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AN ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN THE U.S. AIR FORCES 87 CONTRACTING SQUADRON UNIT

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CAPSTONE APPLIED PROJECT REPORT

AN ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN THE U.S. AIR FORCE'S 87 CONTRACTING SQUADRON UNIT

September 2022

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Collins and Garcia's 2018 thesis, "A Thematic Assessment of The Organizational Climate in the Army's Contracting Workforce," explored the effects on retention and job satisfaction of contracting personnel. Their research suggested the analysis of other service organizational climates could yield a similar report to provide leaders with insights on improving current systemic issues concerning recruitment and retention goals.

This thesis considers the culture at an Air Force contracting unit, explicitly focusing on the 87 Contracting Squadron (87CONS) and its 2020 organizational climate survey. The study found that organizational climate, culture, and job satisfaction significantly impacted how satisfied employees felt about their jobs and their willingness to stay with an organization. In addition, the data analyzed concluded that 87CONS' leadership is focused on improving the organization's climate and culture and consistently makes significant efforts to satisfy employee needs whenever possible. Lastly, the recommendations of this research circled around morale, environment, and organizational culture improvements by leadership, thereby providing a supplemental resource to leaders throughout, helping them formulate solutions on specific areas of concern within a particular organization.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

87CONS	87th Contracting squadron
87 MSG	87th Mission Support Group's
314 CONS	314th Contracting Squadron
508 ASW	508th Aircraft Sustainment Wing
ACC	U.S. Army Contracting Command
AIR 1.0	Program Management
AIR 2.0	Contracts
AIR 4.0	Research and Engineering
AIR 5.0	Test and Evaluation
AIR 6.0	Logistics and Industrial Operations
AIR 7.0	Corporate Operations
AIR 10.0	Comptroller
AFC	Air Force culture
AFCSP	Air Force Contracting Strategic Plan for 2009–2013
AAW	Army Acquisition Workforce
CMMAT	Contract Management Maturity Assessment Tool
CMMM	Contract Management Maturity Model
DAU	Defensive Acquisition University
DEOCS	Defense Organizational Climate Survey
DOD	Department of Defense
JBMDL	Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst
NAVAIR	The Naval Air Systems Command
OCAI	Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument
OO-ALC	Ogden Air Logistics Center
R/E H/D	Racial/Ethnic Harassment/Discrimination
REA	Readiness
RET	Retention
SA	Sexual Assault

SH	Sexual Harassment
SUI	Suicide
STO	Strategic Targeted Outcome
TLOC	Three Levels of Culture
USMC	U.S. Marine Corp

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   BACKGROUND

The 87th Contracting squadron (87CONS) on Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst (JBMDL) serves as the 87th Mission Support Group's (87MSG) contracting activity. A factsheet posted on October 28, 2021, on the JBMDL online resource site describes 87MSG's mission as delivering consistent, agile, and exceptional installation support. This mission includes communications, cyber-security, transportation, supply, logistics, morale-welfare-recreation, human resource management, force protection, and contracting support to a diverse community of both members of the U.S. military and civilians worldwide. The 87CONS' mission objectives include procuring commodities, service acquisitions, and construction contracting support for the JBMDL installation. In addition, the 87CONS supports the global military contingency operations by providing mission-ready contingency Active Duty contracting officers (JBMDL, 2022).

The extensive and complex mission objectives of the 87CONS require the employment and retention of highly skilled, specialized, and capable individuals in the contracting field known as the GS-1102 Department of Defense (DOD) job classification. Personnel must undergo extensive training, including on-the-job training, seminars, webinars, and other mandatory course-level subjects offered by the Defensive Acquisition University (DAU).

Ensuring competency in contracting for the 87CONS workforce is essential in meeting the JBMDL community's needs and its respective mission objectives. By investing enough time in grade and position, it can take many years to achieve the right level of competency to be successful in the contracting career field. Thus, those who pursue contracting need to show mastery of the craft, do their job well and be retainable by their organization. One central idea of why employees remain retainable within an organization is their level of job satisfaction. Therefore, things like compensation and job benefits are not enough to ensure an employee has enough factors to strengthen and maintain their job satisfaction (Robbins & Judge 2012).

As a contributing factor to employee retention, job satisfaction can be defined as a sense of achievement (BasuMallick, 2021). When employees contribute to the achievement of an organization's objectives, they feel appreciated and valued. However, job satisfaction alone is not enough when we look at employee retention. Employees are more likely to stay in one place if they are comfortable where they work. A Harvard Business Review article by Vincent S. Flowers and Charles L. Hughes titled "Employee Retention, Why Employees Stay" highlights this point. The article suggests that employees stay with an organization depending on the influence placed on one of two categories: job satisfaction and environmental factors. Factors that contribute to job satisfaction include recognition, responsibility, motivation, and growth, while factors that contribute to the work environment include work area, benefits, and work rules. Undoubtedly, both factors play a crucial role in employee retention; therefore, an employee's decision to remain with an organization will primarily be determined by the emphasis placed on either factor (Flowers & Hughes, 2014).

In order to measure the amount of influence place on either job satisfaction or environmental factors organizations can conduct climate and culture surveys such as the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS). This research looks at information generated by such a survey. The data collected was used to assess the organizational climate of the 87CONS. An analysis of responses received from the survey related to job satisfaction, trust in leadership, organizational processes, and commitment served as the basis for the analysis of the organization's climate, which can contribute to helping leadership address ongoing challenges related to staffing and retention of contracting personnel.

B.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order achieve a better understanding of how organizational culture and job satisfaction play a role in employee retention this research aims to answers the following questions:

a.   How does organizational culture affect the 87CONS' ability to retain its personnel?

b.   Will increase job satisfaction help overcome any systemic issues concerning recruitment and retention in the 87CONS?

c.   What can organizations like the 87CONS do to increase job satisfaction and decrease turnover?

C.   BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH

87CONS leaders can utilize the findings and suggestions contained herein as a resource in assessing how its organizational culture can affect its current and future workforce. Since the report will look at a specific area of the organizational climate of the 87CONS, the analysis may help provide potential recommendations to upper leadership challenged to recruit and retain its contracting workforce.

