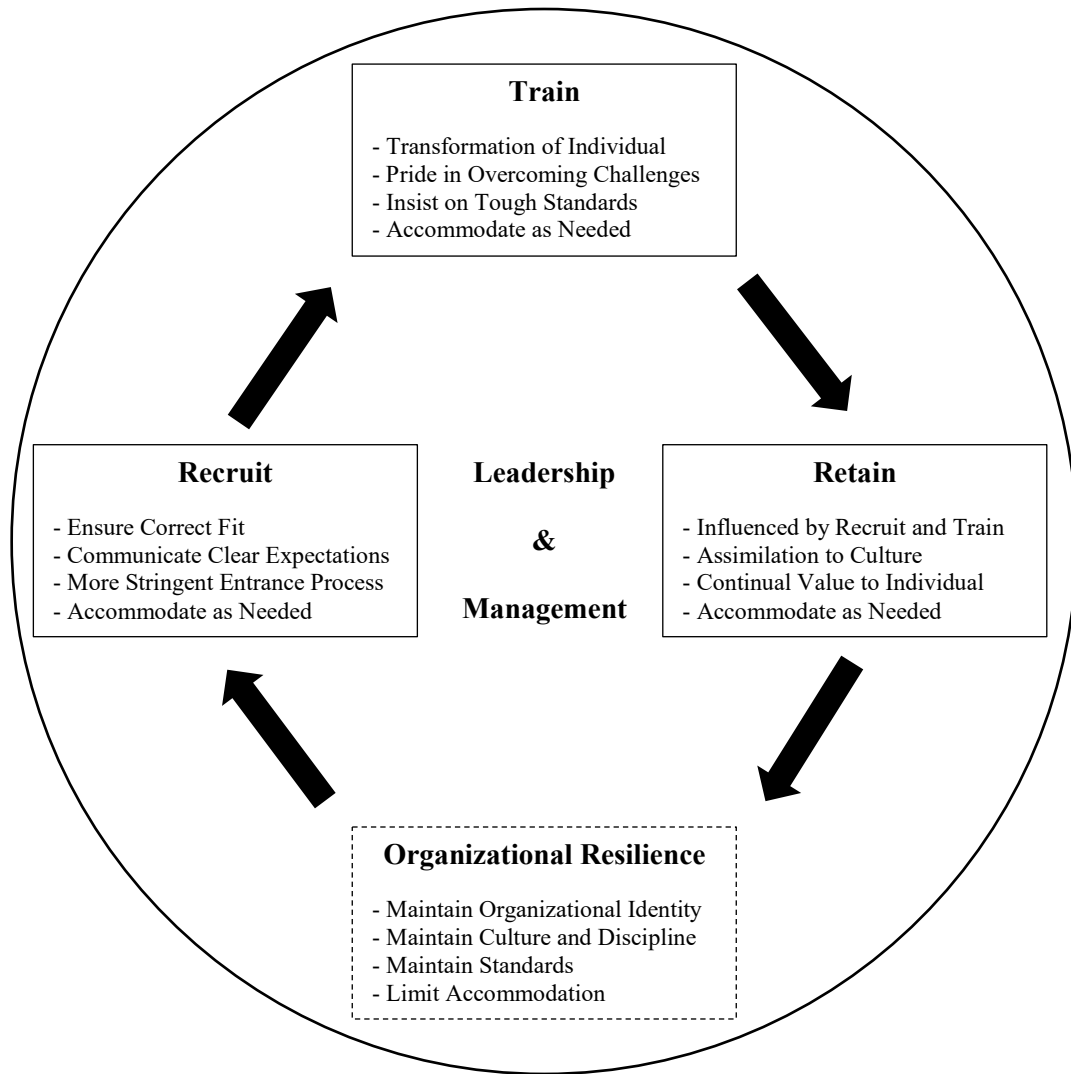


Figure 1: The Recruit, Train, Accommodate, and Retain Cycle

‘Organizational Resilience’ drives the U.S. Army’s practices to *‘Recruit’* a young man or woman into the U.S. Army. If the recruiting process was done correctly and the individual is a good fit⁵ who clearly understands the expectations and has passed the

⁵ For the purposes of this study *‘good fit’* is defined as aligned interests and aptitude of a recruit for a specific career field.

requirements of a stringent entrance process⁶, he or she is ready to be sent off to ‘*Train*’⁷. Once at training, the recruit transforms from civilian to soldier as a result of the mortification process that is characteristic of a total institution. It is important to point out, however, that this is only an example of a mortification process as described by Mouzelis; “even when mortification processes exist, they do not always have destructive or degrading implications for the self” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 9). The recruit is aware that the role stripping and regimentation of the U.S. Army’s daily schedule will occur during this period, which is something he or she volunteered for. The ideal state mentioned is an evident goal of the U.S. Army that must be achieved during the initial training phase. The 247-page handbook given to every recruit known as the Blue Book⁸, its official title as a regulation is TRADOC⁹ Pamphlet 600-4 (2016) states the following:

All phases of training builds character, instills discipline and U.S. Army Values, improves physical conditioning, and teaches basic combat and occupational skills. All of these contribute in the development of your individual skills and knowledge, resulting in a Soldier capable of serving as a member of a team in your First Unit of Assignment. BCT / OSUT /

⁶ The entrance process would be stringent in its ideal state, but the U.S. Army periodically relaxes entrance requirements if a large recruiting goal must be met. This was the case for several years at the height of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is also happening currently from October of 2017 when the U.S. Army was given an 80,000-soldier growth mission and within a few months streamlined the waiver process (Vanden Brook, 2017).

⁷ Initial Entry Training (IET) is comprised of Basic Combat Training (BCT) which is common core, and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) which is specialized for the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of the recruit. In case of some specialties these two are combined into One Station Unit Training (OSUT). BCT is a 10-week program, the lengths of OSUT or AIT can vary greatly from about 4 weeks to in rare cases 84 weeks (U.S. Army, 2018a).

⁸ This is a reference book every soldier keeps on his or her person throughout the duration of the initial training. In the current edition the U.S. Army named it Blue Book referencing Baron von Steuben who was tasked by General George Washington at Valley Forge to turn the men into a disciplined fighting force. Consequently, he authored the first U.S. military regulation titled *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, which would be nicknamed the Blue Book (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2016).

⁹ TRADOC stands for Training and Doctrine Command, it is one of the major commands of the U.S. Army with four functions: design, acquire, build, and improve (U.S. Army, 2018c).

AIT are training courses that transform civilians into Soldiers. Over the course of a number of weeks you will develop the character, commitment and competence skills and knowledge to succeed as a Soldier. (p. 45)

This transformed soldier then begins his or her career for the duration of the contract (typically a 4-year obligation, but this can vary) signed at the time of enlistment. At the end of that first-term contract, it is paramount for the organization to retain that soldier, not only because a very significant amount of money has been invested into recruiting and training this entry-level soldier; but also, because retaining him or her means feeding the pipeline of the next set of junior leaders, and then, the U.S. Army hopes, future senior leaders. This internal recruitment pipeline is why accommodation is necessary. If the U.S. Army loses much of the future top talent to first-term ETS (Expiration of Term of Service) it also means having to promote more of the mediocre personnel to entry-level leadership positions. This is sort of like having to grade on a curve. Such an eventuality can have long-term negative effects, for example not providing the following set of recruits with the best possible first-line leaders may cause more top-talent to leave, and thus build up, then continue a cycle of mediocrity (Kane, 2011; Adams, 2013).

As Figure 1 shows, this is a continuous cycle because each set of soldiers who are recruited with the above mindset, and then trained likewise, are more likely to be retained because they have bought into the culture of the organization and will insist that those who come behind them do the same. The retained soldiers under this belief system will continue to feed the organizational reliance of the U.S. Army. This virtuous cycle is how many other organizations have been able to maintain the specific culture that is important to their functionality over generations, for example, college fraternities, or most

organized religions. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. If the U.S. Army allows the organizational culture of strict standards and discipline to die out with the current set of senior leaders it will completely be replaced after they are gone by a corporate-like culture that millennials desire (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). A logical assumption could imply that if this were to happen there may be no going back because the future leaders would be satisfied with the new culture that they themselves grew up in. That is why current decisions involving style and degree of accommodation, degree and kind of adaptation versus the operational resilience of the U.S. Army are so central. Those decisions are the leadership and management challenges that this study aims to illuminate through the insight gathered from empirical evidence. For instance, the interviews in Part 3 may provide an indication whether or not the millennial generation of soldiers and junior leaders realize the importance or need for preserving the culture and discipline. The challenges are large; thus, a substantial goal of this study is to provide awareness of the issues and clarify opportunities for further research in multiple areas.

Literature Review

It is useful to start with the definition of resilience for this study. The word is very widely used and encompasses dozens of disciplines that have each adopted the term for their own application. Within the same field of study, scholars will still provide different interpretations of the expression's meaning, and even the dictionaries offer anecdotal definitions. For instance, Google states: “1. the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness, and 2. the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity” (Google, 2017). On the other hand, Merriam Webster states: “1. the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused

especially by compressive stress, and 2. an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change” (Merriam-Webster, 2017). Webster goes on to acknowledge that the word’s first known use was in 1807. Beginning with the natural sciences it was used to describe a plant’s ability to endure harsh conditions; later the word was adopted by the fields of psychology and sociology to apply that principle to human behavior. Since then many other fields have coined the term, and over its 200-year history resilience has certainly become a very diverse and widely used expression. This is evident from a quick library search at Temple University returning 16,834 scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles in English, with full text, containing the word *resilience* in their title. Those publications reach across 57 disciplines ranging from psychology to agriculture, to even astrophysics. Resilience is an interdisciplinary topic with broad reaching relevance and without an easy black and white implementation at the organizational level. Even though this study focuses on an a relatively narrow issue of organizational resilience in the U.S. Army, much of this exploratory work can pertain as an extension to a wide variety of topics that interface with resilience.

Santos (2015) in his qualifying paper has done a comprehensive review of resilience literature. Within that work he points out several varying definitions from well-known scholars in the same field:

Richardson and his colleagues (1990) contended that resiliency is “the process of coping with disruptive, stressful, or challenging life events in a way that provides the individual with additional protective and coping skills than prior to the disruption that results from the event” (p. 34). Similarly, Higgins (1994) described resiliency as the “process of self-righting or growth” (p. 1), while Wolins (1993) defined resiliency as the “capacity to bounce back, to withstand hardship, and to repair yourself”. (p. 5)

Linnenluecke has also done an all-inclusive review of resilience in business and management studies among 339 publications from 1977 to 2014. She has categorized the literature into five lines of inquiry: 1. organizational responses to external threats, 2. organizational reliability, 3. employee strengths, 4. the adaptability of business models, and 5. design principles that reduce supply chain vulnerabilities and disruptions (2017). In her findings she points out something very relevant to this paper “resilience has been conceptualized quite differently across studies, meaning that the different research streams have developed their own definitions, theories and understandings of resilience” (Linnenluecke, 2017).

Santos (2015) provides the following definition of resilience specific to business: “In area of business, resilience is measured by an organization’s ability to withstand the impact of any interruption and recuperate its operations to provide basic services” (p. 2). The U.S. Army is unique as an organization not just in its function but also in its culture. The above reference by Santos is somewhat applicable but should be tailored to state ‘*maintain its ability to perform its mission*’ rather than recuperate to a point where it can resume to do so. The U.S. Army cannot afford to degrade to a degree in which it ceases to function at the ‘normal’ operating level. The same could be said about any other organization tasked to provide essential services, such as police, fire, ambulances, hospital staff, etc. Those organizations could also find this study informative, as the generational gap issues will be shared, as well as their status as an entity that must continuously function, thus their need for organizational resilience. Werther more accurately and applicably states: “Resisting and coping with change, for complexly integrated systems, is about “springing back” under real-world change pressures, but it is

hardly ever about returning to the status quo ante” (Werther, 2014, p. 431). The U.S. Army will never be the same, much like any other organization undergoing change, it will continue to evolve. The most important implication of organizational resilience in the U.S. Army’s case is to separate those things that must remain untouched from the ones that can evolve, and continually be able to function throughout the transition without interruption. Thus, the accommodation theme that must run through the cycle of recruit, train, and retain. Additionally, the total institution characteristics of the U.S. Army as described by existing literature only occurs during initial entry training provides an opportunity to augment the current theory of total institutions. The U.S. Army’s totalistic characteristics diminish over time with the advance of one’s career, a phenomenon that does not exist in some other total institutions, such as asylums and prisons.

Furthermore, the culture of the organization is a vital component of its ability to function. It goes beyond the organizational identity that is seen in companies with unique cultures, such as Google or Zappos. The rank structure and discipline of its members have to stay paramount as part of daily operations. While the U.S. Army welcomes ideas from subordinates using outside-the-box thinking and encourages two-way communication, at the end of the day if a lawful order¹⁰ is given it must be carried out without question or discussion (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2016).

Santos also mentions that early resilience research in the 1980s have used terms like ‘invulnerable’ or ‘invincible’ implying that a person possesses extraordinary abilities

¹⁰ A lawful order is an order given by a superior ranking officer (commissioned or non-commissioned) to a subordinate that does not violate any rules of war, or codes of conduct. In other words, an order to commit crime is unlawful. Military personnel can be charged under UCMJ (Uniformed Code of Military Justice) for both failing to obey a lawful order or obeying an unlawful one.

to recover from adversity. "...increasingly, however, researchers have arrived at the consensus that resilience is not some remarkable, innate quality but rather a developmental process that incorporates the normative self-righting tendencies of individuals" (Santos, 2015, p. 5). Several cited sources in Santos' work agree that resilience is not a fixed attribute but an alterable set of processes that can be refined. Moreover, according to Seccombe (2002) "the widely held view of resilience as an individual disposition, family trait, or community phenomenon is insufficient...resiliency cannot be understood or improved in significant ways by merely focusing on these individual-level factors" (Santos, 2015, p. 7).

In a widely referenced 2002 HBR article, Coutu interviewed several business leaders regarding their thoughts on the importance of the then-new buzzword 'resilience'. The responses from the middle-aged leaders based on their own personal perseverance generally echoed the same thoughts. They valued resilience as a trait in a potential new hire above the rest of the attributes but cautioned that it is nearly impossible to measure. One executive pointed out that some of the candidates during the interview process will highlight their self-proclaimed resilience but they are too young in most cases to know that about themselves. "Resilience is something you realize you have after the fact" (Coutu, 2002, p. 3).

A Forbes article points out three reasons resilience would be a valuable skill to have for millennials. They are: "1. it's highly valued in the business world; 2. it will set you apart, in a constructive way, from less resilient peers; and 3. it doesn't matter if you fail – what matters far more is how you deal with failure" (Lipman, 2016, p. 1).

Resilience on a Societal Scale

Gal's paper is a longitudinal study conducted during the critical period of the Second/Al-Aqsa Intifada (the second Palestinian uprising against Israel) with over 1,000 terrorism-related deaths from 2000 to 2004. The article's focus is community resilience at the national, mass-behavioral level comprised of public behavioral indices and attitudinal measures.

Gal also points out that there are numerous definitions of the term resilience. Initially, it was used by the natural sciences to describe abilities of materials to restore their displacement or bend rather than break when stressed. Gradually the term was adopted by behavioral sciences to describe the coping capacities of individuals, communities, and societies. He also highlights the fact that "moving from individual resilience to social resilience does not imply an additive change, but rather a cumulative one" (Gal, 2013, p. 455).

Social resilience encompasses the society's capacity to maintain its functions during a disaster or contain the catastrophe in an adaptive manner, and the aspect of relativity – that is react to the event in accordance with its severity. The study also postulates that the social resilience of a mass population under a nationwide disaster is characterized by the rate of individual adaptation and return to business as usual. This is not dependent on the state's pace of recuperation (Gal, 2013).

Another study done by Chasdi focuses on the development of a resiliency continuum of nation-states that were victims of terrorist attacks, i.e. the U.S. 9/11 attacks; Moscow, 2002; Madrid, 2004; and London, 2005. His analysis pinpoints interconnections between context factors such as historical experience with terrorism and

populations characteristics to the resiliency condition. He references Goertz's framework for dimensions of resiliency and also sorts resiliency characteristics by secondary dimensions and the tertiary indicators of those dimensions (Chasdi, 2013). The applicability to this study is that resilience at the organizational level also has dimensions, and any existing behavior patterns of the organization or their changes as a result of the adaptation or accommodation will have secondary and tertiary effects.

Walklate, McGarry & Mythen wrote an interesting piece on resilience's overuse in disaster planning and preparedness to the point of becoming taken for granted. They acknowledge the word has many different definitions, and that in and of itself is not a problem but the potential that it can become a metaphor rather than an analytical concept is (Walklate, McGarry, & Mythen, 2013). The relevance of their work to this paper is that individual resilience is a household name nowadays in the U.S. Army, overused similarly to safety, diversity, or sexual harassment and assault prevention¹¹. There is a danger of people becoming desensitized to a buzzword, and the seriousness of its implications may be discounted from its overuse. This further impedes exploring other aspects of the word, in this study's case, resilience at the organizational level. With the growing popularity of the word resilience, it can experience the fate of similarly overused words such as diversity that often gets taken for granted. "Having become the buzzword of the moment, the word "diversity" is invoked not to advance an idea but to disguise the absence thereof. It is a euphemism for bureaucrats to hide behind" (Bart, 2003, p. 1).

¹¹ The U.S. Army tends to overuse an otherwise very important and useful term to the point that it loses its significance as everyone becomes nose blind to it. For instance, it is now mandatory for a rater to address whether the rated subordinate leader is supportive of SHARP (Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention) policies on his or her annual evaluations as one of three possible bullet comments in the leadership category.

Individual Resilience in the U.S. Army

The U.S. Army has recognized that its members must remain resilient and that millennials are significantly less resilient when compared to previous generations of soldiers. As part of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, the U.S. Army purchased the Master Resilience Training program (MRT) in 2009 based on the Penn Resilience Program (PRP) developed by Karen Reivich and Martin Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center. This program is taught as a 10-day course to mid-level and senior Non-Commissioned officers who in turn teach the skills to all members of the organization. Currently, it is mandated that every soldier in the U.S. Army trains all 14 modules every two years on a rotational basis and completes an online self-assessment survey annually (Reivich, Seligman, & McBride, 2011).

The program has received criticism regarding its effectiveness. A USA Today article points out that morale is low despite the 6-year \$287M program (as of 2015) that continues to cost the U.S. Army \$50M annually to operate (Zoroya, 2015). The results were obtained from the annual self-assessments that soldiers are required to take. A blue-ribbon panel of scientists in 2014 argued that there was no effort made to test the program's efficacy before embracing it. Furthermore, it can actually be harmful if it leaves soldiers with a false sense of resiliency. As a response to the startlingly negative results, the U.S. Army provided new findings but has lowered the threshold for a positive response to drastically improve the results (Zoroya, 2015).

Much of the literature review indicates that individual resilience cannot be taught in a classroom setting but rather acquired by personal experiences in one's environment. According to Garmezy, there is evidence that half the children living under conditions of

a disadvantage do not repeat that pattern in their own adult lives, but conversely, others born under better circumstances do move downward into poverty as adults (1991). The U.S. Army provides a test of individual resilience during the Initial Entry Training (IET) period while the recruit endures the hardships of his or her basic training. This experience ought to have a positive effect on the soldier who will benefit from his or her honed and tested individual resilience throughout life; additionally, future organizations that he or she becomes a member of may also value this desired trait.

Organizational Resilience

The term organizational resilience for the purposes of this research is defined as the U.S. Army's ability to preserve its core organizational culture and identity through a time of change while maintaining its ability to accomplish any assigned mission. The study takes an inimitable approach in a sense that the primary focus is not individual resilience, nor is it societal resilience but rather somewhere in the middle focused on one distinctive organization. The U.S. Army is unique if one takes a holistic approach to its evaluation. It has similarities to many other organizations in one or more facets but at the same time (arguably another Western military force would be an exception to this rule) it is unlike any other entity. For instance, the U.S. Army cannot outsource core leadership and management talent; it must be developed within; thus, the need for retention of quality personnel is amplified beyond most enterprises. Another side that sets the U.S. Army apart from a large corporation as an employer is that it must fight to retain fundamental aspects of its distinct culture through the resilience of the entity for its survival, and have a high-quality ability to function within any commanded environment with personnel from different generations having different degrees of individual

resilience. Even as a total institution the U.S. Army differs from the others. It does not segregate members from the outside world permanently like a prison but does so for extended periods of time. Its members are volunteers in the same manner as a monastery; however, the U.S. Army is not a lifelong commitment. Moreover, the U.S. Army diminishes as a total institution with increased service time of its members by allowing Soldiers to return to the societal norm of living and working in different places. The total aspect is further degraded by the networked and integrated nature of the modern U.S. Army and its new missions consistently using a large variety of outside expertise.

This type of need to maintain the culture that is directly correlated to the success of daily operations is not commonly seen elsewhere. The study's focus is on the organizational need to maintain resilience under conditions of generational change and organizational legacy competence for all assigned missions so that the U.S. Army may serve the nation's needs. In other words, the U.S. Army needs to maintain all levels of resilience, not just the individual level it currently focuses on.

Understanding Millennials

There are pros and cons to millennials when contrasted with other generations. In this section, the positives and negatives are separated based on the needs of the U.S. Army respecting the performance needs of its entry-level employees.

These are common positives acknowledged by existing literature: they are technologically savvy having been the first generation born in a post-digital and globalizing world (Hershatter, & Epstein, 2010). They are better educated than previous generations, and more ethnically diverse and inclusive. They are more respectful of different cultures with better foreign language competence because of their involvement

in social media and growing up in a connected world (Hartman, & McCambridge, 2011). They prefer clear rules and well-defined responsibilities (Bannon, Ford, & Meltzer, 2011). These traits are labeled as positives for the current global workforce because technology is a way of everyday life, therefore the ability to comfortably use it is essential for every employee. The borderless nature of business requires collaboration with people of very different backgrounds, nationalities, culture, and ethnicities, so the aptitude for diversity is essential. Also, the multi-faceted, fast-paced, and complex environment of modern organizational structures needs a clearly defined division of the workload between departments and the individuals within them to achieve overarching corporate goals.

On the negative side, they are less likely to stay with one employer for an extended period of time, they don't value privacy as previous generations have, and may not understand the full impact of tweeting or blogging about their employers. They prefer a less formal and more flexible work environment (Bannon, Ford, & Meltzer, 2011). They crave praise but they are uncomfortable with criticism, they do not believe they have to "pay dues" when entering an organization, and they are overconfident, opinionated, and expect to be heard (Hartman, & McCambridge, 2011). They have an expectation of organizational accommodation, have grown accustomed to supportive and nurturing environments (Hershatter, & Epstein, 2010). "Some experts believe millennials struggle to make decisions independently" (Tyler, 2007, p. 2). These traits are identified as negative because employee retention can suffer from the attitudes toward embracing the frequent changing of employers, which is both costly and hinders daily operations. The lack of value for privacy can lead to exposure of sensitive proprietary information,

and careless social media habits can be embarrassing to employers or even damaging to organizational reputation. Subordinates who are uncomfortable with candid feedback or criticism intended for professional development are more difficult to coach. The sense of entitlement and expectation of accommodation mainly when it is unearned can also lead to lack of job satisfaction. The lack of toughness, grit, and lower individual resilience implies that their performance will suffer under any adverse or less-than-supportive or non-nurturing environments.

Some other articles, particularly those written by millennials tend to dispute the commonly accepted bad reputations of their generation stated above. For example, Singh argues that the media ragging on millennials about being ill-prepared to deal with life's challenges is the very reason why their generation has higher rates of depression and anxiety (2015). On the other hand, a member of an older generation could argue back that if millennials cannot handle generalized written criticism about them, how are they going to handle real adversity?

Need for Organizational Change

Recruiting becomes a large part of this study for a number of reasons. The U.S. Army needs to continually resupply its pipeline of fresh recruits because there are a considerable number of first-term retention losses (those who separate from military service upon the completion of their initial enlistment contract). Also, only a very small percentage of the U.S. Army stay past the 20-year-mark, as that is the minimum years of service for retirement eligibility.

In a recent piece, the Wall Street Journal (2017) suggested that the military needs to revamp its archaic personnel system that made sense post-WWII but is dangerously

outdated today; "...our military still operates with a personnel system designed in 1947 to fight the Soviet Union. Unchanged since then, this one-size-fits-all system for recruiting, retaining and promoting troops, treats nearly every service member as an interchangeable cog" (Panetta & Talent, 2017, p. 1). The article cautions that as an all-volunteer force the military competes for talent with top companies and universities and must make its offer more competitive.

For the past 30 years, the mostly peacetime U.S. Army ran a recruiting campaign centered on the opportunities military service can provide, such as money for college, marketable skills, personal achievement, and a promise of adventure. At the beginning of a controversial war, those promises seemed inappropriate so the U.S. Army had to change its campaign to service and sacrifice, duty and honor because far more intrinsically motivated individuals were needed to serve at that time (Bailey, 2007). This type of motivational preference seems to be less characteristic of millennials than the previous generations, as they increase their emphasis on extrinsic values and decrease intrinsic ones (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). Retaining the culture of recruiting for selfless service which is one of the seven U.S. Army values supports legacy needs through organizational resilience.

The U.S. Army must also stay on the cutting edge of reaching potential recruits, especially because the target age is the youngest job seekers right out of High School. Using advanced internet technologies, such as search-engine marketing (SEM) is an effective way to reach millennial candidates (Joos, 2008).

Need for Retention of Quality Personnel

The U.S. Army must retain its quality personnel. This statement of course can be said about virtually any business, however there is an amplified need for the subject organization. “Simply stated, if the best workers are not retained, an organization can be negatively affected from the operational to the strategic level” (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011, p. 213). The U.S. Army has no other option but to grow its leadership internally at all levels from an entry-level non-commissioned officer (sergeant E-5) to the highest-ranking commissioned officer (general O-10). Both career paths must have a rich pipeline of lower enlisted soldiers and junior grade officers to correspondingly grow the non-commissioned officers and the senior commissioned officers from.

The human resources literature dealing with employee retention only applies partially to this study. While they explore out-of-the-box potential solutions for organizations, many of those suggestions are simply not possible to implement in a military force. “Customization of benefits is the key to attracting and keeping valuable employees...the one-size-fits-all doesn’t work anymore” (Douglas, 2017, p. 5). The ability to customize retention incentives is extremely limited within the armed forces, they are associated with special skills, such as a medical doctor or a fighter pilot. Another fundamental difference is that the U.S. Army employs its personnel on a contract basis; one that is not only legally binding but with potential for imprisonment if broken. These obligations do vary but members are usually contractually bound for a predetermined length of service.

In addition to the contract, military pension until very recently¹² had a minimum 20 years of service requirement aiding as a major incentive for long-term continued service. Under the new plan, there is still a pension upon 20 years of service but at a lower percentage of active duty basic pay than the legacy system. However, with the defined contribution match, similar to a 401k a member separating from the service with fewer than 20 years will leave with some money. Previously, any less than 20 years of service meant the service member left with nothing (Department of Defense, 2019).

Non-monetary retention incentives mentioned in human resources literature are mostly a far stretch in applicability here. For example, brand equity, whereby individuals stay employed because of the reputation and prestige associated with their employer's brand. There is a slight conceptual similarity because military service is considered an honorable and respected profession, however, that would be more patriotic rather than brand image driven.

There are some recommended practices that the U.S. Army could adapt to improve retention. Employee embeddedness which theorizes that a combination of fit, links, and sacrifice represents the totality of forces keeping someone in his or her job. At the very least increasing fit could be beneficial toward improving the quality of the recruit and his or her retention. "Companies can increase employee fit and thus retention through the recruitment, selection, training, and development processes" (Ma, Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018, p. 6).

¹² The Uniformed Services Blended Retirement System (BRS) went into effect on January 1, 2018. Service members with fewer than 12 years of service had the option to opt-in until December 31, 2018 rather than to stay with the legacy retirement. New members are under this plan as of the effective date. BRS offers Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contribution matching similar to many government agencies, but it is a new concept to the military (Department of Defense, 2019).

The literature that focuses on recruiting and retention in a military context is usually tightly scoped at specific abstract issues. “The data indicate that early career choices related to human capital acquisition and accumulation may have varying effects across time” (Glaser, 2011, p. 231). Some of it is vaguely applicable but not aimed at the entire organization’s need for retaining talent to resupply the various levels of leadership across all specialties in the U.S. Army. “When the military services experience or expect low reenlistment rates in a specific occupation or skill, they attempt to boost those reenlistment rates with Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRBs)” (Arkes, 2016, p. 475). This sort of targeted monetary incentive produces results to meet the organization’s immediate need in a quantitative manner but does little for retaining the best qualified individuals with the most future leadership potential.

The U.S. Army as a Quasi-Total Institution

Upon further literature review following the conclusion of RP 3 the categorical perspective of the subject military organization was shifted to that of a so-called total institution¹³, and consequently the title was changed to reflect this adjustment in focus. However, based on the study’s findings, this research labels the modern U.S. Army a quasi-total institution because its findings partially challenge the categorization of it as ‘total’ in previous works.

The traditionally negative view of total institutions, specifically the mortification processes of their members, is perceived differently during this study. Rather than a

¹³ Total institution as defined and classified by Erving Goffman’s work which specifically catalogs the military using the term *army barracks* as the fourth of five categories of total institutions. Goffman’s definition of a total institution is “...a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life” (Goffman, 1961, p. xiii).

degrading adverse effect to one's self, in this case, it is a positive transformation that is volunteered for by the recruit. Moreover, this research finds that the modern U.S. Army is only a 'total' institution at the beginning of a career, especially during initial entry training, and certain other times such as a wartime deployment contra the more universal career-long and day-to-day characterization described in the existing literature. As the soldier advances through his or her career with increasing rank, the 'total' aspect starts to diminish. The member is integrated into broader society daily¹⁴, and due to the nature of U.S. Army missions and operations in recent years, spends considerable time working with civilians¹⁵. This linkage to broader society, which is emblematic of the modern U.S. Army, reduces the 'total' aspect of the organization as the soldier advances in his or her career. In addition to maintaining the core, non-adaptable components of U.S. Army culture, organizational resilience now also includes conserving its partial status as a total institution during those early onboarding and later deployment times.

One could argue that based on Goffman's definition of a total institution the U.S. Army is more closely related to prison or an asylum rather than any large corporation in the world currently facing the generational challenges with millennials. During the Initial Entry Training¹⁶ period of a recruit in the U.S. Army, the organizations virtually do

¹⁴ Many soldiers, especially those who are married choose to live in off-post housing only after a few years of service, their children attend schools and activities away from the base, the normal daily duties become more nine to five with the exception of training events or deployments.

¹⁵ The modern U.S. Army is well-networked, interactive to broader society, and uses a large variety of outside expertise ranging from hands-on training of junior soldiers to consulting the most senior leaders at the strategic levels.

¹⁶ Initial Entry Training (IET) is the period comprised of Basic Combat Training (BCT), commonly referred to as 'boot camp' and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) during which the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of the recruit is learned. These two can be combined into a single school for some specialties, in which case it is called One Station Unit Training (OSUT). In either scenario this is the onboarding period that begins a soldier's career.

match. “Each captures something of the time and interest of its members and provides something of a world for them; in brief, every institution has encompassing tendencies” (Goffman, 1961, p. 4). In fact, Goffman makes the reference that throughout the discussion whenever the term *inmate* is used in his work that does not only describe an incarcerated individual but instead can be applied to a member of any total institution in the context of the writing. This binary character of total institutions defines inmates as the large group that is restricted from the outside world, whereas staff is the small group that supervises them and socially integrates into the outside world. In his assessment, the vast functional differences of total institutions are acknowledged, but at their core, they are viewed very much the same. “None of the elements I will describe seems peculiar to total institutions, and none seems to be shared by every one of them; what is distinctive about total institutions is that each exhibits to an intense degree many items in this family of attributes” (Goffman, 1961, p. 5).

Goffman describes five categories of total institutions in which the first category is orphanages and homes for the blind; the second category includes sanitariums and mental hospitals, the third encompasses jails and penitentiaries, whereas the fifth group is reserved for religious sanctuaries such as abbeys and monasteries. The fourth category names explicitly the army as a total institution:

Fourth, there are institutions purportedly established the better to pursue some worklike task and justifying themselves only on these instrumental grounds: army barracks, ships, boarding schools, work camps, colonial compounds... (Goffman, 1961, p. 5)

According to Goffman, the totalistic feature of total institutions stems from the breakdown of basic social arrangements by which people tend to sleep, play, and work in

different places. Institutions listed in the five categories above share that opposition to the social norm. “The stripping processes through which mortification of the self occurs are fairly standard in our total institutions. Personal identity equipment is removed, as well as other possessions with which the inmate may have identified himself...”

(Goffman, 1957, p. 50). In addition to the individual member conducting all aspects of his or her life in the same place, it is also in the immediate company of others who are treated exactly alike. Furthermore, the day’s activities are tightly scheduled, imposed from above, and are part of a plan designed to fulfill the aims of the institution. “Areas of autonomous decision are eliminated through the process of collective scheduling of daily activity” (Goffman, 1957, p. 50).

Some scholars feel that Goffman’s description of total institutions is evocative merely of a physical place throughout all of his five categories. The term he uses is ‘army barracks’ which can easily be misinterpreted because that specifically describes the living quarters of traditionally single lower enlisted soldiers and junior commissioned or junior non-commissioned officers. It is where they sleep, keep their belongings and conduct personal hygiene activities. The ‘total institution’ concept, even if Goffman restricted its applicability only to a physical location surely extends operationally beyond just that army barracks to include the soldier’s living conditions. Goffman most likely meant the base in its entirety and its conditions, as in the army installation to which a member is confined, especially during times of onboarding or in the case of deployment.

Using the basic training period as an example, that would include not only the barracks, but also the physical fitness training area, the dining facility, any classrooms, motor pool, weapon ranges, obstacle course, or other training area the recruit occupies

during his or her time there in combination with the ‘total’ living conditions to which the soldier is there subjected.

Perhaps Goffman’s view of the army is only truly ‘total’ at those times and circumstances depicted as total within this paper, however society’s view of the army based on Goffman’s work commonly associates the organization as a whole with his described characteristics of total institutions. It is for this reason the term quasi-total institution is used to label the modern U.S. Army in this study.

Another commonality in Goffman’s work is that because all five categories of total institutions have great control over their members, the organizations’ aim is oppression to a point, obedience, and complete control over the daily lives of the inmates. This is often not accurate when describing the modern U.S. Army. Yes, the organization does have a great amount of influence over its members including legal jurisdiction and disciplinary authority; and it does indeed demand obedience but not blind, unquestioned obedience. Most importantly, in no way does the modern U.S. Army desire to oppress or control its soldiers. In this there is a great differentiation from many of the other total institutions, as the inmate (soldier in this instance) is developed with the hopes of becoming part of the staff (leadership in this instance) by rising up through the ranks. That would certainly not be the case in a mental asylum or a prison, and perhaps not even in religious sanctuaries where an inmate can stay in the same status for his or her entire life.

Much of the argument against Goffman’s use of the concept ‘total’ as it applies to the modern U.S. Army is the lack of specification of the limited applicability of described characteristics in both time and location. The modern U.S. Army wants voluntary

engagement, mission buy-in and thoughtful participation from its soldiers. Furthermore, the negative association Western society has toward the concept of total institutions that are contra accepted social norms compels the use of a distinct separation of the ‘total’ concept when applied to the modern U.S. Army, it being in reality only quasi-total. This change avoids both misinterpretation of Goffman’s work and building an inherently negative perception of the modern U.S. Army as a total organization.

Mouzelis argues contra Goffman that “(a) not all total institutions portray the negative characteristics which are usually associated with them; (b) that even when mortification processes exist, they do not always have destructive or degrading implications for the self” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 113). He also points out that the reason for the mortification process is a practical one: “degraded and demoralized human beings are more pliant and easier to administer than those with a high degree of self-autonomy and initiative” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 113). Goffman presents this fact in a very negative light claiming the occurrence of goal displacement, by which the administrative efficiency becomes the aim of the total institution and its officially prescribed goals are systematically discarded (Goffman, 1961).

Mouzelis states “My argument on this subject is that mortification processes, when they exist, can have a radically different impact on the self, according to the meanings that people attach to them” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 114). Mouzelis recalls his personal account of mandatory military service in Greece and acknowledges that neither he nor any of his fellow recruits perceived the mortification process as self-degrading. The researcher has experienced the same in his service with the U.S. Army. Mouzelis

concludes, “The basic reason for this seems to be that philotimo¹⁷ only operates in certain specific social contexts, in other contexts instrumental rather than honor considerations regulate social relationships” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 116). Mouzelis’ other point is that in the U.S. Army even very serious insults from a cadre are not taken the way one would feel if he or she received that insult elsewhere. There is a need to ‘play the game’, a need to fit into this micro-society of fellow recruits especially with the daily possibility of mass punishment. The recruit who stands out, who challenges the system will be singled out and severely punished by the staff, but also will be looked upon negatively by fellow recruits. Mouzelis speaks to this “...those who see mortification practices as a constant threat to their self-esteem and react violently in order to ‘preserve’ their philotimo, are not considered by their fellows as brave and honorable men but as fools” (Mouzelis, 1971, p. 116). This behavior also forces the staff to strongly respond against the offender to preserve the authority of the institution and maintain the status quo. According to Goffman:

When total institutions take the line (as they sometimes do in the case of mental hospitals prescribing lobotomy or army barracks prescribing the stockade) that the recalcitrant inmate must be broken, then, in their way, they must show as much special devotion to the rebel as he has shown to them. (Goffman, 1957, p. 59)

Clegg claims that organizational theory has failed to address the role organizations played in some of humanity’s worst crimes. He briefly summarizes

¹⁷ Definition of philotimo according to Schafer (2015):

Philotimo is a Greek word that is without definition, but impacts the world beyond imagination. The word philotimo comes from the Greek root words “filos,” meaning friend, and “timi,” meaning honor. The meaning of philotimo extends far beyond the words friend and honor. Philotimo encompasses the concepts of pride in self, pride in family, pride in community, and doing the right thing. (p. 1)

Goffman's 1961 work on total institutions as well as Bauman's 1989 work on the Holocaust. Clegg points out that Goffman studied action rather than focusing on design which gave greater acuity to his analysis. "Institutions are total when they surround the person at every turn: They cannot be escaped, they produce and reproduce the normalcy of life inside the institution" (Clegg, 2006, p. 427).

According to Clegg even though Bauman's work is discussed in organizations literature most of the discussion misses the mark. He states organization studies should examine Bauman's work on the Holocaust from a perspective of an exemplification of how something good in an organization could produce something that was evil in human action. The account of a Danish social psychologist who spent nine months in a concentration camp concludes that "the most frightening thing about the camps as a system was the fact that they were, organizationally, not at all unique" (Clegg, 2006, p.427). The Holocaust serves an example, however extreme it may be, of a total institution's capacity for transforming its members and influencing their actions. Hannah Arendt in her famous book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* provides an account of Adolf Eichmann's trial¹⁸. Similar to defendants of the Nuremberg trials Eichmann's argument was that he was just following orders. Rather than him as an individual, in his mind the institution is to blame for the atrocities he was standing trial for.

The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgement, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together, for it

¹⁸ Adolf Eichmann was a former Nazi SS officer and one of the organizers of the Holocaust. For his crimes against humanity he was tried and executed in Israel nearly 20 years after WWII.

implied...that this new type of criminal, who is in actual fact *hostis generis humani*, commits his crimes under circumstances that make it well-nigh impossible for him to know or to feel that he is doing wrong. (Arendt, 1963, p. 276)

The relevance of these cases in the works of Goffman, Clegg, Bauman, Arendt, etc. to this study is that total institutions have a bad reputation and, in these examples, rightfully so. The U.S. Army, an all-volunteer organization and a military force of a democratic western country, however, cannot afford to be categorized or inaccurately associated with these damaging total institution stereotypes. Granted, most of the target recruiting population won't spend their evenings reading Goffman's *Asylums*, but this typecast is also often exaggerated in Hollywood films. Thus, regardless of the source, these erroneous characteristics could evoke preconceived negativity in potential recruits toward serving.

A portion of this research differs while the modern U.S. Army is in-part and at times a total institution, a one size categorization does not fit it at all. Despite some 'total' similarities, there are plenty of notable differences, and much of the existing literature from decades ago characterized a different U.S. Army from the modern force of today. The U.S. Army is now far more integrated into society by its current missions. Furthermore, senior personnel are seldom exposed to any traits of a total institution aside from the wearing of the uniform. The inmate and staff relationship exist during Initial Entry Training (IET) between the recruit and the drill sergeants precisely as it is in prison. During long training exercises or an overseas deployment, the isolation from normal society does occur, but this isolation is not present throughout a soldier's career. Unlike prison, or a mental hospital where becoming an inmate is not by choice, the

recruit chooses to subject him or herself to military life. In this regard, the U.S. Army is closer to abbeys or monasteries from the volunteer aspect. Even so, there are distinct differences as the monk or nun has committed for life to the total institution, whereas the U.S. Army recruit may only serve a four-year obligation. Additionally, the U.S. Army differs from all total institutions in a very significant and transformative way. In the beginning, the young recruit is, during initial entry training, and the junior soldier during his or her first few years, culturally in a very total environment. Later, with the advance of rank and responsibility, this ‘total’ feature continually diminishes to a non-existent state.

Conceptual Framework and Guiding Questions

This dissertation is an investigation via formal theme statements; attempting to serve as a problem-solving effort that is exploratory in nature. A conceptual framework is provided to aid in the visualization of the relationship between the individual soldier and the U.S. Army.