D.   SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The information presented in this research is limited to the responses given by contracting personnel of the 87CONS as part of the DEOCS report dated 5 Feb 2020. The survey is limited to the results collected from the eighteen personnel who responded to the survey, with a total of fifty 87CONS personnel on the distribution list. Members of the 87CONS shared their opinions and thoughts on their work experiences by providing feedback on various areas of leadership's interest ranging from communication to organizational climate.

E.   METHODOLOGY

In this research, existing data was analyzed from the 2020 DEOCS of 87CONS, focusing on the organization's climate and its impact on job satisfaction and retention. As part of the DEOCS climate assessment, the following topics provided qualitative data: Communication, Organizational Challenges, Organization Community Improvement, and Perception of the Organizational Climate. Inductive analysis was used analyze qualitative data to identify trends and patterns in the climate survey responses, which are discussed more in detail in Chapter III.

F.   ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report is organized into five chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Recommendations, and Summary. The first chapter gives insights into the background, focus, benefits, limitations, and methodology of this research. Chapter II reviews the literature on organizational culture in contracting units of the U.S. military. Chapter III provides insights into methods, sources, and analysis approaches used to carry out the research conducted on organizational culture and the 87CONS climate assessment analysis. Chapter IV provides the results of the analysis and offers potential solutions to increasing job satisfaction and retention. Finally, Chapter V summarizes this research while suggesting areas for further study.

G.   SUMMARY

This introductory chapter provides the background of the 87CONS organization. In addition, this chapter summarized the rationale for the research by listing its potential benefits and limitations. Finally, this chapter briefly describes the research's methods and analysis approach, introducing its data assessment strategy. The following chapter presents a review of the literature, focusing on contributions to understanding the organizational culture of U.S. military contracting units.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

A.   INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture can have both a positive and negative effect on its workforce. Identifying and managing cultural issues that could affect change and leadership's vision therefore can contribute to increased productivity and efficiency. To this end, this chapter reviews the literature on the different studies conducted on organizational culture in military contracting units. The literature reviewed will highlight each study's methods, findings, and limitations, providing a perspective on organizational culture and meaningful insight into the research.

B.   ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE U.S. AIR FORCE

Air Force culture (AFC) differs from other branches but nonetheless influences its organization's operations, structure, and people in the same way. This section reviews two studies on previous AFC research that provides perspective on how AFC is defined and structured.

A study conducted on AFC noted, "As with any other bureaucracy, a service's culture is based upon such things as its history and the types of operations it conducts." (Thomas, n.d, p.1). In the case of the Air Force, brief history sheds light on its cultural development since its designation as a separate military branch in 1947. According to Thomas, the original Air Force existed to take advantage of the newly matured manned combat aircraft technology to deliver air fighting power during wartime efforts like the Cold War and World War II (Thomas, n.d). Accordingly, the following two research papers will build on Thomas' findings and thus will provide insight into what makes up the AFC.

1.   Understanding AFC (Vermillion, 1996)

Research conducted on the Air Force's history, mission, and culture laid out theoretical concepts through generalized explanations of its cultural origins. The research uses a qualitative approach to analyze the environmental, historical, and mission factors of the Air Force's cultural development (Vermillion, 1996). Vermillion begins his inquiry

into Air Force culture by defining culture in general terms through the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary definition of "the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes a company or corporation." (Vermillion, 1996, p. 4). He noted two main themes in the literature reviewed when defining the term, with the two themes as "1. culture may be something an organization "has" and 2. something an organization is." (Vermillion, 1996, p. 5). This quote implies that all organizations possess a cultural identity upon which values and beliefs are built. Vermillion also highlighted the likelihood that subcultures exist within an organization and how they differed from the dominant organization's culture. According to Vermillion, occupational subcultures are characterized by their identity and include elements that define the culture at its core. He defined *subcultures* as groups within an organization that share similar cultural traits with its dominant organizational culture. According to Vermillion, subcultures supplement or deviate from the dominant organizational culture, where the dominant culture might become threatened if it is weak.

Vermillion described Air Force culture through the evolution of the military profession, which was rooted in the concepts of its history of war and discipline. It looked at the Air Force's origins and in particular how the importance of Air Power and technology impacted the AFC. In addition, Vermillion's research on AFC found that a distinctive military character developed due to the post-Civil War budget cuts and force reduction. He noted that because of the military's corporate style it was seen as anti-individualistic, so any form of individualism threatened the services, hindering their efficiency. Instead, AFC held high value on traditions, esprit, unity, and community (Vermillion, 1996). These values led to establishing the AFC's foundation that the modern Air Force is built on today. Airpower has revolutionized the way the United States conducts its warfighting agenda. AFC is a product of its history and mission, involving innovation and the acquisition of technology. Throughout the Air Force's culture, innovation is continually emphasized through research and development along with its acquisition initiatives on minimizing costs, schedule, and performance risks (Vermillion, 1996).

2. Culture Wars (Donnithorne, 2013)

Expanding the concept of AFC further, a case study on the relations between civilian DOD members and active-duty military members looked at how the AFC impacted the American civil-military relationship (Donnithorne, 2013). Focusing mainly on the study's section on AFC, it highlights its methods of analyzing AFC using historical and cultural observations from published works such as Perry M. Smith, *The Air Force Plans for Peace, 1943–1945* and Builder, *The Masks of War* to identify themes of AFC. In addition, it utilizes a qualitative data to conduct a framework analysis in its case studies through broad generalizations on AFC (Donnithorne, 2013). The study notes that "the goal is to uncover the prevailing personality of the Air Force, rooted in its collective history, enduring over time, and comprised of assumptions from which it forms a basis for future action" (Donnithorne, 2013, p. 27). The quote highlights its similarities with Vermillion's research of how the foundation of AFC lies in its history. Donnithorne listed the following five characteristics of the AFC culture: technology-centered, autonomously decisive, future-oriented, occupationally loyal, and self-aware. Of these five assumptions, it is important to highlight the notion of occupational loyalty. The research noted, "The Air Force is an honorable and patriotic means to practice a desirable high-tech trade. Loyalties to the trade, machine, and subculture often outweigh loyalty to the institution." (Donnithorne, 2013, p. 33). The quote suggests that occupational loyalties are present in the Air Force and are formed through the various high-tech trades that support the Air Force mission. Each occupational subculture helps shape and strengthen the foundation of the AFC. Therefore, occupational subcultures will form under the various occupations that make up the organization; for instance, fighter pilots are part of a fighter subculture, whereas bomber pilots' part of a bomber subculture.