Millennials are well documented as being different from previous generations and must be especially accommodated by their employers (Sahadi, 2015). The conceptual framework is based on a reciprocal relationship between the needs of the individual member, and the needs of the organization that must be balanced as shown in Figure 2. Furthermore, as the U.S. Army solely exists to defend the nation, both the organization and the members must also satisfy the needs of the nation. For the organization this means mission accomplishment through the continual maintenance of a ready force despite the changes. For the individual soldier it means a member’s intrinsic motivation for joining, and his or her willingness to serve his or her country.

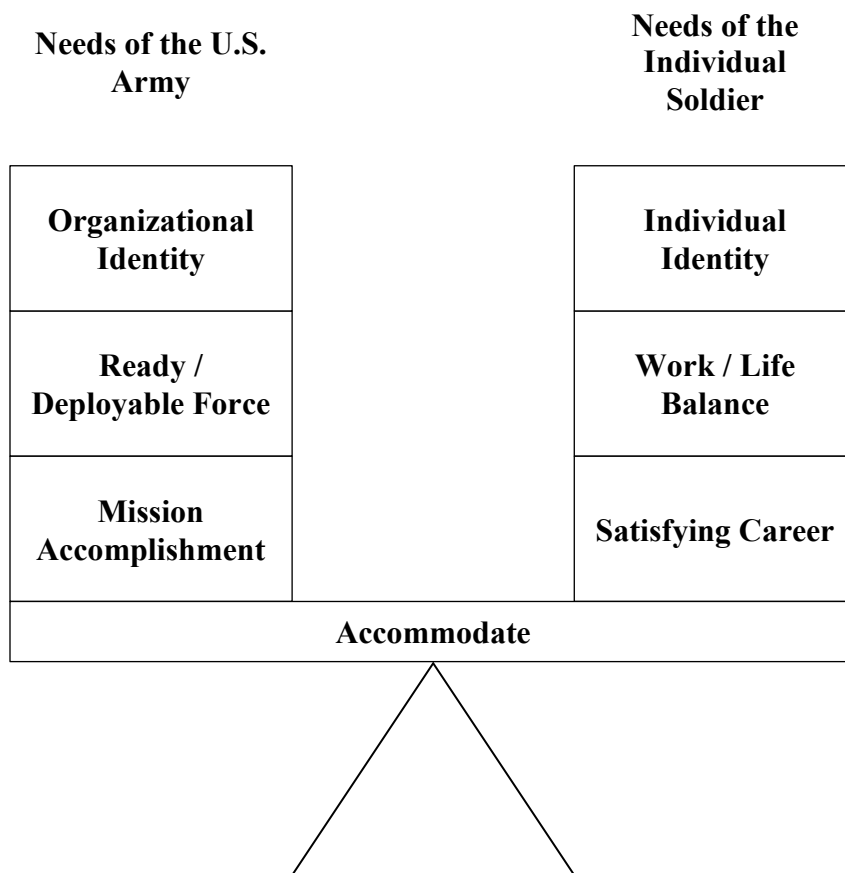


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for the Study

This conceptual framework was a mere hypothesis for the exploratory study. The empirical evidence this study gathered in its subsequent parts validated this framework. A portion of the information the interviews collected was to determine the motivation of individuals to serve in a categorical manner separating intrinsic from extrinsic motivators. The results indicated that both generations of respondents mainly serve for intrinsic reasons. Even in cases in which the initial motive was extrinsic, such as education benefits, the decision to stay was primarily intrinsic. Almost every respondent has spoken about the service of something greater than self or protecting the nation during one or more of the questions.

The key to successfully dealing with the phenomenon was foreseen as ‘give and take’, accommodation versus resilience, choosing what can be changed and what must remain as it has been, to protect the organizational identity that directly correlates to the ability of the U.S. Army to function. These are the ‘springing back’ and ‘adaptation’ elements of resilience used by Werther (2014) and Gal (2013), contra other definitions mentioned above. The findings indicate that this forecast was also accurate.

Four guiding questions have been identified for this exploratory study:

Q1: *What does the U.S. Army have to do to attract and accommodate this generation of soldiers (millennials)?*

Q2: *Does this accommodation conflict with established U.S. Army values, traditions, discipline, needs, and structure?*

Q3: *Does the U.S. Army need to maintain certain standards and core values to be able to do its mission?*

Q4: *How do the individuals, traditions, policies, and way of doing business have to co-adapt?*

These guiding questions will be addressed in the discussion section of Chapter 4 following the findings from both sets of respondents.

Description of Necessary Data

No data set exists that could be used for the purposes of this study due to the unique scope and the exploratory nature of this qualitative report. The U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL) would be the most likely outlet for any useful data to this inquiry. Their mission statement is: “Discover, innovate, and transition science and technology to ensure dominant strategic land power” (United States Army Research

Laboratory, 2017). ARL has conducted 13 studies containing *resilience* in the subject but none of them deal with the organizational aspect of resilience. Therefore, using any data from existing studies would have no relevance to the organization's need to be resilient which is the principal idea in this investigation.

The empirical data collected takes a comprehensive approach to the research question and the four guiding questions. In an attempt to answer the research question, the data originated from various points of views of the generations affected by the gap. The study attempts to showcase two balancing acts:

1. The multiple generations currently in the U.S. Army accommodating each other and working together as leaders and subordinates.
2. The U.S. Army needing to change as an organization to accommodate the new millennial generation but having to maintain its identity and culture to function.

The following qualifying criterion was established for the senior leaders interviewed during Part 2:

1. Military rank: E-9 for enlisted who have served as the senior enlisted member of a Brigade-sized or larger element, and O-6¹⁹ or above in grade for commissioned officers.
2. Years of service: minimum 18 years of service or greater (which is basically automatic for the ranks and positions described in requirement 1 above).
3. Birthday: 1979 or earlier to ensure the respondent is clearly a non-millennial (also virtually guaranteed by the ranks and positions described in requirement 1 above).

¹⁹ An O-6 Colonel is the rank for a Brigade Commander, the Part 2 interviewees also included an O-7 Brigadier General, an O-8 Major General, and an O-9 Vice Admiral.

Initial demographic data collection prior to the start of the interview was gathered from each informant but no personally identifiable information (this was the same for the interviews conducted in Part 3):

- a. What is your rank?
- b. How many years of service do you have?
- c. What is your year of birth?
- d. What is your MOS or Branch²⁰?

There was a total of 10 senior leader interviews conducted during Part 2 of the study. Admittedly, 10 interviews of senior-level officers may seem like a small number, however, getting a one-on-one opportunity to collect candid responses from officers who have been in charge of thousands of soldiers, and responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of equipment is unique. The researcher had this opportunity from personal relationships formed over a long military career, and referrals from high-level individuals to their peers. Furthermore, in this case the small number actually represents a suitable sample size of the senior-level officers who serve in these highly selective leadership positions. All respondent in Part 2 were high-ranking senior officers but in two instances the rank of the informant truly represents the 1% of the 1%, as the total number of generals and admirals are limited by United States Code across the entire Department of Defense, roughly translating to 1:10,000 personnel who hold those multiple-star ranks (Congressional Research Service, 2019). The 10 high-ranking senior military personnel

²⁰ MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) for enlisted personnel and Branch for commissioned officers both mean the same thing, an individual's career field. This data will be gathered in both Part 2 and 3 of the study because theoretically the emphasis on culture should be even more pronounced in the combat arms specialties.

informants included three flag²¹ officers, as well as several current and former commanders of Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). A BCT is a basic deployable unit of maneuver in the U.S. Army, comprised of combat arms, combat support, and combat service support elements. A BCT is completely standalone, able to sustain operations away from its parent division because it contains a multitude of skillsets and equipment. A BCT is comprised of over 4,000 personnel and nearly a billion dollars of equipment. In fact, an Armored BCT's operational cost for its combat systems is over \$66,000 per mile (U.S. Army, 2016). The commanders of one of these units have an astonishing responsibility and can truly provide the best insight into generational gaps from their experience. In the case of two of the general officers much detail will not be given, simply disclosing their responsibility would jeopardize their anonymity. They are so close to the top of the organization that it would be easy to guess their identities. It is safe to say their level of responsibility and authority are an exponential increase from that of the BCT commanders described above in both the number of subordinates influenced and the size of budget overseen.

See Appendix B for the 10 questions that was asked of each interview respondent. Based on the results of the pilot study these were revised from their original state. Some questions were eliminated, others were clarified to grant more specific answers to the intent of the study, and the order was also rearranged as that will help define the direction of the inquiry. In addition to the 10 questions, each informant was asked at the end if he

²¹ A flag officer is an officer in the grade of O-7 to O-10 who are authorized to fly their own command flags. In the U.S. military they are called 'general' in the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps or 'admiral' in the Navy and Coast Guard. They are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for the initial and each subsequent promotion (Congressional Research Service, 2019).

or she has anything to add that could be relevant for the study. This final open question provided an opportunity to gather additional insight from the top-level informants as they saw pertinent to the study.

The final phase of the data collection in Part 3 was to interview 20 millennial soldiers currently in the service. A detailed content analysis was done on written works and the interview results of the non-millennial senior leaders. The interview questions for Part 3 were derived from the results of that analysis. See Appendix C for the eight questions that was asked of each respondent in this round of interviews. The millennial informant qualifying criteria was simply based on age to ensure a diverse group of respondents who are representative of the millennial generation. Having only one criterion allowed informants to range from the youngest lower enlisted, to junior leaders who still make the cutoff of having been born in 1985 or after. The year 1985 was chosen as a cutoff to ensure the respondent is truly a millennial adding to the beginning birth year established for the generation by various organizations. The reason for this decision is precaution, it would be difficult to imagine that someone would be different in their way of thinking simply because he or she was born in 1980 as opposed to 1979 for example. Since only millennials were interviewed in this phase, the anticipation was that their responses would be significantly different from any similar interview question responses of the senior leaders in Part 2.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with four respondents who were senior members but below the qualifying criteria of the actual informants who were interviewed in Part 2. The main benefit of this approach was the ability to revise questions following the initial interviews and ask some of the same respondents the revised set at a later time. Two of the four respondents were re-interviewed using the revised set of questions to ensure clarity moving forward into the interviews in Part 2. Clarifying and testing the questions was very helpful to prepare for the actual interviews. As time-consuming as this approach was to get the questions right, it is absolutely necessary. Given the high caliber of the senior-level informants in Part 2, there would only be one opportunity to gather the empirical data. Furthermore, this method provided an opportunity to get input from four individuals who have personal experience with the topic of this study.

Table 1 shows the redacted demographic information of the pilot study respondents, along with interview data for how and when the interviews were conducted, and the particular question set used for each one. Codenames for the informants in the pilot study were assigned lower case roman numerals to isolate them from the Part 2 and Part 3 respondent codenames.

Table 1							
<i>Pilot Study Interview Summary Data</i>							
Name	Grade	Age	Years of Service	CMF ²²	Date of Interview	Method of Interview	Questions Used ²³
Respondent i	E-9	44	25	19	3/7/18	Telephonically	Original
Respondent ii	O-4	36	14	19	3/9/18	Face to Face	Original
Respondent iii	E-8	37	19	19	3/13/18	Face to Face	Original
Respondent iv	O-4	35	13	90	3/15/18	Face to Face	Original
Respondent ii	O-4	36	14	19	4/4/18	Face to Face	Revised
Respondent iii	E-8	37	19	19	4/6/18	Face to Face	Revised

The four respondents chosen for the pilot study were a convenience sample of colleagues and former colleagues, three of whom are close friends of the researcher. The researcher is a senior member of the U.S. Army with 23 years of service; thus, peers, superiors, and former superiors are those prescribed as senior leaders in this study, and these professional relationships allowed access to these informants. The pilot study respondents are individuals who are reasonably close to meeting the criteria established for the senior-level respondents in Part 2 but either one rank lower, or holding a sufficient rank but serving in a staff assignment and missing the high-level command position. Nevertheless, their responses were presumed similar to those seniors in Part 2, enough that the interview questions could be adjusted and validated based on their answers.

Methodology

The pilot interviews were audio recorded, and the coding was done manually, as the primary objective of these interviews was simply validating the questions to be used

²² CMF is an acronym for Career Management Field. It is the series in which a specific MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) lies. The 19 series CMF is armor and cavalry, containing five MOSs: two for commissioned officers, and three for enlisted and noncommissioned officers. The 90 CMF in Table 1 represents a logistics officer.

²³ See Appendix A for the original set of questions and Appendix B for the revised set.

in the actual data collection during Part 2. The purpose of the coding was identifying themes to establish whether or not the open-ended questions would provide the types of answers that would ultimately help create the second set of interview questions for Part 3 of the study. The goal for the questions was to provide enough structure to allow the identification of concepts and themes but not so narrow in focus that the informant is led toward a specific answer.

First-order categories and second-order themes observed from the manual coding of the pilot interviews are shown in Figure 3. Reoccurring phrases with the same meaning detected across all the interviews were grouped into categories. Those categories then were organized into common themes that they supported. These premises are only from the pilot study results and as such were not re-used during Parts 2 and 3, but rather they will stand alone as a component of Part 1. The empirical data collected during Parts 2 and 3 have a much more detailed content analysis, findings, and discussion. The primary objective of the pilot study was the testing and validation of the Part 2 interview protocol not the collection of empirical data. Nonetheless, the data gathered from the four respondents still allowed the identification of categories and themes which was reassuring in preparation for the senior respondent interviews.

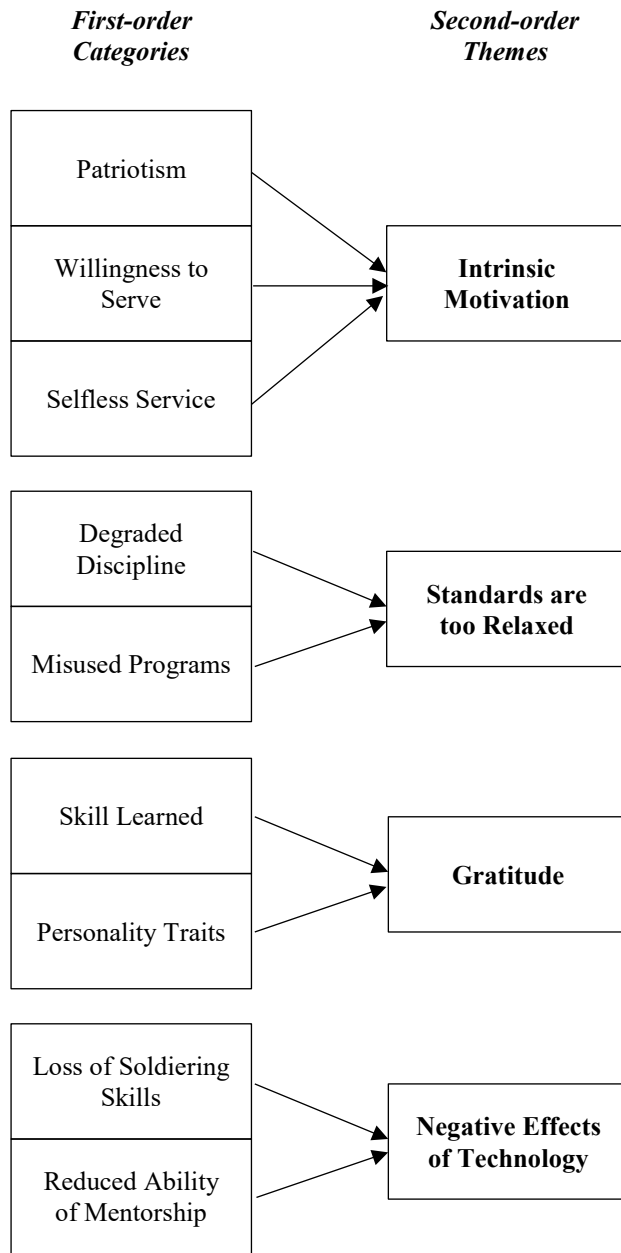


Figure 3: Observed Categories and Themes from the Pilot Interviews

Results

The four respondents ranged in age from 35 to 44 with the median age being 36.5. Their years of service ranged from 13 to 25 years with the median being 16.5 years. The interviews were conducted face to face with the exception of one that had to be done telephonically because of geographic separation. The first four interviews were around 30-35 minutes in length, whereas the subsequent two interviews (second interview for both of those respondents) were much shorter at around 12-20 minutes. Aside from these pilot interviews, no informant was interviewed more than once, this pilot study was an exercise to validate the revised set of questions.

The respondents of the pilot study were universally positive about the U.S. Army's ability to continually meet mission requirements, thus that question²⁴ was removed and replaced (see Appendix A and B for comparison) as it added no value to the investigation. "I don't think there will ever be an issue of the U.S. Army not being able to do its job" (Respondent ii). "Absolutely, we have a strong and capable force now and will continue to do so" (Respondent iv).

Intrinsic motivation to join is necessary for a successful career, although no control measure exists for it.

I joined because I wanted to serve, there was always a sense of patriotism or the need to do this. I didn't necessarily intend to stay this long, but when you are young, you don't think about the future more than a few years at a time. (Respondent i)

I think that's part of the problem; we are pushing all this money and basically begging the high school kids to join for the sign-up bonus and the college money. Those are nice, but if that's why you are coming in, you're in the wrong business. (Respondent ii)

²⁴ Do you think the current force is capable of meeting its mission requirements long term?

Changing with the times is both reasonable and necessary, but the U.S. Army standards have been relaxed too far, discipline is suffering because of it, too much emphasis has been placed on catering to individuals, and some programs have been abused by junior service members beyond their scope (such as EO, diversity, etc.). “These kids are allowed to hide behind the initiatives that every commander must support. All a Private has to do is insinuate discrimination or some other bull.... and about five people in his chain are getting investigated” (Respondent iii).

The senior-level interviewees expressed gratitude for the U.S. Army upbringing, the skills, and personality traits they acquired during their career.

From the time I joined as a young man, the U.S. Army shaped who I am and how I look at things. You know what I mean, it’s easy to pick out a military guy from the crowd by how he walks and talks but it’s more than that. My personality is altered for the better, being on time, unwilling to fail, honesty and integrity, that’s all because of the time I spent in uniform. (Respondent i)

Loss of basic soldiering skills due to technology is contributing to the culture’s erosion, the decline of pride in craft, and the diminishing ability of leaders to pass on knowledge to subordinates as a means of gaining respect and credibility.

I love DAGR and BFT²⁵ as much as anyone, it sure beats the compass and protractor, but we are also not able to teach the junior enlisted something important the way we were taught by our NCOs. That undermines credibility and respect for leadership, they can figure out all the new systems in minutes. (Respondent iii)

²⁵ DAGR is an acronym for Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, and BFT is an acronym for Blue Force Tracker. There are other variations but these types of equipment are similar to the navigation system found in a car. They also have the ability to see other friendly forces on the map and any enemy forces reported by one of the friendly elements. Additional reporting and messaging capabilities further enhance these systems. They have virtually eliminated the need for a topographic paper map, a lensatic compass, and a plastic protractor to conduct land navigation with, once an essential soldiering skill.

Discussion

Insights gathered from the analysis of the pilot interviews provided an excellent validation of the direction and the thought process of the study. From the themes above it was obvious that the respondents of the pilot study, who are similar in age, in their level of responsibility, and mostly serve in the same career management field do share some viewpoints. That was the expected outcome and going forward in Part 2 the forecast was that a similar pattern will be observed from the 10 senior-level respondents. In Part 3, however, a different pattern was anticipated from the 20 junior millennial respondents.

One of the practical discoveries was the significant difference made by rearranging the order of the questions. Engaging with the test group of respondents was the only way to fine tune the flow. Placing the question about the interviewee's motivation to join the U.S. Army up front rather than in the middle (as it was in the original set) helped set the tone of the inquiry, and affected the responses to the subsequent questions. That decision was made after the initial interviews revealed the theme of intrinsic motivation and its significance. The revised set of questions was used to gather data in Part 2 from the senior leader respondents. They are open-ended enough to allow for the exploratory nature of the study but at the same time focused enough to establish patterns in the responses. The outcome of the pilot study was deemed successful, it has met the intent of what Part 1 was designed to do, and allowed the study to move forward into Phase 2 following a successful proposal defense.

The Empirical Data

The subsequent section of the study was begun following dissertation proposal defense. In this section, the empirical strategy along with the motive for the changes are

described, a description of the sample is provided, the interview protocol is explicated, and the analytical approach to the data is rationalized. The findings will be presented for each of the two respondent groups of Parts 2 and 3 in Chapters 2 and 3 correspondingly, with the focus placed on framing common themes and conceptual categories as they emerged from the analysis of the data. Afterwards, a comparison and contrast discussion of these two groups of respondents is provided in Chapter 4 including an explanation of the indicated causes of differences, and offering ideas for further potentially productive new directions of study. Finally, the work concludes by acknowledging limitations of the study's approach and of the study's conclusions.

At the suggestion of the dissertation committee, the surveys that were originally planned during Part 1 for accomplishment in Part 3 were not done because of a lack of existing verified scales. The study methodology was redesigned to consist of two sets of conforming interviews of senior and junior ranking personnel respectively for the empirical data collection. Part 2 thus remained focused upon interviewing senior grade non-millennial officers as originally intended, and Part 3 now focused upon junior grade millennial respondents using the same qualifying interview criterion initially established for the junior survey respondents.

CHAPTER 2: PART 2 INTERVIEWS

Part 2 data collection began after IRB approval²⁶ was received affirming this change in study design. The non-millennial officer interviews started in November of 2018 and concluded by the beginning of January 2019.

The Non-Millennial Senior Officer Sample

The 10 informants in Part 2 of the study were senior grade, non-millennial officers currently serving on active duty. The sample was not random because interviews were secured from professional relationships of the interviewer established over his 23-year career. This sample however, does uniquely represent various organizations, specialties, race and gender categories, and experiences up to the highest levels of the U.S. Army and the Department of Defense. Several informants in the sample represent the top 1% of the 1% of U.S. Army and DoD officer corps, and as such is a very difficult category of respondents for most researchers to access.

The age range is from 45 to 62, the average age of the group is 52, and the median age is 51.5. Years of service ranges from 23 to 39 years, the group has 29 years of service on average with the median years of service being 29.5. There were eight male and two female respondents, which is proportionate to the percentage of males and females serving on active duty. Two of the respondents in the group were from different branches of service (U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy) but both are currently serving in a joint duty assignment billet²⁷. There was one senior non-commissioned officer

²⁶ See Appendix F for IRB approval.

²⁷ A joint billet is a duty assignment that can be held by a member of various branches of service and the position's duties and scope usually extend beyond a single branch of the Department of Defense.

interviewed who is an E-9 serving in a nominative position²⁸, the rest were senior commissioned officers stretching from O-6 to O-9. Command and staff experience in this group ranges from the Brigade level up to the National level. The occupational specialty of the respondents is diverse, encompassing infantry, armor, artillery, logistics, finance, medical and signal. All but one of the senior interviews were done telephonically. Although this is not optimal, it could not be helped because the participants in this elite group were geographically spread out across the United States and are very busy, thus hard to schedule for in-person interviews. Gender, race and other categories not being evaluated in this study were removed from the individual officer descriptions in order to hide their identity. Knowing race and gender, for example, likely would make an individual officer identifiable within this small, elite sample of senior level respondents.

Detailed Description of the Sample

To avoid confusion in the latter sections of this work senior informants in Part 2 were given codenames with letters (Respondent A, Respondent B), whereas junior informants in Part 3 were given codenames with numbers (Respondent 1, Respondent 2). This makes it easy to identify which respondent group a particular statement or perspective originated from.

Respondent A is 45 years old with 23 years of service who is an O-6 Colonel with an infantry background. Respondent A is currently serving as a brigade commander and also has division-level primary staff experience.

²⁸ A nominative position is any E-9 billet in which the service member is rated by a General Officer (GO) or a member of the SES (Senior Executive Service). These positions are the highest levels of service for the most senior non-commissioned officers.

Respondent B is 46 years old with 23 years of service who is an O-6 Colonel with an armor background. Respondent B is currently serving as a division-level primary staff officer and is a recent graduate of the U.S. Army War College.

Respondent C is 58 years old with 34 years of service who is an O-7 Brigadier General with an artillery background. Respondent C is currently serving as a division commander, has previously been a brigade commander, and primary staff officer at both brigade and division levels.

Respondent D is 50 years old with 27 years of service who is an O-6 Colonel with an infantry background. Respondent D is currently serving as Chief of Staff at the division-level and has been a brigade commander.

Respondent E is 49 years old with 30 years of service who is an O-6 Colonel with a logistics background. Respondent E is currently serving as a division-level primary staff officer and has been a brigade commander.

Respondent F is 51 years old with 25 years of service who is an O-6 U.S. Air Force Colonel with a finance background. Respondent F is currently serving in a joint billet in an oversight role at the division-level.

Respondent G is 53 years old with 30 years of service who is an O-8 Major General with an armor background. Respondent G is currently serving as Deputy Chief of Staff at one of the U.S. Army Commands, has previously been a commander at brigade and division levels, and primary staff officer at brigade and division levels.

Respondent H is 52 years old with 29 years of service who is an E-9 Command Sergeants Major. Respondent H is currently serving in a nominative position at the division-level, with prior background in military police and transportation.

Respondent I is 62 years old with 39 years of service who is an O-9 U.S. Navy Vice Admiral with a medical background. Respondent I currently serves as head of a national agency serving all branches of the Department of Defense. Previously, Respondent I held both command and staff positions at the highest levels of the U.S. Navy and the Department of Defense.

Respondent J is 54 years old with 30 years of service who is an O-6 Colonel with a signal background. Respondent J currently serves in an oversight role at the division-level and has been a brigade commander.

Part 2 Interviews

All respondents were provided with the IRB approved Interview Consent Form²⁹ document and the Executive Summary³⁰ of the study, specifically the version used for proposal defense at the time of scheduling, and were asked to review them prior to the interview. The interviews were semi-structured, lasting between approximately 15 to 60 minutes in total, with the recorded portions averaging 28.1 minutes and the median at 24.5 minutes. The first few non-recorded minutes of each interview was spent ensuring the informant had a good understanding of the study and its context from the executive summary provided. Also, after the first few interviews it became obvious that questions 5 and 6 had to be clarified to confirm full understanding of what it is referring to. The executive summary addresses the recruit-train-accommodate-retain lifecycle of a soldier but not in very much detail, so additional verbal elaboration on what that question

²⁹ See Appendix D for the IRB approved Interview Consent Form.

³⁰ See Appendix E for the Executive Summary.

referred to proved very helpful in subsequent interviews. To avoid compromising uniformity of the questionnaire, the same technique was used for the Part 3 respondents in case of those two specific questions.

All interviews were audio recorded (with knowledge and permission of the respondent) within the Trint app and transcribed using that online service. Although Trint claims “up to” a very high percentage of accuracy, in the case of these interviews, which were littered with military slang and terminology, quite a bit of correction had to be made by the researcher to clarify each transcript. In addition to correcting inaccurately transcribed words, any repetitive word such as ‘the, the’, or filler words in pauses such as ‘um’ or ‘you know’ were also eliminated to increase readability and so as to not affect word counts or pattern analysis. All questions were initiated by the interviewer, respondents were allowed to stray away from the question and elaborate on areas they felt were important or relevant, and they were allowed to talk for an extended period of time uninterrupted. The intent of this technique was to allow the respondent to choose which direction to take in answering the question based on what he or she felt was pertinent and to minimize interviewer influence or bias.

Part 2 Interview Protocol

The interview questions were designed to provide enough structure so that the responses could eventually yield themes in the results of the analysis but generic enough to refrain from leading the interviewee down a narrow path. This approach allowed the respondent to answer in the perspective that was most important to him or her. For instance, one of the questions asked about the most important U.S. Army traditions, to which some replied with personal values based answers such as discipline or selfless

service, whereas others talked about the historical aspect of traditions such as the lineage and ceremonies. Another example of this is the question asking whether standards are too strict, too relaxed, or just right. Inherently, standards in the U.S. Army encompass a very wide range of topics and this was done on purpose to allow the respondent the choice. Some even addressed this in multiple parts providing one opinion for some standards and a different one for others. In addition to the 10 structured questions all respondents were asked at the conclusion of the interview if they had anything to add that would be relevant to this study. This method was employed to ensure there was an opportunity to collect data that may have been missed during the structured part. Most of the interviewees elaborated on a previous point or addressed the overall subject of the study either in the generational gap context or from the organizational resilience perspective. This will be elaborated on separately in the findings.

Part 2 Analysis

The analysis started out using NVivo as intended but after numerous attempts at manipulating functions, the results still failed to yield the desired level of understanding or insight the study hoped to gain from a thorough analysis as this program promises. Partially this is due to the researcher not having sufficient expertise at using the software, but mostly the program offered no additional comprehension besides what the researcher had to physically input. Functions, such as word frequency across the 10 transcripts became meaningless. Even with the inclusion of stemmed words, the weighted percentages were all very low although clear patterns within the responses could be identified by the researcher even as the transcription was taking place.

In the interest of an effective understanding of the empirical data collected and the time restrictions for finishing the study, manual coding was employed as the primary method of analysis. First step was reviewing each corrected transcript and interpreting what was said. Given the semi-structured nature of the interview protocol this started out by capturing the premise(s) of each response for every question. In this first phase using open coding, short passages were written down summarizing the main idea(s) of the answer to the question. This technique yielded some redundancy within a single interview as well as across the 10 respondents. Initially, there were approximately 260 passages in total. All duplicates were eliminated prior to moving onto the second phase.

In the second phase of the analysis the desired outcome was creating the first order concepts from grouping together alike passages using axial coding. These constructs emerged naturally from the interviews after conducting, transcribing, correcting, and analyzing them. To aid in selecting and consolidating the passages, two colleagues who are familiar with the study but did not participate in any of the interviews were asked to assist in a small focus group. The purpose of this was mainly a litmus test to ensure the rationale of grouping passages into the same construct made sense to others who are active duty service members and understand the context of what the passages mean, even though they are not trained researchers. Both colleagues agreed that the consolidation was appropriate. Ultimately, 31 concepts in total were left as first-order concepts, these can be seen in Figure 4.

In the third phase those 31 concepts were organized into groups based on commonality and contextual relationships of their origin. Often this was heavily influenced by which question the concept originated from but in numerous instances they

also occurred throughout different parts of the interviews. The concepts were assembled into eight second-order themes shown in Figure 4. Additionally, in the final step the eight themes were further grouped into dimensions that they are contributing to. The two dimensions chosen were *individual* and *organizational* based on the information gathered from the interviews because those insights provided either referred to the individual soldier or to the organization as a whole. The analysis was halted at this point for Part 2 as interviews were still being conducted for Part 3. The way forward was to conduct the same analysis for the first through the third phase of the 20 millennial soldier interviews. Once the first-order concepts and the second-order themes were identified from that examination, the fourth and final phase of analysis could take place.

In the fourth phase of the analysis the concepts and themes from Part 2 and Part 3 are compared and contrasted against one another, identifying similarities and differences within the two distinct groups of respondents.

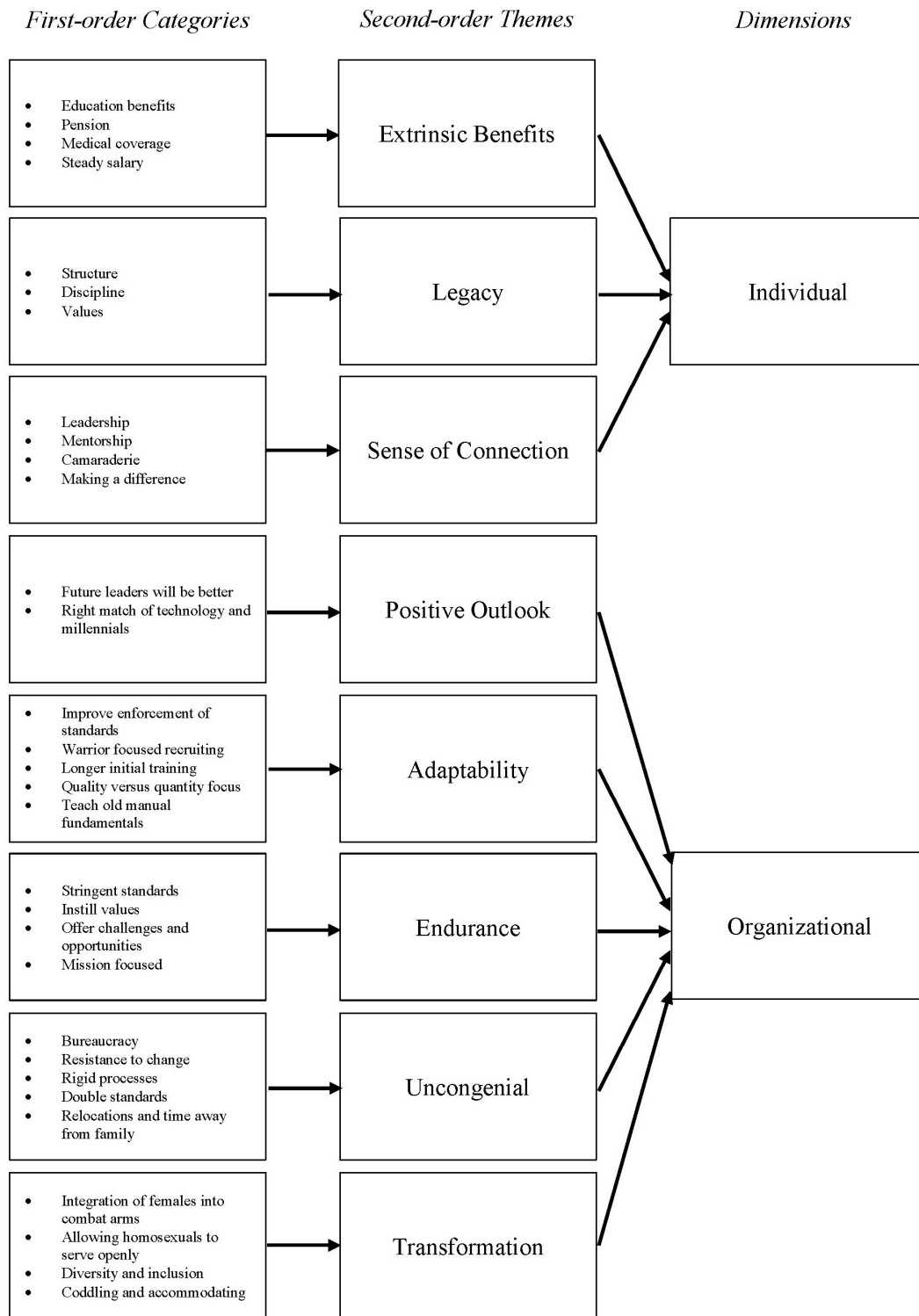


Figure 4: Structure of content categories arising from interview data in Part 2

Non-Millennial Senior Group Findings

The participants in this group vary by race and gender, they span across very distinctive specialties, even different branches of service, yet many of them have stated similar reasons, likes, dislikes, values, and opinions about the topics discussed during the interviews. The forecasted parallel views of these senior non-millennial officers were evident throughout the data collected.

Their answer for why they joined the military included a calling, indoctrination through family tradition, serving the country, being a part of something larger than one's self, making a difference, adventure, and education benefits. "The Army really is my family business" (Respondent D). "The adventure I would say, it had really nothing to do with the income or anything like that. I wanted to go do something fun after high school" (Respondent E). "I joined for college, my intent was to serve four years, get the G.I. Bill and get out, so yeah that didn't quite pan out" (Respondent C).

The group overwhelmingly prized discipline as the most valuable U.S. Army tradition. "Especially in high intensity conflict that if we're going to operate in morally caustic environments than we have to have discipline that ties us back to who we are as citizens, who we are as people" (Respondent D). Other popular answers included the U.S. Army values³¹ specifically selfless service, customs and courtesies, and the organization's rich history and heritage. "I would say the living up to the Army values because it is a set of values that go across the entire force and that's what binds it

³¹ The seven U.S. Army values are: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. These values are taught to every recruit during initial entry training and all members of the organization are expected to live their lives by these values both on and off duty.

together” (Respondent H). “We as the United States Army can't lose sight of our past. Because that past, that discipline, that organization, that loyalty, our seven core values really establishes and set us apart from other organizations, even other world militaries” (Respondent C). The reason for needing discipline in a military organization is easy to conceptualize for anyone, there are instances in wartime situations during which leaders must order subordinates to perform tasks that can cost them their lives. This high-level of respect for rank or authority, and extreme need for compliance without hesitation is an essential part of organizational culture directly affecting function.

The most significant organizational culture change mentioned by nearly everyone was the integration of females into the combat arms specialties. “Now we're seeing women in the combat arms and so there is this continued movement of increasing that diversity, increasing that inclusiveness” (Respondent I). Others are diversity and inclusion particularly diversity of thought, the ability of homosexual service members to serve openly, and the millennial issues, especially the easing up of the standards and coddling them which counters the entry experiences of previous generations. “When we talk about inclusion it's about that diversity of thought. If we all look the same, we all talk the same, then we'll continue to do the same thing forever and we'll never grow as an organization” (Respondent F).

The opinions were spread fairly evenly between standards being too relaxed or just right but many mentioned that it is heavily dependent on which particular standard. “I guess what my answer is that I don't think the standards are too harsh or too lax, I think that they are negotiable” (Respondent I). For instance, the U.S. Army has altered the entrance standards cyclically based on the need for total numbers in the force. “I think

you start enforcing the standards based on that cycle. I think you modify and you adapt it to the strength posture of the organization” (Respondent C). Most of the group stated that while the standards are there, it is the enforcement of those standards that need to be tightened up. “I think the standards that are out there, that are established are just fine. I think the enforcement of the standards though is lacking across our formations” (Respondent B). Additionally, in a traditionally very straightforward organization the attempted interpretation of standards is a growing issue. This is seen more with millennials according to the respondents because of their tendency to avoid fitting into a box, and the desire to shape the rules for their benefit. “This newer generation, how they want to interpret things, no matter what it says in black and white you can make whatever you want out of it in some way, shape, or form” (Respondent F). Every respondent who mentioned the very recent lengthening of initial entry training³² for the combat arms branches saw it as a step in the right direction to rectify some of the issues of easing up too much in the past years.

For the question about what should change in the U.S. Army during the soldier’s lifecycle of recruit, train, retain with accommodation running through the entire cycle most of the focus was on recruiting. The ideas resonated in the same direction. The U.S. Army invests a lot of money into attracting would-be recruits just to get them in front of a recruiter, then the testing, medical examination, background checks, enlistment bonuses, the cost of initial entry training, etc. “The investment that we make in military personnel when we bring them is very costly” (Respondent I). The U.S. Army needs to do more

³² The U.S. Army very recently started experimenting with the lengthening of OSUT (One Station Unit Training) – a combination of BCT (Basic Combat Training) and AIT (Advanced Individual Training) for the combat arms specialties (Vergun, 2018).

warrior focused recruiting instead of primarily using the benefits of service as quid pro quo to appeal to young people. An effort needs to be made to appeal to the intrinsic motivators too. “I do think that there are ways we can challenge ourselves as an Army even more and inculcate this feeling of wanting to belong. ‘I want to be part of that’. I’ll tell you the Army is seeing that now” (Respondent G). The U.S. Army needs to instill from the very beginning of engaging the High School student that what he or she is signing up for is a profession of arms. “The most dangerous thing we can do to the Army is try to turn it into a corporation, and have a corporate mentality about the fundamental purpose of why we have an Army” (Respondent E). To support this, the transition that takes place from civilian to soldier should be tough and realistic and the lengthening of initial entry training is seen as a positive change. It is important to be honest with the recruits about the realities of military service to manage their expectations. “The first time to deal with the idea of somebody getting blown up can't be when you see somebody get blown up” (Respondent D). A few respondents, however, have mentioned that the U.S. Army can accommodate for some special skills vital to the overall mission and those individuals do not need to be held to the same standards as combat soldiers because we want to attract them for their expertise in a niche area.

The Marine Corps reflects on what they want: ‘we are looking for a few good men’, their standards are high, and their tolerance for non-performance is low. Whereas we're a much larger organization and so we have to morph our standards to accommodate these recruits. (Respondent C)

This was exemplified with cyber skills especially in which the U.S. Army wants the best personnel but the physical attributes of those recruits are irrelevant. “I think there are ways that we can look at and open up and change the culture within the Army and say:

look, not everybody in the Army has to be an infantryman” (Respondent B). Lastly, somehow the U.S. Army needs to shift the focus from quantity to quality in its recruiting efforts, however, the informants acknowledged that this is a lofty proposition with no recommended solution.

On the opposite end of that inquiry about what should stay the same the focus shifted to maintaining stringent standards, staying true to the mission of the U.S. Army, conserving that discipline so vital to the organization.

I believe what the Army has to do is ensure that standards are maintained, that we are producing soldiers, they have to understand and make potential soldiers, i.e. recruits understand that we are training for combat, and this isn't to train you to be a better business manager someday. (Respondent E)

Protecting the organizational culture and using caution when making changes was pointed out multiple times. “As we try to adapt, if we adapt too far and adapt too much of the traits associated with Millennials and don't hang onto some of our values that us Gen X people have then we could be in jeopardy” (Respondent C). Some took a much harder line than others but the core idea remained the same, the U.S. Army must stay resilient as an organization and protect itself for its continued function and longevity.

You're not made to stay, it's a voluntary force. If you're unhappy don't try and change it to meet your needs. You need to change to meet its needs. If you can't do that than maybe you should separate yourself from the organization. (Respondent F)

Again, the reason for training and the need to maintain the toughness and realism was pointed out. “In all this we have to remain true to our core of what it is we're being asked to do and that's the defense of the nation. We train in order to go to combat” (Respondent G).