The literature cited above suggests that AFC has roots in its history and technology. Its history tells us that many subcultures will form under each trade because of the various occupations necessary to meet the Air Force's technology needs, making up its larger organizational culture. Of course, the technology demanded of the Air Force would not be possible without the many necessary acquisitions needed to procure the tools, training, and resources to research, maintain and repair those technologies which in total fall under the

purview of its contracting units. Therefore, the following section will narrow the focus to the organizational cultures of contracting units within the Air Force. Air Force leadership has long been aware of the importance of managing its organizational culture and the potential impact it can have on its workforce. The following literature review on organizational culture in Air Force contracting units will provide background to help us gain insight into Air Force units like the 87CONS.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN U.S. AIR FORCE CONTRACTING UNITS

> Air Force Contracting must return to the basics. Our culture was built on a foundation of strong leadership, a well-trained workforce, open and honest communications, and an ability to overcome challenges.
>
> —Roger S. Correll
> Air Force Contracting (2008, p.15)

1. The Air Force Contracting Workforce

The Air Force contracting mission serves a wide variety of functions supporting the nation's defense. The acquisitions of major weapon systems, logistics and sustainment, installation and mission support, and contingency operations have been possible through the talented efforts of the highly skilled, educated, and professional contracting Airmen, both active duty and civilians. (Air Force contracting strategic plan 2009–2013, 2008). While the active duty contracting workforce negotiates contracts and obligates funds downrange, the Air Force's civilian contracting workforce anchors its efforts in providing contracting continuity in support of its home base. The demands of the contracting field are met through a collaboration of expertise in both active-duty military and civilian contracting efforts. (Air Force contracting strategic plan 2009–2013, 2008).

The Air Force Contracting Strategic Plan for 2009–2013 (AFCSP) stresses cultivating a culture in the Air Force contracting field through competence and courage. In addition, it links the overall culture of the Air Force's core values of integrity, service, and excellence with the contracting building blocks of improving processes and leveraging technology. Furthermore, the AFCSP notes that the responsibilities of contracting

professionals in carrying out statutory duties and obligating funds in support of our nation's defense cannot be stressed enough. This responsibility is also to instill confidence in our stakeholders that the processes and contract actions taken are ethically sound, valid, and have been accomplished in the best interest of our nation's defense. (Air Force Contracting, 2008).

2.   Culture Analysis Approach

Studies on Air Force contracting units focusing on their organizational culture could not be found. Therefore, to understand the culture of Air Force contracting units, we will apply the three levels of culture (TLOC) model to analyze the following case studies concerning the contracting capabilities and processes of Air Force contracting units. They are: Case Study I —Jackson 2007's *Analysis of the 314th Contracting Squadrons Contract Management Capability Using the Contract Management Maturity Model* and Case Study II—Sheehan, Moats, and VanAssche's 2008' *Analysis of the Contracting Processes and Ethical Culture at Ogden Air Logistics Center, Hill AFB*. Schein & Schein, (2016) state that to analyze organizational culture, an observer can look at the various values or rules of behavior that an organization identifies with by analyzing its culture on three major levels, as depicted in Figure 1. Additionally, Schein and Schein note that the analysis of culture can be conducted at many levels, namely at levels where cultural spectacles can be observed (Schein & Schein, 2016). The quote highlights the keywords of being "visible," meaning that to effectively apply the concept of TLOC, direct or in-person observation of the organization should be conducted. Therefore, the culture described in this literature review achieves this end by interpreting and identifying elements that resemble artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic levels of assumptions.

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1. **Artifacts**
   - Visible and feelable structures and processes
   - Observed behavior
     — Difficult to decipher

2. **Espoused Beliefs and Values**
   - Ideals, goals, values, aspirations
   - Ideologies
   - Rationalizations
     — May or may not be congruent with behavior and other artifacts

3. **Basic Underlying Assumptions**
   - Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values
     — Determine behavior, perception, thought, and feeling

3.   Contract Management Maturity Model

Many of the case studies reviewed below utilize the Contract Management Maturity Model (CMMM) to assess its organization's competency levels. The following summarizes CMMM's purpose and includes a detailed description of its key process areas and maturity levels.

Organizations can use the CMMM as a guide for improving their contract management practices. The ratings provide leaders with a snapshot of where attention is needed for improvement during a specific contract phase. There are six key processes or phases that the CMMM looks at. They are: 1. procurement planning, 2. solicitation planning, 3. solicitation, 4 source selection, 5. contract administration, and 6. contract closeout. (Garrett & Rendon, 2005). Procurement planning helps the buyer decide if the procurement is necessary, what buy method is appropriate, how much of the item or service is needed, and when is the appropriate time to purchase. Solicitation planning focuses on documentation needed to acquire pricing information from vendors and identify reliable sources. Unlike the solicitation planning phase, the solicitation phase solicits from the vendor actual pricing information, such as quotes or proposals. The source selection phase uses the pricing information received, evaluates the proposals or quotes, and decides on an award. The contract administration phase administers the contract and carries out various contracting actions, including but not limited to modifications, terminations, and contractor

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performance assessments. The contract closeout phase ensures that all administrative matters are completed, and all services or items have been accomplished or delivered accordingly (Garrett and Rendon, 2005).