Most respondents acknowledged that after a certain number of years (around 10) it made sense to stay until 20 years of service for the pension and the other benefits. The reasons given for staying in the service far past the minimum 20 years of service required for retirement were common. The respondents stated they liked being in uniform, liked being around soldiers and the camaraderie, enjoyed the progressive leadership opportunities, and the ability to mentor junior leaders. “I just left brigade command. I wanted to command at that level so I stayed for that but what's really kept me in is the Army has been good to me, it's been good to my family” (Respondent E). “I started looking around to see what kind of opportunities there might be and that's when I got selected for my first star, and now [at the three-star level] I'm getting to learn on a much broader enterprise scale” (Respondent I). Additionally, the pride from serving the nation, making a difference, and for some even the chance to serve at the same time as their children was influential.

For the two-part question about likes versus dislikes regarding U.S. Army life the positive answers reverted back to some previous responses. The discipline, structure, rules and regimented life, values, camaraderie, leadership opportunities, making a difference, pride in service to country resonated through all respondents. Some also mentioned liking the diverse assignments both in geographic locations and in very different job functions throughout a long career. One respondent even mentioned that while it seems like a small thing he really enjoys not having to think about his attire for the day. He referenced that as a corporate executive picking out shirts and ties to match his suit would be a daily annoyance. The dislikes were also similar among the respondents. Most acknowledged that there is not much they dislike which makes perfect

sense for a group of senior leaders who have served an average of about 30 years. The frequent relocations, particularly from the family perspective were reoccurring, stating that the spouse is either unable to have his or her career or else has to change jobs every few years. Children are also regularly disrupted by having to change school and abandon friendships to start anew.

It really comes down to a balance between what you give to the organization and what you give to the family because when you spend twelve hours a day with the unit and you spend an hour a day with your son and your wife that's a significant commitment and sacrifice.
(Respondent B)

The bulk of the dislike was aimed at the U.S. Army being a very bureaucratic organization, one that is very resistant to change, with policies that further prevent the implementation of more efficient or positive transformations.

We are very much still a bureaucratic machine. I get frustrated a lot as I try and try to create change and manage change...a lot of Army bureaucrats default to 'no' because 'no' is an easy answer versus try and get to a hard 'yes' to create some positive change. (Respondent E)

The double standards for females was mentioned by both sexes as something they dislike, although the integration of women into the combat specialties and the upcoming new gender-neutral fitness test³³ is helping to mitigate that.

In regard to the question about whether technological advances have negatively affected basic soldiering skills the answers were mostly given in two parts. The short answer was usually 'yes', but with caveats that the technological advances are absolutely necessary for the United States to stay competitive with or ahead of other militaries.

³³ The ACFT (Army Combat Fitness Test) is currently in implementation phase to replace the long-standing APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test). Major differences are going from three to six events, it is a much more comprehensive assessment of physical fitness, and it is both gender and age neutral in scoring (U.S. Army, 2019)

Another facet was the acknowledgement that the millennial generation is best poised to master these advances and maximize the capabilities of new technology. “We have found with simulation that kids, new recruits have some of those digital skills that are very secondhand to them, it's very natural to them. They do really well with these technological areas” (Respondent I). For the negative impact of the new technology it was said that there is absolutely value in knowing how to perform basic soldiering skills the old, manual way for both redundancy (in the event the technology is inoperative) and for better conceptual understanding of the task. “All those systems came really online in the late 90s and early 2000s. That's where we saw the transition in that reliance on those systems and so you begin to see those basic soldier skills start to fade” (Respondent B).

The last structured question asked if the respondents think the next generation of leaders will be better, worse or about the same as them. The vast majority had a positive outlook and either said they would be better or at least the same level of effectiveness as current senior leaders. “You have to be able to communicate with them and be able to challenge them to meet future endeavors but generations behind us will always be better. And if they're not, we as leaders have failed” (Respondent G). There was an understanding mentioned by multiple respondents that they will inherently face different challenges leading the Generation Z soldiers. “I don't think it's going to be a matter of better or worse. I think it's just going to be very different” (Respondent I). There were a few negative responses as well:

I think that they'll be worse. The reason I say that is because I think the level of discipline, structure, accountability, and authority is not what it should be. We have a sense of entitlement and recognition or reward for everything that they do. (Respondent C)

The interviews ended with asking if the informant had anything to add that he or she believes would be relevant to the study. Many respondents complimented the study that it is a relevant and worthwhile topic to explore. Most have reiterated or rephrased a previous point made during one of the responses. The answers were fairly widespread as intended for gathering additional insight. Here are some of the highlights: As it is often the case with generational gaps reaching the younger generation is difficult because they communicate differently from their predecessors who are typically old enough to be their parents. “So, we just got to be able to speak their lingo and bridge that generational gap I think. What I would add that it's not a cookie cutter answer, it's an art that the senior leaders got to figure out” (Respondent A). The accommodation (with moderation) can positively affect retention as one respondent mentioned.

With them easing up in certain areas it improves the work environment where there's less stress on soldiers, which then if there is less stress on them, they more or less think of this as a job and a career and would want to stay. That I've seen as a good change. (Respondent H)

The softness and lack of physical conditioning oftentimes affiliated with millennials continues with the Generation Z young people who are currently in high school and will start joining the military. “The physical things though in terms of accession standards that does have me concerned is that less than 20 percent of today's high school students would be considered physically eligible to join any one of the services” (Respondent I). Multiple respondents mentioned the importance of advertising the intangible and nonmonetary benefits of military service in recruiting efforts, one of them being the outstanding leadership opportunities that joining can provide. “The United States Army has primus here; or the military has primacy in leadership development” (Respondent C).

Finally, it is important to keep the quality in the forefront, like any other organization globally, the U.S. Army also desires the best possible personnel to fill its ranks. “The military services want to continue to bring in the best talent because we want to maintain the best military in the world” (Respondent I).

Table 2 shows the frequency of main concepts in the answers with the corresponding question for Part 2. The number is a count of occurrence for any of the phrases listed together because of their similarity. For instance, if one respondent answered that he or she likes “values, discipline, and structure” for question eight than that would count as three. Some of the responses are only a singular phrase (denoted in bold for easy identification) such as the answer that the enforcement of standards is lacking. The frequency there was five representing that 50% of the informants thought so.

Table 2		
<i>Frequency of Main Concepts in Part 2</i>		
<i>f</i>	Phrase(s)	Question
5 ¹	Tradition of service in family, Calling	1
4	College, Education benefits	
14	Discipline, Structure, Values	2
9	Esprit de corps, Ceremonies, Lineage	
16	Females in combat, Gays can serve openly, Diversity	3
9	Easing of standards, accommodations	
4	Too relaxed	4
5	Just right, Mixed, Negotiable	
5	Enforcement of standards is lacking	
7	Better transparency and communication in recruiting	5
6	Warrior-focused recruiting	
5	Quality focus recruiting or retention	
7	Tougher or longer initial entry training	
12	Standards, Core values, Readiness	6
8	Tough training, True to mission	
16	Stayed for camaraderie, leadership, or pride	7
8	Stayed for pension, pay, or benefits (until 20 YOS)	
19	Values, Discipline, Structure, Pride	8 (Like) ²
12	Bureaucracy, Resistance to change, Bad policies	8 (Dislike)
6	Time away from family, Moving	
7	Necessary advances, Millennials are right match	9
6	Loss of basic fundamental skills	
6	Future leaders will be better	10
3	About the same, Different not better or worse	
4	Need to bring in top talent, Great leadership opportunity	Open
3	Communication gap, Softer society	
5	Accommodate in moderation, Maintain culture	

¹ Number represents the times any of the related phrases were used for that question, some are singular denoted in **bold** whereas others have multiples

² Question #8 was two parts, like and dislike, here it is split for clarity

CHAPTER 3: PART 3 INTERVIEWS

Part 3 began immediately after receiving IRB approval for the study's modification. High interest for participation from informants has allowed this part of data collection to be completed within approximately one month. Part 3 data collection was going on concurrently with final analysis and write up of Part 2, but the analysis of Part 3 data did not begin until all 20 interviews were conducted and transcribed.

The Millennial Sample

The informants in Part 3 of the study were junior grade (a mixture of lower enlisted personnel, junior non-commissioned officers, and company grade commissioned officers) millennial personnel currently serving on active duty. The sample was random, although a convenience sample from a geographic aspect. The recruiting material was distributed to leaders of units who are known to the researcher in the Southern Nevada and Southern California areas. This sample represents various units differing in their functions, occupational specialties, races, and gender characteristics.

The age range is from 21 to 34, the average age of the group is 29.5, and the median age is 30.5. Years of service ranges from 2 to 13 years, the group has 8.95 years of service on average with the median years of service being 9. There were 15 male and 5 female respondents which is slightly higher³⁴ than the percentage of females serving on active duty. There was one company grade officer interviewed in the grade of O-3, the rest were a mixture of lower enlisted and junior non-commissioned officers ranging in grade from E-4 to E-7. The occupational specialty of the respondents is diverse,

³⁴ 25% in the Part 3 sample versus 16 to 18% depending on the source.

encompassing cavalry, armor, fire support, logistics, communications, human resources, transportation, engineers, and recruiting; more specifically 12 different specialties represented in the sample within those 9 branches. All but one of the junior interviews were done in person, the singular exception was conducted telephonically.

Detailed Description of the Sample

To avoid confusion in the latter sections of this dissertation junior, millennial informants in Part 3 were given codenames with numbers (Respondent 1, Respondent 2), whereas senior non-millennial informants in Part 2 were given codenames with letters (Respondent A, Respondent B). This makes it easy to identify which respondent group a particular statement or perspective originated from.

Respondent 1 is a 28-year-old E-5 with 7 years of service and a communications background. Respondent 2 is a 25-year-old E-5 with 7 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 3 is a 31-year-old E-7 with 12 years of service and a cavalry background. Respondent 4 is a 24-year-old E-4 with 6 years of service and a human resources background. Respondent 5 is a 29-year-old E-5 with 10 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 6 is a 34-year-old E-6 with 13 years of service and a cavalry background. Respondent 7 is a 33-year-old E-6 with 13 years of service and an armor background. Respondent 8 is a 34-year-old O-3 with 10 years of service and a cavalry background. Respondent 9 is a 33-year-old E-7 with 12 years of service and a human resources background. Respondent 10 is a 28-year-old E-5 with 9 years of service and a transportation background. Respondent 11 is a 31-year-old E-5 with 9 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 12 is a 32-year-old E-5 with 9 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 13 is a 33-year-old E-6 with 13 years of

service and a cavalry background. Respondent 14 is a 33-year-old E-6 with 11 years of service and a fire support background. Respondent 15 is a 21-year-old E-4 with 2 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 16 is a 30-year-old E-6 with 8 years of service and an engineer background. Respondent 17 is a 22-year-old E-4 with 4 years of service and a logistics background. Respondent 18 is a 33-year-old E-6 with 9 years of service and a communications background. Respondent 19 is a 28-year-old E-5 with 7 years of service and a recruiting background. Respondent 20 is a 28-year-old E-5 with 8 years of service and an engineer background.

Part 3 Interviews

All respondents were provided with the IRB approved Interview Consent document and the Executive Summary of the study, specifically the version used for proposal defense and for the Part 2 respondents at the time of scheduling and were asked to review them prior to the interview. The interviews were semi-structured, lasting between approximately 11 to 23 minutes in total, with the recorded portions averaging 11.75 minutes and the median at 11 minutes. The first few non-recorded minutes of each interview was spent ensuring the informant had a good understanding of the study and its context from the executive summary provided. Additionally, just as during the Part 2 interviews questions 4 and 5 (same as questions 5 and 6 in the Part 2 protocol) were clarified to confirm full understanding. The executive summary addresses the recruit-train-accommodate-retain lifecycle of a soldier but not in very much detail, so additional verbal elaboration on what that question referred to was offered for those two specific questions. This technique maintained uniformity with the senior non-millennial respondent group.

All interviews were audio recorded (with knowledge and permission of the respondent) within the Trint app, transcribed using that online service, and corrected in the same manner as the Part 2 transcripts. All questions were initiated by the interviewer, respondents were allowed to stray away from the question and elaborate on areas they felt were important or relevant, and they were allowed to talk for an extended period of time uninterrupted. The intent of this technique was to allow the respondent to choose which direction to take in answering the question based on what he or she felt was pertinent and to minimize interviewer influence or bias.

Part 3 Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was unchanged to the extent possible to ensure any differences in the data collected were due to the differences in generational views, and not because of study design. These interviews were expected to be quite a bit shorter than the ones in Part 2, as the junior soldiers would have less to say than their senior counterparts because of their lesser time in service and experience.

The recruiting method was also changed from that of the very senior grade non-millennial officer respondents. Rather than direct engagement, a simple recruiting poster was sent to leaders of units in the Southern Nevada and Southern California geographic areas to distribute to their subordinates. The interested volunteers then could reach out to the researcher for more information via email or telephone. The benefits to using this approach are twofold, first ensuring no junior respondent felt pressured to grant an interview to a senior ranking researcher, and second, the true randomizing of the sample. Even though this was a convenience sample from a geographic perspective, the respondents are very diverse in every aspect as described above in the sample section.

The questionnaire was slightly redesigned to fit this group of informants based on projected average age and years of service differences, as prescribed by the study. Of the 10 questions used in the Part 2 interviews two were removed. First, question #2 from the protocol asking about the most significant organizational cultural changes observed during the informant's career was omitted. This was done for obvious reasons; a longer career is needed to answer this effectively because it is necessary to serve long enough to see the next generation coming into the military, and culture changes slowly over time. Second, question #9 was also omitted, which asked about whether or not technological advances have negatively affected basic soldiering skills. The reason for this removal is much less obvious. Technology is improving constantly and at a rapid rate; however, the responses of the senior officers universally referenced major milestones causing the degradation of those older, manual ways of doing things. The principal technological advance named was Blue Force Tracker (BFT) or one of its variate names FBCB2 (Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below) replacing the paper map, compass, and protractor navigation. This system was fully online between 2001 and 2003 thus anyone who enlisted after that time would have never operated without it using the old non-technology methods. Even the oldest millennial who would be eligible for participation in Part 3 by the birth year cutoff would be too young to have joined prior to this technology's implementation.

Of the remaining eight questions six were exactly the same, whereas two others were slightly altered for applicability but without changing the context. Part 2 interview question #7 was reworded to ask what would make the respondent stay in the U.S. Army as opposed to the past tense version because all seniors were well over retirement

eligibility. Finally, question #10 was transformed to ask whether the informants in this group believe once they become senior leaders will they be better, worse, or about the same as the current senior leaders. The former version asked the senior interviewees whether they believed the future leaders will be better, worse, or about the same as them. The goal was to retain comparability while fostering applicability.

Part 3 Analysis

The analysis for Part 3 followed the same exact steps as the analysis used for Part 2 during the first three of the four phases. First phase was reviewing each corrected transcript and interpreting what was said. Given the semi-structured nature of the interview protocol this started out by capturing the premise(s) of each response for every question. In this first phase using open coding, short passages were written down summarizing the main idea(s) of the answer to the question. As in Part 2, this technique yielded much redundancy within a single interview as well as across the 20 respondents. Initially, there were approximately 410 passages in total. All duplicates were eliminated prior to moving onto the second phase.

In the second phase of the analysis the desired outcome was creating the first order concepts from grouping together alike passages using axial coding. These constructs emerged naturally from the interviews after conducting, transcribing, correcting, and analyzing them. The same two colleagues who assisted in Part 2 were asked to perform the same function during the Part 3 analysis to aid in selecting and consolidating the passages. They did not participate in the interviews, nor are they trained researchers but they are familiar with the study and understand the context of the passages. As in Part 2, the purpose was merely a litmus test to ensure the constructs

make sense, and the grouping of passages into the same construct are rational. Both colleagues agreed that the consolidation was appropriate in Part 3 as well. Ultimately, 33 concepts in total were left as first-order concepts, these can be seen in Figure 5.

In the third phase those 33 concepts were organized into groups based on commonality and contextual relationships of their origin. Often times this was heavily influenced by which question the concept originated from but in numerous instances they also occurred throughout different parts of the interviews. The similarities between Part 2 and Part 3 can be attributed to the parallel interview protocols. The concepts were assembled into eight second-order themes as shown in Figure 5. These themes were very similar to those of Part 2. Additionally, in the final step the eight themes were further grouped into dimensions that they are contributing to. The two dimensions were unchanged from Part 2: *individual* and *organizational*. This was based on the same rationale; the information gathered from the interviews and the insights provided either referred to the individual soldier or to the organization as a whole.

The fourth phase of the analysis consisted of comparing and contrasting the concepts and themes between Part 2 and Part 3 to identify the similarities and differences between the two groups of respondents. Categorically there were far fewer differences in the answers between the two groups than originally anticipated. This finding will be explained in the discussion and limitations sections of the study. The central difference in theme was that the Part 3 respondent were more concerned about organizational decline and more outspoken against the accommodation than the senior respondents of Part 2. This was contrary to the pre-study assumption of the researcher. Consequently, the positive outlook theme was changed to mixed outlook because the group expressed a

bona fide need to return to a previous level of discipline to prevent further cultural degradation. Additionally, certain first-order categories changed as expected based on the age and length of service differences of the two groups. For example, the younger group was more focused on those events that are more recent for them, such as the recruiting process or initial entry training.

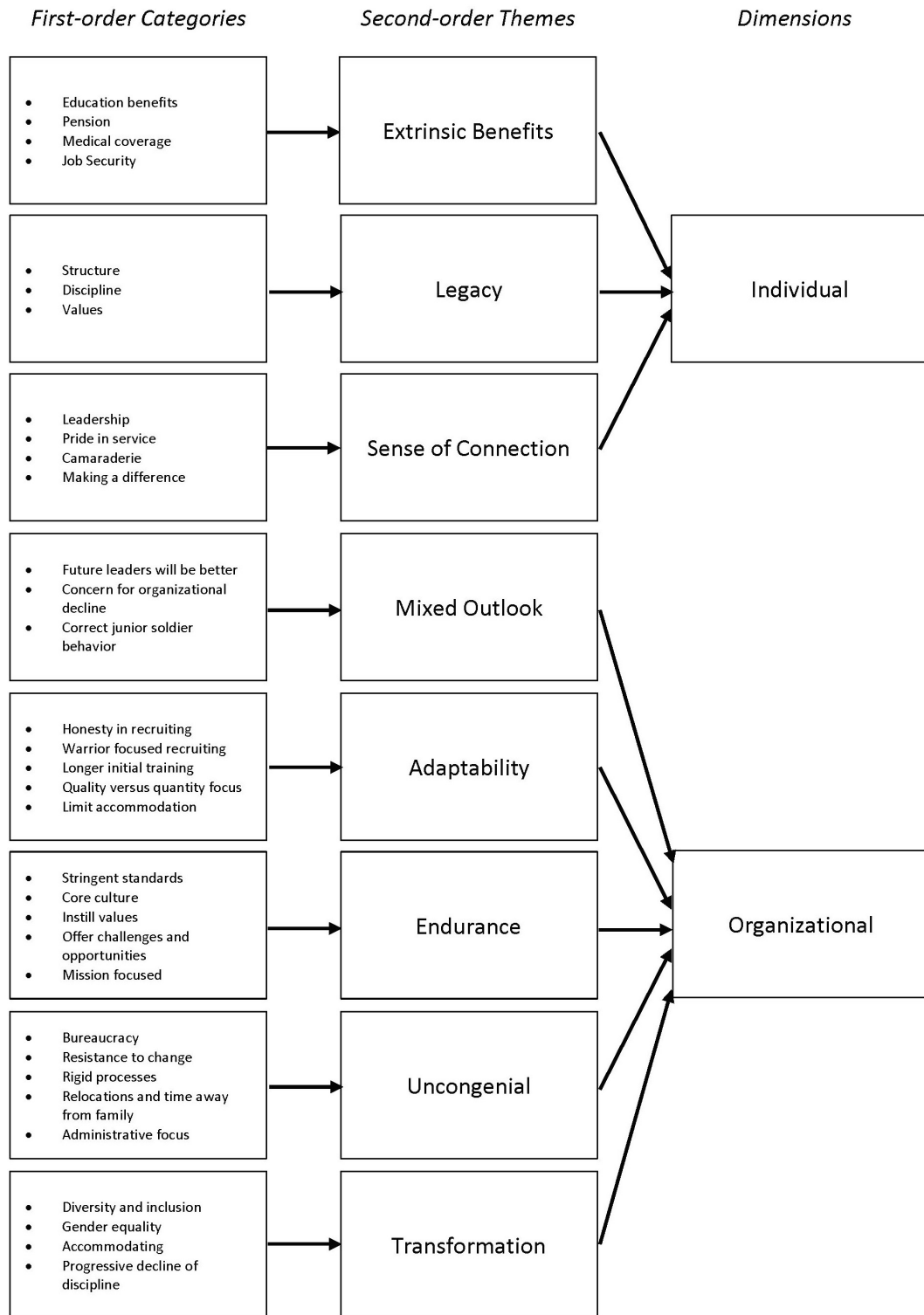


Figure 5: Structure of content categories arising from interview data in Part 3

Millennial Junior Group Findings

As with the senior group the participants in this junior millennial group also vary by race and gender, they span across very distinctive specialties, yet many of them have stated similar reasons, likes, dislikes, values, and opinions about the topics discussed during the interviews. The parallel views of these junior respondents as a group were evident throughout the data collected which was not surprising, however, there were an unanticipated number of similarities to the responses of the vastly different senior group.

Their answer for why they joined the U.S. Army more than half the time was family, mostly as a tradition of service, in some cases getting away from family, or removing the burden on parents having to pay for college. “My grandfather fought in WW2, my father fought in Desert Storm, my brother joined. Coming from a family of patriots I just felt like it was my turn to join the service and serve my country” (Respondent 20). “Something my family has done for four generations and I knew my parents would pay for college but also kind of wanted to get my own money for it” (Respondent 5). For some it was just a calling based on an attraction to the military. “Pretty much from the time I was a kid growing up playing with my G.I. Joes and seeing the war movies I always knew I was going to join” (Respondent 7). Others were influenced by the 9/11 attacks and watching the highly televised invasion of Iraq in 2003 as teenagers. “I was 19 years old that year after high school I really wanted to jump out of airplanes and to be politically incorrect kill people” (Respondent 6). In addition to the intrinsic motivators listed above the majority of the respondents said education benefits and/or enlistment bonuses heavily influenced their decision to enlist.

The group's answer for most valuable U.S. Army traditions included discipline, structure or rank structure, esprit de corps, ceremonies and lineage. "Esprit de corps and unit representation on the uniform I think are super valuable because they both tie into each other. You can always tell someone's unit and who they served with in combat" (Respondent 13). "The pomp that comes from wearing Stetsons, those traditions really instill esprit de corps, people take pride in being part of it and really want to do more to be part of it" (Respondent 7). Soldiers traditionally dislike the long ceremonies; during the rehearsals and the event itself they end up standing still for a few hours. It was a surprise to hear that even the younger soldiers have an appreciation for why the U.S. Army still conducts them. "It's kind of tedious you're just standing there for an extended time but also kind of fun to stop and think back like there's probably some soldier a hundred years ago who was like my God here we go again" (Respondent 5). There was an evident appreciation for the U.S. Army values having a positive effect on the respondents as a person. "I didn't respond well to authority as a teenager and up until I enlisted and I was already 21. The Army really helped instill respect and it taught me responsibility. I have to be held accountable and I'm held accountable" (Respondent 11). The levels of leadership and the one-on-one mentorship a soldier receives from the first unit of assignment until the end of a career was pointed out. "You have leadership that guides you. Sometimes you stumble and fall but no matter what you look up to these individuals and that's where you want to end up, being able to help others" (Respondent 14). A few mentioned the inherent diversity of the organization as a valuable tradition: "If you're a civilian there are people, certain demographics, or cultures, or backgrounds

that you normally wouldn't interact with. In the Army you're forced to work with each other and I've always really enjoyed that aspect" (Respondent 6).

Exactly 75% of the participants stated the standards were too relaxed. "The standards are actually too relaxed for what I think a professional soldier should be that's entrusted with defending the security of the nation" (Respondent 8). "I do appreciate a little bit of a tougher standard but we're getting to the point where we're allowing complaining without really seeing if maybe the soldier is just not cut out for it" (Respondent 10). Several of the informants started voicing their discontent toward the younger soldiers within their generation in the response. "They seem to have an unearned sense of entitlement and this attitude, they're walking around like they've been here for years and they're acting like E-7s when they're only E-2s" (Respondent 4). "Certainly seemed a lot harsher and infractions were dealt with a lot more severely when I was a brand-new Joe versus what I see new Joe's get away with ... seems it just gradually gets easier and softer almost" (Respondent 5). "I noticed as some of those standards have dropped people start questioning things, back talking, not doing what they're supposed to be doing and I think it's a direct reflection of standards dropping and that's starting to hurt the organization" (Respondent 7). "They've made it easier for kids to go through and I think that's detrimental because you don't learn what it's like to sacrifice these small little things and I feel that this younger generation just doesn't really get it" (Respondent 11). "The newer generation that is in the military just comparison from when I got in to now lack military bearing or respect for higher ranking NCOs or even just people in general" (Respondent 18). The other 25% either said they were just right or else that it really depends on the standard. "I believe they are just right because if

we loosen them then people will be lazy, if we make them tougher a lot of people won't be able to make it" (Respondent 19). None of the informants said that standards were too harsh overall; only that in some specific cases they are, for example the new ACFT. Another perspective added was that younger soldiers are not realistic in their expectations of what serving is like. "People come into the Army and they talk about how hard it is on their life. Of course, it's hard on your life that's what you signed up [for] and it's a lifestyle" (Respondent 12).

For what should change in the U.S. Army, the majority of the responses addressed recruiting or initial entry training. The issues with the recruiting process revolved around the first impression and the lack of transparency. "Recruiting is a big thing. I had a terrible recruiting experience, I had four different recruiters taking care of me and they all straight up lied to me" (Respondent 15). "The recruiter, while they're not lying to them they're not being completely honest either" (Respondent 4). The recruiting message needs to change focus, which the U.S. Army is starting to do now, for the first time in well over two decades. "You're gonna go do something that not a lot of people have the opportunity to do. It seems they kind of hide that that aspect of the Army, it seems they always pitch the benefits and not the adventure portion" (Respondent 6). Quality problems with recruits was brought up by multiple people: "It meant a lot joining because I wanted to be part of that 1% of the population that can serve. Now it's just like we need numbers, we need people, so lower all standards" (Respondent 20). "In the end we're looking at the bigger picture, we're serving our country so going back to standards, going back to doctrine instead of saying okay let's just do a waiver for this or that to accommodate certain individuals" (Respondent 16). An interesting observation offered

that the minimum age for service is simply too low: “I don’t think taking an 18-year-old kid fresh off the street is the right answer anymore, that age should go up to 21 now”.

The respondent suggested that many of the issues initiate from the maturity level of the current youth. “It’s not the back in my day and so on and so forth. I don't see any problems like that. I just see the problems with the level of responsibility that an 18-year-old of today is expected to have” (Respondent 13). The entrance exam that measures aptitude for military service (the ASVAB) was also recommended as a necessary change although it is used by the entire DoD. “The tests don’t reflect what we actually need. They're not well structured, they need to be reformatted. And then in basic training we get soldiers who are not ready to be here” (Respondent 9). For the initial entry training the recommended changes mentioned removal of comfort items as before and making the training tougher. “They should put more reinforcement into PT, no cell phones allowed, you should have to write letters. I got mine two or three times but some other people had it the whole time” (Respondent 2). Additionally, the importance of this training to support the transition from civilian to soldier was stated. “Basic training is the most critical time ... those vital times when you need zero distraction from even at home that way you actually get 100 percent of the training retained” (Respondent 14). The recent change of the U.S. Army lengthening initial entry training for the combat arms branches was positively received: “They're starting to extend basic training because they're realizing that we've lost a lot of the soldier’s skills that we still need to maintain for our warfighting function” (Respondent 7).

Accommodation itself was noted as something that should be used sparingly “I think we need to be less accommodating like we were before to have as proficient of a force at

least back when I came in” (Respondent 3). Another respondent acknowledged the need for accommodation with young people: “You do have to accommodate a little bit more when you're going after the younger generation, these 18-year-olds just because of the personality types”. The respondent continued on that it is for their tendency to change jobs frequently “...training that could translate to the outside world because most people [who] join the Army don't stay here” (Respondent 8). The change in retention was aimed at returning to a previous state of staying in the organization for more intrinsic reasons. “I've noticed that a lot of the younger soldiers their value has shifted, it was the unit cohesion, esprit de corps that's why guys would reenlist. Now they had to up the bonuses just to keep people in” (Respondent 3). A broader idea was offered regarding the lack of change as a systematic issue. The U.S. Army conducts an after-action review (AAR) following any event or mission to capture data in the categories of sustain and improve. “Follow through because we constantly have the exact same stuff coming up in AARs, we say hey we need to change it but it will not change. Let's just stop talking about it and actually implement it” (Respondent 19).

On the opposite side of the inquiry about what should stay the same, the core culture was mentioned numerous times. “I feel day by day it gets weaker and the lower enlisted just get stronger as far as talking back and attitude. The culture should definitely stay the same and if they can't handle it than they don't belong” (Respondent 10). In recruiting the one-on-one time a recruiter spends with the recruit and accompanying him or her to MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station) should stay the same. “Keeping that professional relationship, holding their hand through the process because it can be very tedious and some kids don't know what it's like to fill out 50 pages of forms or even

be held accountable” (Respondent 1). The transitional effect of the initial entry training must be there, even one of the younger respondents has stated that looking back on it, it is not a negative experience. “Basic training, is a little more relaxed than it used to be but as you know the millennial generation we still feel like it’s sometimes too much. But then afterwards we look back on it like it wasn’t that bad” (Respondent 2). The reason for this is straightforward if a recruit can’t handle the stress of a training environment than he or she will likely crumble during combat. “... with our job especially in combat arms inherently you’re gonna face some of the worst times of your life and you can’t soften those standards when it comes to training” (Respondent 8). The U.S. Army drill sergeant is a powerful figure of authority to trainees and should be kept as such. “Through basic and AIT we should always keep that drill sergeant presence. You know someone there to uphold the standards but also to enforce the standards as necessary” (Respondent 7). For retention at the unit level there are many things that the command can do to keep soldiers in uniform. In addition to the camaraderie and esprit de corps allowing some flexibility when able can go a long way. “I’ve seen the leadership go above and beyond to help the soldiers who are really good...they kind of give him that leeway, and that flexibility I think has helped a lot with retention because we keep soldiers that way” (Respondent 4). Retention bonuses are very necessary to maintain the pipeline of mid to senior leaders. “Retention bonuses. It’s really the only thing that puts us similar to an outside civilian business. We give money to retain people.” The same respondent suggested to extend them to those with a few more years of service ensuring the U.S. Army keeps that middle management who might otherwise leave. “We can give it at four and eight years but we’re losing people after the 12-year mark who are the

people we need to keep” (Respondent 9). Additional things that help retention are the care the U.S. Army provides its members and their dependents. “I do think we should definitely sustain mental health care. That's something we're very good at now that we were not very good at before, and I think we should keep doing that because I think it's very necessary” (Respondent 18). The gender equality at least in the case of compensation is automatic in the military and it is appreciated as another retention incentive. “Can I say being a female in the military? In the civilian world unfortunately, you do not get paid the same as a male but in the military an E-5 whether they're female or male are paid the same” (Respondent 19).

For what would make the respondent stay in the U.S. Army most of the answers were repetitions of previously noted organizational attributes such as camaraderie and pride in serving. The reasons for reenlisting often change from the initial enlistment. “When I joined it was for the bonus and then I really liked it, and obviously the longer you serve the more patriotic you become. So, I'm going to stay because I love this job” (Respondent 3). The appreciation for what they got from serving was universally intrinsic. “This is where my heart is, [it's] the only family I've ever known and I am willing to do whatever it takes no matter how hard it is to progress” (Respondent 10). Preserving the culture that the informants have come to appreciate was pointed out as a factor for staying or if lost then for leaving. “It [the U.S. Army] helped me be a better person and I would never want to lose that.” The respondent continued that hypothetically losing that could result in separation: “The thought of change for the worse ... I wouldn't want it to change in such a drastic way that I would lose even wanting to be here” (Respondent 14). The majority of the responses for what would

make them think about leaving the U.S. Army were hypothetical, this group was positive about the organization (more on this latter). “One thing that would get me to leave is more changes, more adaptations, though they should allow some accommodations they have also allowed the Army to weaken or taken away the values in place” (Respondent 9). “I don't want to see special needs or special requirements that people come up with, like all of a sudden males could be wearing makeup or having colored nails. We still have to show that professionalism” (Respondent 16). Some acknowledged that they would leave the U.S. Army if a much better opportunity presented itself. “I feel like it also kind of stagnates growth that I just know how to be a cog here as opposed to trying something else” (Respondent 5).

For the two-part question the answers were virtually universal regarding what the soldiers like about U.S. Army life. Many have stated these throughout the interview: the camaraderie, the brotherhood, the esprit de corps, the pride that comes from wearing the uniform and serving something greater than one's self. Additionally, the discipline, the structure, either current or future leadership opportunities. Even the ease of daily operations that comes from wearing the uniform and having a formal rank structure is well-liked. “In the civilian world you can't always easily assess who is the boss, the Army is very transparent about that you're going to listen to this person because it's on their chest, they're wearing their authority” (Respondent 3). The dislikes heavily included bureaucracy, nearly every informant mentioned it. “I dislike bureaucracy. I don't know if it's in just my role ... it seems to serve no other purpose other than to make that person seem more important and therefore indispensable” (Respondent 5). “The big thing for me that's always been the killer and I think it's going to eventually hurt the force

is the bureaucracy. You can't have a civilian corporate mindset in the military”

(Respondent 6). Quite a few have a strong understanding that this originates from the highest levels of the organization. “Let’s go into dislike. I think, and you could probably get this answer anywhere but there is a disconnect between people who make policy and decisions and what actually happens at the unit level” (Respondent 13). Along similar lines the resistance to change was brought up. “What I don't like is sometimes the Army has a hard time in my opinion adjusting to new standards or new rules like quickly”

(Respondent 1). The lack of work / life balance and the family hardships that are commonplace in military service are disliked by most respondents as expected. “At times seeming to have to go somewhere at a moment's notice. The long hours or the multiple weeks away to go to training or a school ... and that's time away from your family”

(Respondent 7). “It's sometimes forgiving when I have things going on at home, when I'm sick or need time off but that goes both ways. When the Army needs you, it expects you to perform and it can be pretty harsh” (Respondent 12). “It's hard to find that balance. I can be really good at my job here in the military but at home that'll suffer because I'm putting in a lot of hours at work” (Respondent 19).

The last structured question asked if the informants think they will be better, worse, or about the same as the current leadership when they get to that point in their careers. An overwhelming 75% said they would be better. The reasons stated were technology and closer mentality to the future Generation Z soldiers that millennials will lead. “I will be able to better understand the junior soldiers just from growing up in the time frame that I did. Technology was a part of my life from I don't want to say day one but early on” (Respondent 8). Some said that they will likely be less harsh. “I'd probably

be better as I am close to the newer generation so I have a better understanding of them ... but I'm sure there are some situations where I won't be as strict as I should be”

(Respondent 15). The availability of information and knowledge sharing will potentially contribute to more effective leaders. “We have the Internet, like for example 92Y wise I can go on a Facebook group and find a whole bunch of information that maybe 20 years ago you [had to] physically go meet someone and get this information” (Respondent 5).

A few gave reasons that may seem a little naïve because most likely leaders for centuries have adapted their style from observing their predecessors. “Every leader has their bad points and good points and you get exposed to so many throughout your time in the Army that you kind of get to cherry pick the best of each” (Respondent 7). “I don't think that I'm better than them in that sense I just think that I could do better because I can see the path ahead” (Respondent 3). Or perhaps a little disgruntled because of a few specific leaders: “I think I would be better because of the hardships that I had to face from my leadership so basically examples of what not to do” (Respondent 18). Three respondents said they would be about the same. The reasons stated were that they would strive to be as good as their current leaders, or because there is no difference in overall leader quality from one generation to the next. Only two respondents said they would be worse either because of generational focus on individuality; or because presently they are not likely to have the harsh combat experiences that current leaders possess. “I don't think we'd better. I feel like we are very into our phones which equals our own or somebody else's life, so the individual gets a lot more attention than the organization, or the greater good” (Respondent 2).

The interviews ended by asking the informant if he or she had anything to add that would be relevant to the study. Some had nothing to say, others addressed a wide range of topics as intended for gathering further insights, below are the highlights. A few respondents have strongly spoken out against the millennial stereotype reiterating that it is not applicable to them despite the year they were born.

I feel like as human beings we're obsessed with giving ourselves labels whether it's rank, or nationality, sexuality, religion and being a millennial is just another label to me. I don't identify with that. As far as the stereotypes I'm not tech savvy or on social media so if I'm a millennial based on the year I was born fine. But when I look at the criteria I know it's not me. (Respondent 10).

Others gave similar unsolicited testimonies of this. “I do fall into the millennial generation; however, I don't think that I am, I've always had to work for everything that I've had” (Respondent 11). While the need for continual change and adaptation is necessary the U.S. Army should maintain those core values. “Organizations need to change. They need to understand that times change and the Army is no exception. There are certain traditions that we need to keep ... you have to be able to adapt without sacrificing your core values” (Respondent 8). The organizational resilience idea was reinforced. “The program was built to work, to build soldiers, to build America's guardians and I don't think we need to conform to a generation. I feel the generation itself, the newest generation coming in is pretty soft” (Respondent 14). Again, some frustration was voiced about softening the organization for the purpose of accommodation. “We're gonna make it easier for you because you don't want to work as hard. I think that needs to go away, we need to go back to being a little bit more strict, harder. This is the Army” (Respondent 12). On the other hand, it was said that the

change is necessary to retain the millennial and the future generations. “Everything is constantly evolving and in order to retain the new generation coming in they're gonna have to handle people a lot differently but it doesn't mean it's a bad thing. It could actually be good” (Respondent 15).

There is a negative effect resulting from the training mindset that was adapted for the global war on terrorism. “I think there's a lack of actual job knowledge coming out of the force right now that came from shifting away from our war fighting functions versus just trying to grind out basic soldiers” (Respondent 7). Not surprisingly there was a call for minimizing bureaucracy: “The force needs to get rid of the risk aversion and the layers of bureaucracy. I believe that impedes platoon and company level officers and NCOs and what they're trying to accomplish” (Respondent 6). Another mention against the ‘everyone gets a trophy’ mentality that awards are reserved for those deserving of special recognition. “When a soldier doesn't get awarded it leaves a bad taste in his mouth. You didn't really go above and beyond, you don't need to get awarded for everything, you aren't entitled, we don't owe you anything” (Respondent 11).

A millennial perspective on how their generation is viewed by preceding ones and acknowledging that it has some merit. “They feel like we're very lazy and we take shortcuts, that we use technology as a hindrance and that we're always on it” the respondent continued on to admit “So instead of actually paying attention and focusing on what we should be we're always on our phone trying to see what someone else is doing on Snapchat, Instagram or Twitter” (Respondent 2). Further study on the generation by the U.S. Army was also recommended. “Taking the time to study millennials like how their mentality is. I don't think it's just about technology I think they

have a lot more psychological things that need to be studied if we want to reach them” (Respondent 18).

The U.S. Army used to have specialists ranks beyond the current E-4, extending into the pay grades of non-commissioned officers but without the leadership authority. They were designed to continue advancing the careers of technical experts that were not leadership material. Those were phased out at different times starting with the highest ones, and the last one abolished in 1985. One informant suggested bringing those back for special skills where leadership is not necessary. “Doing away with the senior specialist ranks and this whole mentality that everyone is a leader has really hurt the Army because we're losing good Joes who are very technically proficient but have no business pinning on Sergeant stripes” (Respondent 4).

A solution was offered by Respondent 16 to the quality issue with recruiting. The U.S. Army only measures the number of recruits that a recruiter brings in who ship to initial entry training. That is considered a successful enlistment. Respondent 16 suggested the use of human resources and mental health professionals to help screen and assess candidates in addition to the U.S. Army recruiters. This would of course increase recruiting costs, lengthen the process, and be counterproductive to just meeting strength numbers in the force, however, it could improve the overall quality of enlistments, reduce costs later on in training, and also improve retention.

One informant reinforced that mentorship is very important and valued by the younger soldiers and it has a direct effect on retention. “I’ve had higher ups talk to me about what they've incorporated into their career and why. That has been the biggest thing that has made me want to pursue this as a career” (Respondent 17). Another ended

the interview with an appreciation for the U.S. Army in regard to embracing diversity. “I think the military is amazing I love the fact that I ended up joining ... it's a great place to be because you can be whoever you want and you're accepted” (Respondent 19).

Table 3 shows the frequency of main concepts in the answers with the corresponding question for Part 3. The number is a count of occurrence for any of the phrases listed together because of their similarity. For instance, if one respondent answered that he or she likes “values, discipline, and structure” for question seven than that would count as 3. Some of the responses are only a singular phrase (denoted in bold for easy identification) such as the answer that standards are too relaxed. The frequency there was 15 representing that 75% of the informants thought so.