The CMMM consists of five maturity levels assigned to each process based on the implementation and adoption of best practices. The maturity levels are Level 1 Ad Hoc, Level 2 Basic, Level 3 Structured, Level 4 Integrated, and Level 5 Optimized. (Garrett & Rendon, 2005). Ad Hoc is the lowest and most basic level; at this level, the organization understands and acknowledges the importance of the management processes. Established procedures, formal documentation, and consistencies in following best practices may not exist. At the basic level, there are some established procedures; however, those procedures are only applied to some contracts, usually those of high complexity and importance. At the structured level, management processes are established and required by the organization's policies. Processes are expected to be followed throughout the organization, where senior leadership is active in making decisions and approving key contracting strategies related to contract terms and conditions and the management of contract documents. At the Integrated level, the organization's management processes, and all the basic core processes, are well integrated and executed throughout the organization. All members understand their role and ensure that the project's end-user is included as a primary team member in the procurement process. (Garrett & Rendon, 2005). The highest maturity level of the CMMM is the Optimized level, where periodic evaluations of the contract management processes are conducted using metrics based on efficiency and effectiveness. These evaluations enable the organization to continuously improve its contract management processes, implementing best practices and setting standards, thereby streamlining the procurement processes. (Garrett & Rendon, 2005).

4.   Air Force Contracting Unit Case Study I (Jackson, 2007)

The following study notes that to improve the contract management processes, leadership has to create a separate path for success through its organization's culture development (Jackson, 2007). The 314th Contracting Squadron (314 CONS) at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, looked at its contracting processes and provided

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recommendations of target areas for improvement through the use of the Contract Management Maturity Model (CMMM) and the Contract Management Maturity Assessment Tool (CMMAT). The CMMAT is used to capture data through the use of self-administered surveys for either buyers or sellers. As a result, the data is then analyzed using the CMMM to assess the maturity levels of the organization's contract management processes (Jackson, 2007). The recommendations derived from the CMMM findings for Jackson's study included the following suggestions for achieving the next higher maturity level of the CMMM. Recommendations for each phase consistently recommended that processes be in place to ensure that the member is an integral part of the team, coupled with applicable training focusing on organizational core processes of each phase. According to the study the CMMM sampling strategy used a qualitative study targeted at respondents likely to have the best knowledge of the organization's contract management processes which was divided into two categories: 1. Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level II certification recipients, and 2. Warranted Contracting Officers. In addition, the study highlights that although the CMMM model's purpose is to identify problems and weaknesses, it does not offer solutions based on the findings. Furthermore, the research does not explicitly showcase the 314 CONS' organizational culture. Therefore, as mentioned previously, this literature review will look for elements of the 314 CONS' culture by identifying the TLOC through interpreting and identifying elements that resemble artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic levels of assumptions.

According to research, the 314 CONS history over the last thirty-one years has provided continuing contracting support to Little Rock Air Force Base through acquisitions of services, commodities, and construction contracts. The research showcases the organization's many forms of recognition. It also displays its belief in excellence, competency, and professionalism in its management processes at the home station and the support of a wide array of contingency operations worldwide. In addition, the one article boasts its excellent supporting capabilities through the retention and structure of its active duty and civilian workforce. As indicated by this study the 314 CONS asserts its claim as a top performer in contracting support under the Education and Training Command and

during Unit compliance inspections. Furthermore, it states that the organization has an outstanding reputation in the training of its contracting workforce. (Jackson, 2007).

Looking at the study results, CMMM rated the organization on the five maturity levels described above. It measured the critical process areas of procurement planning, solicitation planning, solicitation, source selection, contract admin, and contract closeouts. The source selection process area was rated at level four, making it the highest-rated process area. Contract closeout was rated at a level two, making it the lowest-rated process area. The findings indicated that all other processes were rated at level three and considered structured (Jackson, 2007).

Looking at the research conducted on the 314 CONS' workforce competencies and the findings generated by the CMMM, we can make the following assumptions based on the TLOC. *Artifacts:* A high level of synergy and communication exist within the 314 CONS. According to the literature, the 314 CONS has a proven track record of high performance, resulting in various awards and recognitions throughout its history into the present time. *Espoused Beliefs and Values:* The organization values its contracting workforce and believes in effectively training its personnel to stay at peak performance. 314 CONS stated that "through the years, regardless of the number of militaries deployed, the 314th CONS has always provided quality support to the wing" (Jackson, 2007, p. 28). Alluding to the fact while most of its military contracting workforce is downrange, its civilian workforce possesses ample competencies to run smoothly and efficiently. *Basic Underlying Assumptions:* The 314 CONS' is still young and has more need to mature. The 314 CONS has accomplished much in its short thirty-one years. However, the CMMM results of the 314 CONS' contract management process show that although most of its processes are structured, there is still room for growth and improvement. (Jackson, 2007).

5.   **Air Force Contracting Unit Case Study II (Sheehan et al., 2008)**

Located at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, the Ogden Air Logistics Center (OO-ALC) is comprised of five separate agencies (508th Aircraft Sustainment Wing (508 ASW), the 526th Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile Systems Wing, the 75th Air Base Wing, the 84th Combat Sustainment Wing, and Contacting Directorate) also utilized the CMMM tool to

measure the maturity of its organization's contracting processes. However, the research's purpose was also to measure the organization's ethical culture by administering a questionnaire that specifically focused on the rule-bending of contract processes. The study used the same sampling strategy as previously described for the first case targeting respondents of two categories, 1. Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level II certification recipients, and 2. Warranted Contracting Officers. The qualitative research conducted listed the following two limitations of its study: accuracy of the responses received and implementation of the findings. Nevertheless, the research stressed the importance of the study, stating that contracting processes within the DOD have and continue to fall victim to unethical practices warranting further studies into ethical behavior. In addition, an assessment of the contracting processes within the OO-ALC has become a topic of concern. Civilian personnel retiring or leaving the organization threatens to reduce the organization's knowledge and capabilities. Accordingly, the study examines if more aggressive measures are necessary to retain its civilian workforce (Sheehan et al., 2008).