Table 3		
<i>Frequency of Main Concepts in Part 3</i>		
<i>f</i>	Phrase(s)	Question
14 ¹	Tradition of service in family, Calling	1
11	College, Education benefits	
18	Discipline, Structure, Values	2
13	Esprit de corps, Ceremonies, Lineage	
15	Too relaxed	3
5	Just right	
6	Lack of transparency, Recruiter lies	4
8	Tougher or longer initial entry training	
9	Core culture	5
6	Tough training, Drill sergeants	
17	Staying for camaraderie, leadership, or pride	6
8	Staying for pension, pay, or benefits	
27	Values, Discipline, Structure, Pride	7 (Like) ²
12	Bureaucracy, Resistance to change	7 (Dislike)
8	Time away from family, long hours	
15	Future leaders will be better	8
9	Labels, Stereotypes, Incorrect assumptions	Open
7	Discipline of young junior soldiers is lacking	
5	Limit accommodation, Maintain culture	
¹ Number represents the times any of the related phrases were used for that question, some are singular denoted in bold whereas others have multiples ² Question #7 was a two-part inquiry, like vs. dislike, here it is split for clarity		

CHAPTER 4: THE RESULTS

Discussion

The results of Part 2 were very similar to what was anticipated by the investigator, which is not surprising because the researcher falls into the generational cohort of the senior group, therefore views, values, experiences, and biases are well aligned. The informants in that group stated comparable opinions to what motivated the study in the first place. The results of Part 3 on the other hand were unpredicted and not fully in line with the assumptions of the author or the assumptions from literature on millennials as distinct. A far greater difference in opinions was projected given the two very distinct groups are separated by an average 22.5 years of age, and 20.05 years of service. Additionally, there is an enormous dissimilarity in experience and level of responsibility between those two groups.

There are several possible causes for this, one is elaborated on in the limitations section below, that the sample consisted of above-average soldiers who have embraced the organization. Another possible cause is the very large range of birth years assigned to a generational cohort. While those are well researched and reasoning is provided for the cutoffs, it is worth pointing out that a millennial at the time of this study in 2019 can potentially vary between 18 and 41 years old. Those two ages are based on the two most extreme birth years provided by the various organizations who have assigned the differing periods. That typical range is between 15 to 20 years depending on the source, however up to 23 years in the example of largest variance. As mentioned in the beginning of this study there is an emerging view suggesting a micro-generation called Xennials between Generation X and the millennials pushing the earliest birth year of the

millennial back to 1985. This study has adopted that non-traditional birth year for the oldest millennial to qualify as an informant for Part 3. The rationale was to ensure a sizeable age separation between the two cohorts. This was goal was exceeded because the Part 2 respondents ended up being considerably older (average age of 52 years) than the minimum birth year of 1979 established for that group. The Part 3 respondents on average were also much older than anticipated (average age of 29.5 years) even though they were all well within millennial birth years.

Not all millennials are created equal may be the new mantra of this study. The thirty somethings who made up a large percentage of the respondents have already served nearly half of a career (average time in service of 8.95 years) which also means most of them have reenlisted at least once. Not only are they significantly older than the youngest possible millennial, they have also assimilated to U.S. Army culture. Similar to their Part 2 non-millennial counterparts they feel like stakeholders in the organization and have embraced its philosophies. This could provide some explanation for the similarity of their answers to those of the senior respondents.

In the individual dimension under the benefits theme both groups value education assistance, the pension, and no-cost healthcare. In the lifestyle theme they echoed structure, discipline and values as most important. Finally, under the satisfaction theme leadership, camaraderie, and making a difference were the same. In fact, in the individual dimension the only notable differences were millennials citing pride in service more and job security whereas the seniors called it a steady salary. Possible explanation here is frame of reference within one's career; the senior group has a much higher average salary and job security is no longer a concern, but the younger group appreciates

knowing their employer won't declare bankruptcy. Pride of service more in the forefront for the junior group can also be due to a relatively new, versus a lifelong commitment of the senior group diminishing the emphasis

In the organizational dimension the similarities were likewise overwhelming as explained above. The differences were mostly in the outlook theme for the future of the organization; the millennial respondents were far more concerned about the relaxation of standards and the lack of discipline of those junior to them deteriorating the organizational culture. The respondents in the junior group were actively and repeatedly attacking the behavior of younger millennials. "They seem to have an unearned sense of entitlement and this attitude..." (Respondent 4). "The newer generation that is in the military just comparison from when I got in to now lack military bearing or respect for higher ranking NCOs or even just people in general" (Respondent 18). This was a very interesting and surprising discovery. Perhaps the older millennials in entry-level leadership positions are more sensitive to the issue because they are the ones dealing directly with the youngest service members. The senior officers of Part 2 are isolated from them by multiple levels of subordinate leadership. Additionally, the Part 3 respondents do not want to be grouped together with the stereotypical millennial as many have expressed.

Ideas for the change theme focused around recruiting and initial entry training for the group in Part 3. They also advocated for more warrior-focused recruiting, quality over quantity of new recruits, and supported the new longer basic training. "As such, the Army is considering lengthening training so that new Soldiers are better indoctrinated into Army culture and values, are physically fit, and technically and tactically more

proficient” (Vergun, 2018, p. 1). One of the top ideas for organizational change was more honesty and transparency from the recruiters, so potential recruits better understand what will be expected of them. This group also stated the U.S. Army should limit accommodations because they are excessive. “We're gonna make it easier for you because you don't want to work as hard. I think that needs to go away...” (Respondent 12). “I don't want to see special needs or special requirements that people come up with (Respondent 16). “Now it's just like we need numbers, we need people, so lower all standards” (Respondent 20). Placing the organizational need ahead of the individual need from this junior group was surprising. Furthermore, they advocated for retaining core culture as something essential in what should stay the same.

The millennial group had the same dislikes as the senior respondents with bureaucracy mentioned by almost every informant. This is alarming, while it was natural to hear from the top-level leaders, it was unanticipated at the millennials’ level in the organization to take such a prevalent place. The shift in focus from training to administrative readiness was added by the junior group, the senior group did not mention it as a dislike probably due to a better understanding for its necessity at their level.

Finally, in the cultural evolution theme there were some differences. The seniors mentioned integration of females and the allowing of homosexuals to serve openly, whereas the juniors did not. Assumably this is because of perspectives, the millennial generation is very accepting of others, so it must seem natural to them from social norms they grew up with. They did appreciate diversity and inclusion, and gender equality just as the older generation did but in equal compensation and promotion, not in opening more occupational specialties to females. Once again, remarkably it was the millennial

group of respondents who pointed out a progressive decline of discipline; which supports that it has noticeably slipped over the past several years during their time in service, as well as their awareness of its importance, and their willingness to preserve it.

Table 4 shows all the first-order categories from both groups of respondents and the second-order themes they support. Most are shared between the two groups and in those instances the table also displays the weighted number in parenthesis for Part 3. The values are not frequency here but rather the number of respondents within the group who mentioned a phrase relating to that category anywhere during the interview, so not restricted to a specific question as it is the case in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 4			
<i>Comparison of Distribution of Answers between Part 2 and Part 3</i>			
Part 2 Seniors	Part 3 Juniors	First-order Categories	Second-order Themes
4	11 (5.5) ¹	Education benefits	Extrinsic Benefits
7	14 (7)	Pension	
4	12 (6)	Medical coverage	
6	- ²	Steady salary	
-	8	Job security	
10	16 (8)	Structure	Legacy
10	18 (9)	Discipline	
9	13 (6.5)	Values	
10	9 (4.5)	Leadership	Sense of Connection
10	-	Mentorship	
-	15	Pride in service	
6	14 (7)	Camaraderie	
8	10 (5)	Making a difference	
6	15 (7.5)	Future leaders will be better	Outlook ³
4	-	Right match of technology/millennials	
-	9	Concern for organizational decline	
-	13	Correct junior soldier behavior	
6	-	Improve enforcement of standards	Adaptability
-	6	Honesty in recruiting	
5	7 (3.5)	Warrior-focused recruiting	
6	11 (5.5)	Longer initial training	
5	8 (4)	Quality versus quantity focus	
7	-	Teach old fundamentals	
-	5	Limit accommodation	
8	6 (3)	Stringent standards	Endurance
7	9 (4.5)	Instill values	
-	9	Core culture	
6	8 (4)	Offer challenges and opportunities	
4	6 (3)	Mission focused	
6	14 (7)	Bureaucracy	Uncongenial
4	3 (1.5)	Resistance to change	
6	5 (2.5)	Rigid processes	
4	-	Double standards	
7	8 (4)	Relocation and time away from family	
-	4	Administrative focus	Transformation
5	-	Integration of females in combat arms	
-	5	Gender equality	
5	12 (6)	Coddling and accommodating	
7	8 (4)	Diversity and inclusion	
3	-	Allowing homosexuals to serve openly	
-	9	Progressive decline of discipline	

¹ Number in parenthesis represents the weighted value as compared to Part 2

² The dash (-) represents a category that did not emerge from that group, this does not necessarily mean no mention of it at all, simply not enough to create that category

³ The *Outlook* theme was the only one different, “positive” for Part 2 and “mixed” for Part 3

Addressing the Research and Guiding Questions

The study was meant to be an exploratory effort from its infancy, and as such did not aim to find supporting evidence for or against any hypotheses. Following the findings, it is able to address the research and guiding questions as applicable. The research questions asked: *How can the U.S. Army recruit, train, accommodate, and retain millennials without negatively affecting its core functions, culture, and identity?* There is no definitive answer as anticipated, but rather a collection of ideas. Much of this was presented in the findings section from the perspectives of two distinct groups. Both groups confirmed independently the necessity and importance of the U.S. Army's organizational culture and its vitality to the function of the institution. Furthermore, the findings indicate that an individual's assimilation to that culture is the key. Regardless of why a person decides to enter the U.S. Army if he or she chooses to stay past the initial service obligation than the individual has bought into that culture. Once that assimilation happens the individual is protective of the organization often placing its needs ahead of individual wants. Therefore, accommodation should only occur to the extent that it does not negatively affect core functions, culture, and identity. The U.S. Army will continue to experience significant first-term losses, however, the ones who choose to stay generally will want to preserve its organizational values. The findings indicate that millennials in entry-level leadership positions have adapted similar opinions to those who spent their entire lives in uniform. This implies that the U.S. Army will continue to endure transitioning from one generation to another as it has throughout its history.

Guiding question 1 asked: *What does the U.S. Army have to do to attract and accommodate this generation of soldiers (millennials)?* Both cohorts of respondents

advocated a more warrior-focused recruiting effort to market the adventure and service aspect, rather than the extrinsic benefits. The U.S. Army has started doing this with their most recent advertisement campaigns. Also, the importance of communicating the organization's core functions and its expectations of the individual member openly and honestly should yield positive results. A career in the U.S. Army is not for everyone thus the organization should not seek those individuals who are not the right fit. Recruiting and training a soldier is a costly endeavor with a large percentage of the successful ones still exiting after their first contract no matter what. Those who do stay do not desire accommodation but rather structure, discipline and values according to the responses of the junior sample.

Guiding Question 2 asked: *Does this accommodation conflict with established U.S. Army values, traditions, discipline, needs, and structure?* This can be answered as 'yes it does' with a degree of confidence. Both groups of respondents stated that while change is inevitable and some accommodation is necessary, it should be used sparingly and the core cultural components should not be affected by it. Seems most of the accommodations which have negative consequences attributed to them occurred in the past decade indicated by the millennial respondents speaking out against it and calling for it to cease. Those informants have 9 years of service on average demonstrating the implementation window.

Guiding Question 3 asked: *Does the U.S. Army need to maintain certain standards and core values to be able to do its mission?* The two very different groups both stated that strict standards and the core U.S. Army values are essential for organizational identity and function. They state that preserving the rank structure and

discipline allows the U.S. Army to continue accomplishing its mission of protecting the nation. Moreover, the two cohorts showed an appreciation for those standards and values.

Guiding Question 4 asked: *How do the individuals, traditions, policies, and way of doing business have to co-adapt?* There is no definitive answer or solution that the study can offer to this inquiry. Suggestions have been made by respondents from both groups that the organizational adaptation should be slow and to leave the traditions which are the staple of the U.S. Army untouched. The policies will naturally evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the organization and its members, but no drastic measures should be taken to accommodate a generation. It was also pointed out that the burden lies with those individuals who seek to become members of the organization and they should adapt to its needs.

The Quasi-Total Institution Label

Previously in this paper the author discussed the perhaps misinterpreted, possibly overgeneralized, and now expired or limited applicability of works on total institutions by Goffman during the 1960s regarding military organizations. The majority of Goffman's focus is on his other groups that contain nursing homes, asylums, prisons, and monasteries. The references he does provide under the term 'military example' are from a time long-gone and neither accurate nor representative of the modern force. Members of his group four are provided less detail in *Asylums* but despite of what Goffman may have intended he did write some brief references to army barracks or ships at sea and then proceeded to conclude that all total institutions share common traits. Goffman specifies that "every institution has encompassing tendencies" (Goffman, 1961, p. 4). He also

acknowledges: "...what is distinctive about total institutions is that each exhibits to an intense degree many items in this family of attributes" (Goffman, 1961, p. 5). These and similar statements imply that all total institutions are organizationally the same to a certain point. Furthermore, the binary characteristic of total institutions described as the inmate/staff arrangement differs in the U.S. Army because the staff is promoted from the inmate population unlike in many other total institutions. Therefore, the quasi-total label offers a greater separation of the modern U.S. Army from what is defined as a member of group four in *Asylums*.

Some parts of military service are in fact characteristic of total institutions, such as the stripping of individual identity by the mandatory wearing of uniforms, prescribed grooming standards, limitations on wearable accessories, etc. Throughout onboarding, as in the initial entry training of a recruit, and during deployments to combat zones or extended training events the member does live and work in the same place and is relatively isolated from society. The isolation part is starting to diminish even there because contractors and DA civilians provide much of the training in today's modern U.S. Army. They live on military bases in those combat zones among the service members.

It is important to recognize that in the modern U.S. Army a member of the organization only spends time in an isolated 'total' live/work arrangement occasionally and for limited periods. This notion still carries with it a negative connotation as shown in follow-on works that came decades after *Asylums*. "These features are incompatible with the basic institutions of modern western democratic societies which tend to exhibit fragmentations and separation" (Davies, 1989, p. 78). In addition to bureaucracy,

respondents from both sets of interviews mentioned the time away from family as one of their top dislikes about U.S. Army life. They do understand that it is necessary and will continue to be part of military life, however, for the sake of potential recruits the message must be clear that it is not business as usual.

Much of the follow-on work after Goffman, just as he had done focuses on a specific subsection of total institutions mainly in groups one, two, three and five which are nursing homes, asylums, prisons, and monasteries respectively. Additional and updated research has generally passed over group four which includes army barracks. The ones that do address this group explicitly reference back to the original work without adding different perspectives. For example, specifically regarding group four: “These institutional models do not protect the individuals or the community but rather serve an instrumental function by easing the completion of institutional goal” (Lemke, 2014, p. 2). This is not at all representative of the modern U.S. Army that goes to great lengths to protect, educate, nurture, accommodate, and retain its personnel. This shows up in the interviews of both senior and lower ranking soldiers. These organizational actions in and of themselves support the quasi-total rather than total label.

The relevance of Goffman’s work does appear limited to the original five groups he proposes. Later attempts at expanding the applicability have failed, for example Robert Gordon and Brett Williams in their 1977 book *Exploring Total Institutions* wrote a four-part collection of works attempting to broaden the total institution applicability beyond the categories described by Goffman in 1961. In review these attempts were described as far-reaching. “Perhaps the weakest section of the book is the fourth and

final part, *Extending the Model and Metaphor*. In this section four authors undertake the extension of the idea of total institutions to broader areas” (Higgins, 1978, p. 267).

Mouzelis does argue against the original work in a military context stating that contra Goffman the stripping processes of military onboarding are not detrimental to the subject’s self-image but rather able to build a sense of pride and accomplishment. This was shown in the interviews of lower ranking millennial soldiers. “It meant a lot joining because I wanted to be part of that 1% of the population that can serve” (Respondent 20). While this study wholeheartedly agrees with Mouzelis’ findings, there are additional reasons to refute the total institution label. One of the key characteristics Goffman employs is the defined split between the member groups of a total institution referring to the large managed group as ‘inmates’ and the small supervisory group as ‘staff’. This could be conceived in the U.S. Army during the onboarding period when cadre are harsh with the trainees. The treatment of junior personnel after initial entry training apart from some physically tough schools (that use mortification as a tool in the same manner as initial entry training) is nothing like the traditional inmate and guard analogy implies. In fact, rather than a large group being led by a small group the U.S. Army is organized into multiple layers of leadership making this claim of binary character inaccurate outside of the training environments discussed.

Empirical evidence from the interviews of the senior leaders, who according to Goffman would be characterized as the small staff in a total institution oppressing the large inmate population, or in this case the lower ranking soldiers who make up the bulk of the U.S. Army, is opposing totalistic traits. Their attitudes are not at all representative of what leaders of total institutions are described as in the literature. A leader of a true

total institution would not embrace diversity of thought, he or she would demand blind allegiance to the organization. “When we talk about inclusion it’s about that diversity of thought. If we all look the same, we all talk the same, then we’ll continue to do the same thing forever and we’ll never grow as an organization” (Respondent F). Standards in a total institution would be firm and unquestionable. “I guess what my answer is that I don’t think the standards are too harsh or too lax, I think that they are negotiable” (Respondent I). A total institution would not innovate in ways that undermine organizational culture to benefit individual fit. “I think there are ways that we can look at and open up and change the culture within the Army and say: look, not everybody in the Army has to be an infantryman” (Respondent B). The leadership would not advocate for organizational change that improves the lives of its most junior members. “Whereas we’re a much larger organization and so we have to morph our standards to accommodate these recruits” (Respondent C).

The same can be seen from the junior personnel in the empirical data who recognize the need for and appreciate the structure. Over 70% specifically stated that either structure or discipline is what they like about the U.S. Army. They do not feel oppressed by the rules or powerless against the institution, rather they are protective of its culture and proud to be members. Every single respondent mentioned something directly related to lineage, culture, or structure as the most valuable U.S. Army tradition that the organization should keep. Not likely that inmates would testify this way about a total institution as described in *Asylums*.

As suggested in the preceding sections of this work, the U.S. Army must maintain a positive image to continuously attract and retain quality personnel. The history of total

institutions is riddled with the worst examples of organizations abusing their power exhorting over their members. “Each institution has power, and apparently each institution seeks more – and more” (Wallace, 1971, p. 1). Their stereotypes are not in line with societal norms especially in western cultures. “Total institutions appear particularly distinctive in the free and highly differentiated societies of the West where there is also a tendency to see them as essentially oppressive and opposed to the individual” (Davies, 1989, p. 79). Goffman concludes this as well:

Total institutions disrupt or defile precisely those actions that in civil society have the role of attesting to the actor and those in his presence that he has some command over his world – that he is a person with “adult” self-determination, autonomy, and freedom of action. (Goffman, 1961, p. 43)

This study has demonstrated in multiple ways that the modern U.S. Army is now only a quasi-total institution, and the outdated labels of the past should be expunged. The parts that do remain from those characteristics described in the 1960s are necessary for function and mission accomplishment. They are also less intrusive in a member’s life than they were previously, and not demoralizing to the individual in a way that literature implied. Second, the empirical data shows that not all millennials are created the same. This finding mitigates generation change impacts for the U.S. Army.

Limitations of the Study

All methods and approaches have flaws and limitations. This study is no exception. As was previously justified, the apparently small sample size of the 10 senior respondents in Part 2 is sufficient because of the high ranks and positions they hold. It is almost impossible for most researchers to access officers of this rank for one-on-one interviews. Furthermore, 10 officers represent a relatively high percentage of available officers at this elite rank level. There are only about 650 flag officers serving on active duty across the four branches of the Department of Defense, and less than 25% of those have multiple stars, so approximately 160. In essence, the highest-ranking respondents in Part 2 represent roughly 1:10,000 service members, thus the 1% of the 1% explanation.

On the other hand, to say that 20 millennials interviewed is truly representative of the population as a whole would be an insincere claim. Increasing the sample size would not improve this representation drastically until we arrive at an unrealistic number of subjects for any single researcher to accomplish within a dissertation timeline as designed by the Temple University program. To capture the opinions of the entire younger generation currently serving, a Department of the Army sanctioned and funded study would be necessary that would direct a number of junior soldiers to participate in interviews rather than seek out volunteers. This direction, rather than the volunteerism seen herein, has its own methodological problems. Alternatively, conducting a large survey with verified scales could accomplish this, however the results would be skewed as many soldiers do not take surveys seriously. A face-to-face anonymous interview better captures their real opinions and feelings toward the organization.

Every informant in both Part 2 and Part 3 were given a copy of the Executive Summary of this study used for the dissertation proposal defense. They were asked to read it prior to the interview to understand the context of the study. This was a necessary element given the deliberately vague questions used in both protocols, however, this in and of itself introduced a prejudice. The participants became more conscious of the problems in the study and that could have tainted or amplified their responses. It has certainly caused several respondents in Part 3 to protest the label of the millennial stereotypes.