As described in the previous case, the OO-ALC's CMMM also rated the five agencies under its organization on five maturity levels 1 Ad Hoc, 2 Basic, 3 Structured, 4 Integrated, and 5 Optimized. It measured the critical process areas of procurement planning, solicitation planning, solicitation, source selection, contract administration, and contract closeouts. (Sheehan et al. 2008). The CMMM results showed that most agency's processes were at a structured maturity level, except for the 508 ASW, which fell into the Basic and Ad Hoc levels. The study also assessed the CMMM results at an Enterprise level, noting that established processes and standards are only implemented on high visibility requirements and are not considered established or institutionalized throughout the entire organization. (Sheehan et al. 2008). Overall, the CMMM assessment indicates that the organization is not effectively relaying policy and following established practices regarding its communication.

The study noted that although the overall organization's standards on ethics were positive, some areas still needed improvement. One area of improvement was reporting ethical violations, where only 27% of respondents felt comfortable reporting ethical

violations, but only 20% agreed that violations were being reported. Another area was leadership's awareness of reported unethical practices. Leadership awareness concerning unethical behavior accounts for only 16% of the study results, indicating that leadership may not feel unethical practices are a problem. Despite leadership's awareness, 57% of employees felt leadership was concerned and tracking unethical behavior. The final area of improvement was discipline, where the study's results showed that only 14% "agreed" that discipline was consistent and fair, whereas 35% of respondents "somewhat agreed." (Sheehan et al. 2008).

Looking at the research conducted on the OO-ALC's workforce competency and ethical culture, we can make the following assumptions based on the TLOC. *Artifacts:* Communication is ineffective. As a result of the OO-ALC's "rule-bending survey," the organization and its units have established policies and standards to mitigate rule-bending practices; however, the organization is still concerned about the policy's effectiveness. (Sheehan et al. 2008). The research findings indicate that employees are not effectively following the organization's rules and regulations. *Espoused Beliefs and Values:* the organization's agencies have a standard level of competency. The research's findings from the CMMM noted that, although one of the five agencies fell below the "Basic" maturity level, most agencies under the OO-ALC were rated at a structured level of maturity for contract management processes. These process ratings demonstrated consistent leadership throughout the organization to establish and mandate contract management standards. *Basic Underlying Assumptions:* As a whole, there is some trust in leadership concerns. The following excerpt of the results showed that only

> 27% of the respondents agreed that they felt comfortable reporting ethics violations to leadership. Additionally, only 20% of respondents agreed that employees would bring observed violations to the attention of superiors. Furthermore, only 16% of the respondents fully agreed the Chain of Command knows what type of behavior goes on in the organization. Finally, only 14% of respondents who fully "agreed" offenders would be disciplined consistently and fairly by management. (Sheehan et al, 2008, p. 54).

According to the survey results, there may be some organizational climate hurdles to overcome from the values generated, causing inconsistencies in what leadership has

implemented versus how motivated and satisfied employees are with their jobs to adhere to the organization's policies and leadership direction.

This section looked at organizational culture in Air Force Contracting units through the TLOC. The interpretation of the research using the TLOC was necessary as literature on Culture in Air Force contracting units is unavailable. Nevertheless, the research reviewed provided a cultural background look into Air Force contracting units through the assessment of its organization's competency and ethical culture. The following section will compare organizational culture in other military contracting units.

D. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN OTHER U.S. MILITARY CONTRACTING UNITS

1. Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

This chapter has examined organizational culture based on four studies throughout the Air Force organization. To better understand organizational culture, this section will look at studies that highlight other military organizations' cultures within the DOD to understand the term better. Some studies below utilize the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) to assess their respective organization's cultures. According to OCAI Online and its book reference of Cameron and Quinn: *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, states that the OCAI was developed as a research method used by over ten thousand companies and is a proven and valid method of assessing an organization's culture. Based on the Competing Values Framework the tool assesses four types of organizational culture on a 0 – 100-point system where each organization has a mix of each type, with one type standing out overall. Figure 2 provides a map depiction of the OCAI structure.

Figure 2.   OCAI Culture Map. Source: OCAI (2022).
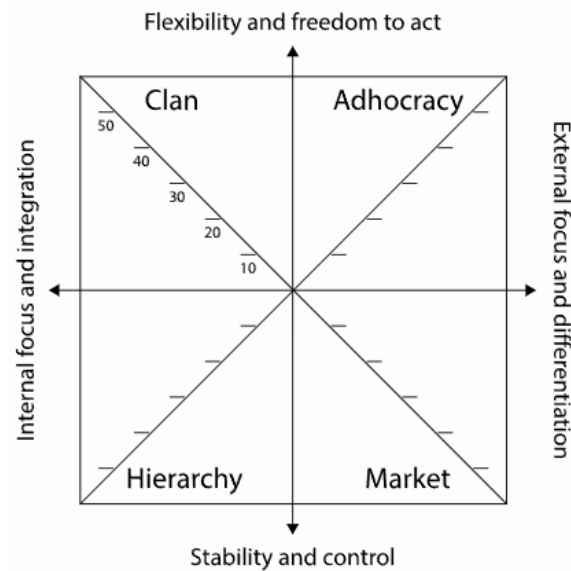
The OCAI map comprises a left and right X-axis and a top and bottom Y-axis. The Left x-axis is the Internal focus and integration side, where the organization's focus looks inward at its "development, collaboration, integration of activities, and coordination" (OCAI, 2022). The right x-axis is the External focus and differentiation where the focus of the organization looks outward, at things like market conditions, latest technology, best practices, and customer needs. (OCAI, 2022). The upper y-axis or the Flexibility and Freedom to Act dimension assumes that the organization cannot predict everything that can happen and must adopt a flexible attitude towards changing circumstances. At the same time, the lower y-axis, or Stability and Control, believe that reality can be known and controlled with the proper planning and structure. When mapping an organization's culture against these axes, you end up with the following four culture types: An adhocracy culture embraces innovation, takes risks, makes a vision a reality, and implements change. A clan culture promotes a team-oriented, collaborative environment where people's collective wisdom builds long-term commitments and relationships. An organizational hierarchy, also known as a control culture, is a classical structure in which formal policies and procedures dictate how people should act and what they should do. Market culture or the results oriented, competitive Compete Cultures focuses on speed, delivering results and reaching goals. (OCAI, 2022).

In order to identify the dominant culture type, respondents are asked to rate six dimensions of organizational culture 1. Dominant Characteristics, 2. Organizational Leadership, 3. Management of Employees, 4. Organization Glue, 5. Strategic Emphases, and 6. Criteria of Success (OCAI, 2022). The Dominant Characteristics refer to where numbers fall on the map. For example, depending on the organization's respondents, the ratings may display that the highest scores fall towards a Market culture or a Hierarchy culture showing the dominant characteristic of that organization. The Organizational Leadership dimension refers to the employee's perception of the organization's leadership. The Management of Employees dimension identifies what culture type is dominant in managing employees. For example, the ratings of the OCAI could highlight a Clan culture way of managing employees where teamwork, harmony, and participation are the organization's primary focus. The Organization Glue refers to the principles, values, rules, and day-to-day operations that keep the organization together. The Strategic Emphases point to how decisions are made in achieving long-term success. The Criteria of Success refers to what culture type defines the organization's success. For example, a Hierarchical culture type may define success through the organization's efficiency in meeting its goals. Each of the six dimensions, once analyzed and totaled, will highlight the dominant culture type for that organization.

2. NAVAIR Contracting Culture (Kovack, 2008)

A study examining the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) in Patuxent River, Maryland, assessed its organization's contracting process capabilities by utilizing the CMMM. In addition, the research identified performance roadblocks through cultural analysis of its organization's dominant culture type using the OCAI. The study noted that the OCAI limitations are similar to the CMMM, with the following four limitations of OCAI: 1. OCAI only provides cultural identification but cannot provide solutions to cultural issues. 2. OCAI cannot help improving the organization's capabilities. 3. OCAI sample sizes are too small for statistical analysis when comparing multiple cultures. 4. OCAI cannot change an organization's processes or culture without leadership effort. (Kovack, 2008). The research also states that NAVAIR is made up of seven core competency offices: Program Management (AIR 1.0), Contracts (AIR 2.0), Research and

Engineering (AIR 4.0), Test and Evaluation (AIR 5.0), Logistics and Industrial Operations (AIR 6.0), Corporate Operations (AIR 7.0), and the Comptroller (AIR 10.0). Of these seven core competency offices the research assesses only the Contracts (AIR 2.0). According to the research, five of NAVAIR 2.0's six departments contributed to the findings of the assessments. Figure 3 provides a snapshot of each department and its respective role as part of NAVAIR 2.0.

Figure 3.   The NAVAIR 2.0 Departments.
Source: Kovack (2008 p.50-52).

AIR 2.1 - Is the Contracts Policy and Process Management Department whose primary
responsibilities are to develop, maintain, support, implement and manage
contract policy, processes, and resources.
AIR 2.2 - Provides contract management and planning for Naval aviation programs
assigned to Program Executive Officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs.
AIR 2.3 - Provides contract management and planning for Naval aviation programs
assigned to Program Executive Officer for Air ASW, Assault and Special
Mission Programs.
AIR 2.4 - Provides contract management and planning for Naval aviation programs
assigned to Program Executive Officer for Strike Weapons and Unmanned
Aviation and NAVAIR 1.0.
AIR 2.5 - Responsible for the management, planning and leadership of Aircraft Support
Contracts.
AIR 2.6 - Provides contract management and planning for naval aviation programs
assigned to Program Executive Officer for Joint Strike Fighter.

The research described the OCAI as part of an early assessment model based on the competing values framework. Chosen for its predictability of organizational culture the study explains that the OCAI "identifies fundamental dimensions of organizational culture, creating a foundation for organizational discussion that can foster change and improvement" (Kovack, 2008, p. 4). The research noted that the OCAI only used six of the standard twenty-four key dimensions 1) dominant characteristics, 2) organizational leadership, 3) management of employees, 4) organization glue, 5) strategic emphases, and

6) criteria of success. (Kovack, 2008). According to the literature the assessment provided data that was used to measure three types of cultural qualities of the organization; they are culture type, strength, and congruence. The assessment was conducted both onsite and online. It consisted of participants from all NAVAIR 2.0 offices of middle and upper management of both military and civilian personnel. The results of the surveys showed that NAVAIR 2.0's dominant culture is hierarchical in nature, as the data revealed that although some of the other offices had different dominating cultures the aggregated scores showed that both the current and preferred culture types were Hierarchy. In the case study, the Hierarchy Culture is characterized by centralized control, predictable outcomes, and stability. Based on this definition NAVAIR 2.0 has a positive organizational culture that will likely result in high job retention and satisfaction rates.

3.   U.S. Army Contracting Workforce Culture (Collins and Garcia, 2018)

Collins and Garcia (2018)'s research on the organizational climate of the Army Contracting Workforce (ACW) was based on a thematic analysis of four open-ended responses from a climate assessment survey on job satisfaction, career enhancement, compensation, and organizational justice. Listed later on in this section the study identified themes that could affect and improve job satisfaction. Considering only the survey responses received, the qualitative study could not provide a conclusive picture of the entire organization (Collins & Garcia, 2018). This study did not directly focus on its organizational culture but the organizational climate. An interpretation of the study's explanation of the differences between climate and culture is as follows. Climate is concerned with how things are in reality versus how things are supposed to be. Climate and culture affect each other relatively, where climate changes in response to culture and culture changes after extended exposure to climate. Therefore, the analysis included in this study offers a sense of the ACW's culture by analyzing its climate. The primary tool utilized by the study for data analysis was the Interrater Reliability statistical method which is used to measure agreements between raters. The Interrater Reliability method consists of the Cohen Kappa and Fleiss Kappa. According to the study, the Interrater Reliability method determines an agreement between two or more raters on research that requires a