The other limitation became obvious quickly after conducting a handful of the Part 3 interviews. The Part 3 recruiting method used breeds a noticeable bias, because the respondents are seeking out the researcher based on a flyer. These are above-average soldiers. They are the 'good' ones who gave overwhelmingly positive responses. They were either intellectually stimulated by the study or wanted to dispute the millennial stereotype as not applicable to them. The disgruntled ones are not lining up to grant an interview, hence the suggestion for further exploration of this topic needing to employ random selection of participants exists. That would be easy to achieve with a Department of the Army directed study and that would ensure a large sample and a good mix that is representative of the force. That was not possible for this program for the reasons stated, thus the interpretation of results is sensitive to, and cognizant of, this design and program limitation.

Research Contribution

The study's scope focused on the U.S. Army as the unit of analysis and the current phenomenon of organizational change, but it is also beneficial to other

organizations that are facing change involving the need to accommodate the new generation of employees while attempting to maintain core elements of their root culture and organizational identity.

This study is pertinent to the other branches of the U.S. military, as well as military forces of the Western World who are facing similar challenges on the basis of this generational change phenomenon. While undeniable similarities are contributing further to the broad applicability of this study, it is essential to acknowledge that the U.S. Army is a unique organization. Granted, in an armed forces context, it is similar to other branches of service and other Western militaries. Discounting those mentioned here, there are challenges the U.S. Army is facing that are not likely to be encountered by organizations of another industry as they are unique to militaries. Examples of this are the inability to recruit leadership and management talent from outside, as this must be grown within the organization; or the need for unquestioned obedience within the rank structure, and when carrying out of orders given by superiors.

The study is also applicable to paramilitary organizations worldwide such as law enforcement from local to the federal levels. Lastly, those organizations that were not founded by millennials, and have strong organizational culture stemming from Baby Boomer or Generation X leadership may also find parts of this study relevant. Organizational culture, organizational behavior, and maintaining core functions and features of the organization while accommodating generational change are topics of interest to enterprises globally, as is the need to cope with generational differences within their human capital stock. Although the focus of this study is the U.S. Army, leaders and managers across the globe could find applicability and relatability from the issues

covered in it for their use. This broader applicability implies likenesses to many private firms in term of corporate culture, especially those with a very authoritarian culture.

This original research contributes to the fields of organizational culture (system of shared values and beliefs), organizational behavior (human behavior within an organizational setting), total and quasi-total institutions, leadership behavior, strategic management, resilience, change management, and positive psychology.

Recommendation for Further Study

The exploration aimed to further awareness for future research in the study of organizational resilience, millennials, generational gap, recruiting, training, and retention. Resilience at the organizational level is underrepresented in existing literature when compared to the individual or the societal level. Millennials have been studied extensively in various contexts, perhaps this fact is partially to blame for the strong, and largely negative stereotype society has labeled them with. More open-minded approaches and accurate assessments are necessary contra the common millennial problem narrative. On the subject of generational gaps, it may be more absurd to attempt the generalization of a group of people based solely on age than it is to accept any racial or ethnic stereotypes as factual. How could we as a society be so oblivious? Yet it is common practice to simplify the social world, one that the author has also previously been guilty of. Edgar Schein's son Peter contributed to the fifth edition of his book on organizational culture mentioned previously in this study. Peter Schein has 25 years of experience working in Silicon Valley, where both millennials and technology are extremely conspicuous. Peter in the book states a compelling reason for further study on the generational gap:

We know it is too easy to reduce millennials to a rigid collection of known attributes and expected behaviors. But if “entitlement” and “low management” are commonly associated with this cohort, managers and leaders will be justifiably compelled to study the behaviors and search for patterns that can be understood and generalized. (Schein, 2017, p. xxii)

There is plenty of literature in the areas of recruiting, training, and retention but the military should continue the subjects’ exploration in its own specific context far beyond the scope of this work. It is essential to adjust and refine practices continually, based on the organization’s needs and the current operating environment.

Finally, there is a need for further study of so-called total institutions from the proposed perspective “...total institutions seemed to have missed the institutional bandwagon, which is surprising because total institutions are a significant type of organizational rationality for eliminating equivocality, with practical lessons in variation, selection, and retention” (Clegg, 2006, p. 427). This study suggests that this “missing of the institutional bandwagon” may not be so.

Conclusion

This study was motivated by a phenomenon of generational change facing the U.S. Army with implications for declining discipline and a weakening of organizational culture. The anticipated results, supported by the commonly held view that millennials are different, would have painted a picture of two very dissimilar sets of values with a clear dissonance between the senior non-millennial leaders and the junior millennial soldiers.

Surprisingly, given this common view about the difference of millennials, the opposite happened. The millennials interviewed shared many of the same values as the senior ranking officers, along with desire for the organizational culture to endure. In fact,

it was the junior group, not the senior leaders voicing the most contempt and concern for those younger service members whose lack of discipline and desire for accommodation is potentially damaging to the U.S. Army's organizational culture. These findings do support a few important claims made in the preceding sections of this study. First, there is an issue with a considerable percentage of the youngest soldiers regarding discipline and lack of adaptation to the established U.S. Army culture. Second, the millennial generation is at a point today when they are no longer all young, some are very much as invested in their U.S. Army service as their non-millennial predecessors. This is confirmation of assimilation becomes a turning point when a soldier buys into the ideologies of the organization and understands its importance to function. Additionally, this could indicate that the worst is yet to come and that the millennials will have a difficult time leading the future Generation Z soldiers; who according to them are more characteristic of those stereotypes society has assigned to the millennials. On the other hand, it may indicate that each generation is variable as to attitudes and thus that many are adaptable to U.S. Army core values and functions.

The U.S. Army has taken some very important steps in the right direction recently to mitigate potential problems. These include more warrior-focused recruiting campaigns, the lengthening of initial entry training for the combat arms specialties, and revising the fitness test into a more comprehensive assessment. The ACFT requires better overall conditioning from the soldiers than did its more accommodative recent ancestor. These findings bode well for the U.S. Army to be able to function using millennial generation soldiers.

Total institutions have been credited with horrible accomplishments³⁵ in history, much of which occurred in the past 75 years, thus most of the literature shows total institutions in a negative light. From the researcher's perspective and for the study's principle idea of organizational resilience Mouzelis' point resonates the best that total institutions don't necessarily portray the negative characteristics that are stigmatized as synonymous with them. Additionally, the mortification process is not always bad, and in case of the U.S. Army it is necessary. Moderation is the key of course as with everything in life. For instance, drinking water is necessary for one's survival, drinking plenty of water is healthy, however, drinking too much water can be harmful and even cause death³⁶. During the accommodation of millennials, the U.S. Army must retain a certain amount of the characteristics of a total institution and the mortification processes of its initial entry training to preserve its organizational identity and ability to function. In the event this degrades, the U.S. Army could experience the shift in power described by Mouzelis in certain total institutions. A hospital or a mental asylum is a total institution by Goffman's definition and categorization. A luxury hospital or rehab center providing services for the rich and famous however can experience a reverse in the power relationship between staff and inmates (Mouzelis, 1971). Similarly, if the U.S. Army forgoes too much of the mortification processes such as stripping of individual identity,

³⁵ Goffman (1961), Arendt (1963), Wallace (1971), Mouzelis (1971), Clegg (2006), etc. to include the works of others they are referencing range from the Nazis' and the Gestapo's genocide during the Holocaust, to the lobotomies performed as punishment in mental hospitals during the 50's through the 70's, and the use of corporal punishment in military service not so long ago.

³⁶ There are several articles that study the adverse effects of drinking more than 64 oz. of water daily. One in a military context references several cases of death from the consumption of large quantities of water by athletes and military personnel which resulted in hyponatremia that is a very low concentration of sodium in the blood and the entrance of the excessive water into brain cells (Gardner, 2002).

limited privileges, regimentation, and even the tyrannizing of everyday life it could see continuing decline in the transformation (from civilian to soldier) and the discipline of its members. This can logically lead to degraded organizational performance and decrease in the ability to carry out prescribed organizational goals or dictated tasks.

Finally, the insights gained from the interviews support the quasi-total institution label this study hypothesized for the modern U.S. Army. Some of the negatives associated with the total institution label of the past is no longer accurate when describing today's U.S. Army. While the U.S. Army does inherently possess traits of a total institution at times, these are necessary characteristics and not demoralizing to its members. A good example of this is the required wearing of the uniform, which many interviewees confirmed is a source of pride, rather than a display of control. Furthermore, the isolation from society only happens at times during a career and even that period of segregation is lessening.

The results show the U.S. Army will endure through another generation as it always has. This is evident in the senior respondents' attitude that future leaders will either be better, or the same as them just facing different challenges. "... generations behind us will always be better..." (Respondent G). The majority of the junior interviewees were also optimistic when forecasting their future performance, but even more significant was their surprising level of devotion to preserving the culture, insisting on the discipline, and supporting the mission of the U.S. Army. "... you're gonna face some of the worst times of your life and you can't soften those standards when it comes to training" (Respondent 8). "The Army really helped instill respect and it taught me responsibility" (Respondent 11). "You have leadership that guides you. Sometimes you

stumble and fall but no matter what you look up to these individuals and that's where you want to end up, being able to help others” (Respondent 14). Therefore, the reason for the continued organizational resilience of this quasi-total institution is not the “it’s too big to fail” platitude, but rather resides in its future leaders’ ability to recognize the importance of its organizational culture. That is a major contribution of this study.

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APPENDIX A:
ORIGINAL PILOT STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This is the original set of interview questions used only in the pilot study for four respondents. The questions were developed from a combination of literature review interpretation and personal experience. They were also refined during research workshops by consulting several qualitative researchers.

1. What are the most significant changes you have seen in the U.S. Army during your career?
2. In your opinion what are the most valuable U.S. Army traditions and why?
3. What should the U.S. Army change and why?
4. What should stay the same in the U.S. Army and why?
5. What made you join the U.S. Army?
6. What made you stay in the U.S. Army or what is making you think about leaving the U.S. Army?
7. What do you like about U.S. Army life, and what do you dislike about U.S. Army life?
8. Do you think standards are too harsh, too relaxed, or just right, and why?
9. Do you think the current force is capable of meeting its mission requirements long term?
10. Have we become too dependent on technology in the U.S. Army, and why or why not?

APPENDIX B: REVISED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The interview questions below is the revised set after the first four pilot interviews have been conducted using the original questions shown in Appendix A. These were used during the second interviews for two of the four respondents in the pilot study. Having been validated, this set was also used for all 10 interviews of the senior non-millennial respondents in Part 2.

1. What made you join the U.S. Army?
2. In your opinion what are the most valuable U.S. Army traditions and why?
3. What are the most significant organizational cultural changes you have seen in the U.S. Army during your career?
4. Do you think standards are too harsh, too relaxed, or just right, and why?
5. What should the U.S. Army change in ‘recruit – train – accommodate – retain’ and why?
6. What should stay the same in the U.S. Army in ‘recruit – train – accommodate – retain’ and why?
7. What made you stay in the U.S. Army or what is making you think about leaving the U.S. Army?
8. What do you like, and what do you dislike about U.S. Army life?
9. Do you think U.S. Army technological advances during your career has negatively affected basic soldiering skills and if so what the effects are?
10. Do you think the next generation of leaders will be better, worse, or the same as us and why?

APPENDIX C:
MODIFIED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The interview questions below were used for all 20 interviews of the junior millennial respondents in Part 3.

1. What made you join the U.S. Army?
2. In your opinion what are the most valuable U.S. Army traditions and why?
3. Do you think standards are too harsh, too relaxed, or just right, and why?
4. What should the U.S. Army change in ‘recruit – train – accommodate – retain’ and why?
5. What should stay the same in the U.S. Army in ‘recruit – train – accommodate – retain’ and why?
6. What would make you stay in the U.S. Army or what is making you think about leaving the U.S. Army?
7. What do you like, and what do you dislike about U.S. Army life?
8. As a future leader do you think you will be better, worse, or about the same as your current leaders and why?

APPENDIX D:
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Title of research: Organizational Resilience in a Quasi-Total Institution: The U.S. Army Engages the Millennial Generation

Investigator and Department:

Primary Investigator: Guntram Werther, Ph.D., MSCM / Dissertation Chair

Student Investigator: Tamas Horvath / DBA Student

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

You are invited to take part in a research study because you are either a senior military leader, or a junior soldier / junior leader who meets the criterion established by the parameters of the study for that particular category of informant.

What should I know about this research?

- The researcher will explain this research to you, and you will be provided an abstract of the study prior to participation
- Whether or not you take part is up to you
- You can choose not to take part
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind
- Your decision will not be held against you
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide

Who can I talk to about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you in any way, contact the following researcher by any of the methods provided below:

Tamas Horvath
2515 Endearing Court, North Las Vegas, NV 89032
(702) 860-7535
horvath@temple.edu

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board. You may talk to them at (215) 707-3390 or e-mail them at irb@temple.edu for any of the following:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team
- You cannot reach the research team
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject
- You want to get information or provide input about this research

Why is this research being done?

This research is an exploratory study as a doctoral dissertation for the researcher. The study examines the U.S. Army's way of coping with the millennial phenomenon of an exaggerated generational gap. The focus of the work is organizational resilience from a cultural viewpoint; attempting to pinpoint the pillars of the institute that must remain unchanged as the U.S. Army accommodates this generation of soldiers and future leaders. The study also disputes claims in existing literature that name the U.S. Army a total institution, which it only is at specific times of onboarding, such as initial entry or deployment.

How long will I be in this research?

We expect that you will be in this research for approximately a 30 to 40 minute for a one-time interview conducted one on one with the researcher for senior leader informants and 15 to 20 minutes for junior personnel informants, either face to face or telephonically.

What happens if I agree to be in this research?

Informants will be interviewed once, at a time convenient for the participant and lasting approximately 30-40 minutes for senior, and 15-20 minutes for junior respondents. The interview will be audio recorded but your identity will be confidential (see below for more details).

Will being in this research help me in any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include:

Participating in the interviews may provide the informants a stimulus to reflect on the U.S. Army in the context of the study, and consequently stimulate thoughtful consideration in those areas. Additionally, a copy of the study's findings will be available to any participant at his or her request.

What happens to the information collected for this research?

While we cannot promise complete secrecy, every effort will be made to protect the identities of the informants. In case of the interviews your identity will be known only to the researcher interviewing you, but no personally identifiable information about you will be collected or recorded. If your responses are used as a direct quote in the study you will be identified merely as Respondent A, B, C, etc. Only your basic demographic information will be linked to that codename assigned to you which is limited to your age, rank, years of service, and Branch / MOS. Those are collected to aid in the analysis of your responses with consideration to your generational views and perspective of the U.S. Army. The audio recordings of the interviews will be transcribed using a service such as Trint; the transcripts than will be and analyzed for content. The intent is to find the common themes in the responses and be able to compare and contrast the views of the senior personnel against those of the junior personnel.

APPENDIX E: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROVIDED TO INFORMANTS

This research examines the United States Army's organizational resilience as it faces the phenomenon of the drastically different millennial generation of potential recruits and soldiers. Millennials are arguably the most unique generation to date when compared to their predecessors, mainly due to the significant technological advances of the past few decades and their ubiquitous use of it. This study is distinctive because it addresses organizational resilience and generational gap issues from a cultural maintenance versus resilience viewpoint in a quasi-total institution. The exploration will refute claims of the existing literature, which labels the U.S. Army a total institution because that has changed drastically. The 'total institution' label for the modern U.S. Army can only be true during certain times of the soldier's experience, such as during onboarding or deployment. Still, the U.S. Army's need to change, so that it can recruit, train, accommodate, and retain this younger generation as an employer, must be balanced with preserving the organizational ability, culture and identity essential for the U.S. Army to function. That constant need to balance has mitigated the 'total institution' mindset of old. That is a major finding of this study.

This study is a three-part investigation through formal theme statements; it is a problem-solving exploratory effort. In addition to a review of existing literature on related, yet interdisciplinary topics, the study collects and analyzes empirical data in the forms of semi-structured interviews of senior grade non-millennial officers in Part 2, and, in Part 3, interviews of junior grade millennial generation soldiers who are currently serving. The proposition is to take a holistic approach to understand relevant views of

different generations presently in the service and harvest the experiences and perspectives of senior leaders who have witnessed the U.S. Army's transition firsthand. The study will showcase the uniqueness of the U.S. Army: as a 'total institution' it differs from others because it becomes much less total as the member spends more time in it; as an organization it is different from most others because it must retain its talent since it has to grow leadership internally; finally, its strong culture is essential to daily operations. Despite those facts that make the subject organization unique, parts of the study are relevant to many businesses globally who face similar issues of organizational adaptation versus resilience enfolded in their multi-generational workforce. This original research is expected to contribute to the fields of organizational culture (system of shared values and beliefs), organizational behavior (human behavior in an organizational setting), total institutions, leadership behavior, strategic management, resilience, change management, and positive psychology.

APPENDIX F: IRB APPROVAL OF STUDY



Research Integrity & Compliance
Student Faculty Center
3340 N. Broad Street, Suite 304
Philadelphia PA 19140

Institutional Review Board
Phone: (215) 707-3390
Fax: (215) 707-9100
e-mail: irb@temple.edu

Certification of Approval for a Project Involving Human Subjects

Date: 12-Nov-2018

Protocol Number: 25532
PI: WERTHER, GUNTRAM
Review Type: EXEMPT
Approved On: 12-Nov-2018
Approved From:
Approved To:
Committee: A1
School/College: BUSINESS SCHOOL (1500)
Department: FSBM:MARKETING & SUPPLY CHAIN MGMT (15090)
Sponsor: NO EXTERNAL SPONSOR
Project Title: Organizational Resilience in a Quasi-Total Institution: The U.S. Army
Engages the Millennial Generation

The IRB approved the protocol 25532.

If the study was approved under expedited or full board review, the approval period can be found above. Otherwise, the study was deemed exempt and does not have an IRB approval period.

If applicable to your study, you can access your IRB-approved, stamped consent document or consent script through ERA. **Open the Attachments tab and open the stamped documents by clicking the Latest link next to each document.** The stamped documents are labeled as such. Copies of the IRB approved stamped consent document or consent script must be used in obtaining consent.

Before an approval period ends, you must submit the Continuing Review form via the ERA module. Please note that though an item is submitted in ERA, it is not received in the IRB office until the principal investigator approves it. Consequently, please submit the Continuing Review form via the ERA module at least 60 days, and preferably 90 days, before the study's expiration date.

Note that all applicable Institutional approvals must also be secured before study implementation. These approvals include, but are not limited to, Medical Radiation Committee ("MRC"), Radiation Safety Committee ("RSC"), Institutional Biosafety Committee ("IBC"), and Temple University Survey Coordinating Committee ("TUSCC"). Please visit these Committees' websites for further information.

Finally, in conducting this research, you are obligated to submit the following:

- **Amendment requests - all changes to the study must be approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of the changes unless necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects**

- **Reportable new information - using the Reportable New Information form**, report new information items such as those described in the Investigator Guidance: Prompt Reporting Requirements HRP-801 to the IRB **within 5 days**
- **Closure report** - using a closure form, submit when the study is permanently closed to enrollment; all subjects have completed all protocol related interventions and interactions; collection of private identifiable information is complete; and Analysis of private identifiable information is complete.

For the complete list of investigator responsibilities, please see the Policies and Procedures, the Investigator Manual, and other requirements found on the Temple University IRB website: [: http://research.temple.edu/irb-forms-standard-operating-procedures#POLICY](http://research.temple.edu/irb-forms-standard-operating-procedures#POLICY)

Please contact the IRB at (215) 707-3390 if you have any questions

APPENDIX G:
IRB APPROVAL OF MODIFICATION OF STUDY



Research Integrity & Compliance
Student Faculty Center
3340 N. Broad Street, Suite 427
Philadelphia PA 19140

Institutional Review Board
Phone: (215) 707-3390
Fax: (215) 707-9100
e-mail: irb@temple.edu



Approval of Modifications

Date: 07-Feb-2019

Protocol Number: 25532
PI: WERTHER, GUNTRAM
Review Date: 07-Feb-2019
Committee: A1
School/College: BUSINESS SCHOOL (1500)
Department: FSBM:MARKETING & SUPPLY CHAIN MGMT (15090)
Sponsor: NO EXTERNAL SPONSOR
Project Title: Organizational Resilience in a Quasi-Total Institution: The U.S. Army
Engages the Millennial Generation

On 07-Feb-2019, the IRB approved the following modifications:

This modification represents the change from Part 2 to Part 3. The interviewees in this group will be younger than the ones in Part 2 but still legal adults and nothing else has changed in the study. The questionnaire was updated, it removed 2 questions from the one used in Part 2 and slightly modified 2 other questions to be more applicable to the age group of respondents. The remaining 6 questions are exactly the same, as well as the demographic data collected. Additionally a recruiting poster was created for this group and the protocol was updated from Part 2.

If you modified the consent form, you can access your IRB-approved, stamped consent document or consent script through ERA. Open the "Attachments" tab and open the stamped documents by clicking the Latest link next to each document. The stamped documents are labeled as such. Copies of the IRB approved stamped consent document or consent script must be used in obtaining consent.

Please contact the IRB at (215) 707-3390 if you have any questions.