qualitative rating. The method aims to sort and categorize all statements received from interviews (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The study also utilized the Cohen Kappa and Fleiss Kappa, where the Cohen Kappa is used for two raters, and the Fleiss Kappa is used for three or more raters. According to the research, four non-technical skill categories are used in the inter-reliability test: job satisfaction, job characteristics, work-family conflict, and organizational justice with defined categories (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The analysis of the Job Satisfaction category was rated on four themes: leadership, intrinsic value or motivation, advancement, and benefits. Each theme was rated between "moderate agreement" to "almost perfect" agreement among raters. Themes under Job Satisfaction for Cohen Kappa were rated as moderate for leadership, substantial for motivation, substantial for advancement, and almost perfect for benefits. For Fleiss Kappa, the ratings differed slightly, showing a moderate consistency among raters where leadership, motivation, and advancement were rated as substantial, and Benefits rated as almost perfect (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The analysis of the Job Characteristics category was rated on four themes leadership, productivity, inertia, and processes and goals. Each theme was rated between "moderate agreement" to "almost perfect" agreement among raters. Themes under Job Characteristics for Cohen Kappa were rated as moderate for leadership, productivity, inertia, and processes and goals. The results under Fleiss Kappa showed moderate consistency for Inertia and Processes and Goals but substantial consistency for Leadership and Productivity (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The analysis of the Work-Family Conflict category was rated on three themes: premium payment, time off w/pay, and other rewards. Each theme was rated between "moderate agreement" to "almost perfect" agreement among raters. Themes under Work-Family Conflict for Cohen Kappa were rated as almost perfect for premium payment, substantial for time off w/pay, and moderate for other rewards. For Fleiss Kappa, the ratings varied, showing a mixed consistency among raters, where an almost perfect rating was given to all the themes under Work-Family Conflict (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The analysis of the Organizational Justice category was rated on four themes: trust in leadership, communication, performance appraisal, and reward systems. Each theme was rated between "moderate agreement" to "almost perfect" agreement among raters. Themes under Organizational Justice for Cohen Kappa were rated as moderate for trust in leadership, communication, performance appraisal, and reward systems. For Fleiss Kappa, the ratings varied, showing a moderate consistency among raters for each theme where trust in leadership received a moderate rating, communication and performance appraisal received a substantial rating, and the reward systems theme received an almost perfect rating (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

The case study focused on the four non-technical skills to base its assessment on the organization's climate and noted the following recommendations for each category. For Job Satisfaction, findings indicated that leadership should try to understand and effectively manage employees' emotions by incorporating emotional intelligence training at all levels of leadership in the organization. Doing so can help mitigate issues with employees' feelings of job satisfaction and the decision to stay with the organization. For Job Characteristics, senior leaders need to provide subordinates with more growth opportunities, purpose, direction, and motivation. The study recommended the implementation of monthly and quarterly town hall meetings to voice concerns and receive feedback on ideas and best practices. For Work-Family Conflict, the time-off compensation for overtime work clashes with the immense workload; therefore, employees cannot use and enjoy the time earned. The study recommended that time off earned must be used as soon as possible, allowing employees the opportunity to take needed time off. For Organizational Justice, leadership must understand what is most dear to employees, as compensation and benefits do not equal satisfaction. In light of the many opportunities available to employees in the private sector, the study recommended that leadership implement more recognition for a job well done, provide more opportunities to excel and provide career goal solutions through mentorship (Collins & Garcia, 2018).

4. U.S. Marine Contracting Culture (Pollman, 2015).

A study looking at the organizational culture in the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) found that data derived from an OCAI survey revealed that there are no differences in culture between the USMC and its field grade subcultures. Indicating that culture throughout the USMC and its respective units like its contracting offices share the same culture throughout the organization. The research conducted on the USMC noted that studies on its organizational culture had not been done using a formal framework such as the OCAI. The study aimed to showcase the USMC's culture through the administration of the OCAI. In December of 2014, the Senior Marine Staff administered the OCAI at the Naval Postgraduate School to Marine officers studying there. The researchers noted that the methodology of the OCAI is based on the Competing Values Framework that identifies an organization's dominating culture by evaluating four dominating culture types: Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy. In addition, it states that most organizations are made up of a combination of culture types but are usually dominated by one overall. (Pollman, 2015). Furthermore, the researchers acknowledge the limitation of the study stating that the OCAI targeted 204 USMC Naval Postgraduate students that represented the larger population of the organization (Pollman, 2015).

The case study's culture analysis using the OCAI looked at six key dimension profiles to gauge the USMC culture: They are 1. Dominant Characteristic, 2. Organizational Leadership, 3. Management of Employees, 4. Organizational Glue, 5. Strategic Emphasis, and 6. Criteria of Success. (Pollman, 2015). According to the OCAI findings, each dimension shared characteristics of all four culture categories. The overall organizational culture ratings were "21.2 percent clan, 13.4 percent adhocracy, 35.4 percent market, and 29.9 percent hierarchy" (Pollman, 2015, p. vii). The OCAI findings revealed that the dominating culture type of the USMC and its subcultures is that of a Market culture. As mentioned, a market culture exhibits stability and control over accomplishing tasks focusing on getting things done quickly and efficiently, a known trait of the USMC.

E.   SUMMARY

This literature review looked at organizational culture in various military contracting units. It provided a chronological view of culture in the U.S. Air Force, Navy Army, and Marine Corps focusing on each respective contracting unit. The literature reviewed highlighted the various methods, findings, and limitations, providing a perspective and background on organizational culture within the DOD. The following chapter displays the different levels of the methodology used to draw conclusions and find answers to the previously mentioned research questions.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. INTRODUCTION

This section highlights the methods used to analyze the research data including sources of data and analysis methods. The research uses data from a previous climate assessment survey administered to the 87CONS. The purpose of the study was to understand the impact of an organization's culture on job satisfaction and retention. The data was analyzed to formulate assumptions on the Air Force organization's climate and provide recommendations for improvement.

B. RESEARCH APPROACH

The approach aimed to interpret data already collected during the administration of the 2020 DEOCS by looking at the organization's climate and its effects on job satisfaction and retention. This assessment used an inductive approach where quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed, with the end results of these processes providing the basis to make assumptions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The qualitative data from the DEOCS analyzed responses received on the organization's climate for positive and negative feedback. In contrast, the quantitative data focused on the numeric ratings received for each category, noting any increase or decrease from the previous year. The interpretation of the data listed the ratings received for each category analyzed and noted the numeric rating for the current and previous years. The findings listed individual responses to specific questions as well as the ratings for those that "agreed" and "disagreed." Analyzing the data collected from each category and its findings helped formulate assumptions and conclusions of the research.

C. DATA SOURCE

The data source uses dimensions of the 87CONS' organizational climate portrayed on the 2020 DEOCS. The study narrows its focus to four areas of the DEOCS: Job Satisfaction, Trust in Leadership, Organizational Processes, and Commitment. The following provides a summary on the DEOCS climate assessment tool. The Defense

Organizational Climate Survey, otherwise known as the DEOCS, is a climate assessment tool used by Air Force and other military services across the DOD to assess their respective organization's climate. The survey considers many variables broken into two types of factors; Protective factors that are associated with positive outcomes are based on various attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that make up the organizations or units. A higher favorable rating on protective factors is likely to indicate positive outcomes, such as organizational performance and better personnel retention. In contrast, lower scores on protective factors are proven to be associated with adverse effects, such as suicide and sexual harassment. Similar to protective factors, risk factors are reversed. Risk factors are also associated with the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that make up the organizations or units. However, a higher unfavorable rating on risk factors indicates adverse outcomes, such as sexual assault and increased suicide rates. In contrast, lower risk factor scores will show more positive results, such as higher performance, organization readiness, and increased retention rates. The protective factors are broken down into ten whereas the risk factors are separated into nine areas. Each factor is related to a specific strategic targeted outcome (STO) that represents personnel issues identified as important to the DOD. Looking at Table ,1 a gray-filled area indicates relationship between the STO and factor while a white filled area indicates no relation (DEOCS 2022)

The six strategic target outcomes are Racial/Ethnic Harassment/Discrimination (R/E, H/D), Readiness (REA), Retention (RET), Sexual Assault (SA), Sexual Harassment (SH), and Suicide (SUI). Table 1 provides a visual representation of the relationships between each factor and STO (DEOCS 2022)

Table 1.   DEOCS Factor. Source: DEOCS (2022).

Alignment of DEOCS Factors and Strategic Target Outcomes

Factor	Factor Type	R/E H/D	REA	RET	SA	SH	SUI
Cohesion	Protective		■	■			■
Connectedness	Protective		■	■			■
Engagement and Commitment	Protective		■	■			■
Fairness	Protective	■	■			■	
Inclusion	Protective	■	■				
Leadership Support	Protective		■	■			■
Morale	Protective		■	■			■
Safe Storage for Lethal Means	Protective						■
Transformational Leadership	Protective		■	■			
Work-Life Balance	Protective		■				■
Alcohol Impairing Memory	Risk		■	■	■		
Binge Drinking	Risk		■	■	■		
Passive Leadership	Risk		■	■		■	
Racially Harassing Behaviors	Risk	■	■	■		■	
Sexist Behaviors	Risk		■	■		■	
Sexually Harassing Behaviors	Risk	■	■	■		■	
Stress	Risk		■	■			■
Toxic Leadership	Risk		■	■		■	
Workplace Hostility	Risk		■	■		■	

Note: A grey fill indicates relation between the STO and Factor, while a white fill indicates no relation.

D.   DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

This section explains how the research data was analyzed. A qualitative analysis method was used to analyze the responses given on each dimension. Using inductive reasoning, the observations and gathering of the research data enabled the development of recommendations on how 87CONS could focus its efforts on improving each of the climate dimensions analyzed.

An inductive approach was used to analyze data collected during the survey, as it left room for interpretating the data while providing recommendations for improvement. The following provides a summary of how the approach works. To start, you collect information through surveys or interviews that ask participants open-ended questions. Using the responses received you can then identify, themes, or categories that can be used to compared to known theories to understand the study better (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Since the DEOCS mainly consists of non-numerical data, a qualitative analysis was determined to be the optimal approach to analyzing data. The evaluation's objective for

this research was to understand the relationship between organizational culture and its effects on job satisfaction and retention. Using the inductive approach, data from the 87CONS' 2020 DEOCS focused on four assessment categories: Job Satisfaction, Trust in Leadership, Organizational Processes, and Commitment. The data included in each category was first summarized to provide the reader with a clear understanding of what the category meant. Subsequent analysis included with a detailed summary of the assessment's responses under a specific category, listing both the percentage of individuals who responded to the survey during the current year compared to the previous year to gain a better perspective of either positive or negative change. Each category was grouped into one of the ten DEOCS protective factors that best described the tone of the responses collected from the 2020 DEOCS. These protective factors provided additional insights into each category that was later useful in developing potential recommendations for improvement.

E.   SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the methods and approaches used to analyze and produce a report of the findings. It looked at the source of the data and the various methods of analysis and interpretation. It gives insights into the DEOCS survey structure and research methods of inductive analysis through qualitative research methods. The next chapter reviews the findings of the DEOCS and provides recommendations concerning culture, job satisfaction, and employee retention for the 87CONS.

IV. DATA, FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the 87CONS 2020 DEOCS, which comprised military and civilian personnel. Analyzing the survey data revealed the organization's strengths and weaknesses in each category. The analysis is followed by conclusions on the available data on how culture and job satisfaction in the 87CONS have affected personnel retention and recruitment.

B. DATA ANALYSIS OF JOB SATISFACTION

1. Job Satisfaction Category

Job satisfaction relates to an employee's positive experiences and feelings about their job (Robbins & Judge 2012). The 87CONS DEOCS overall ratings for job satisfaction were rated at 63% in 2018 and 88% in 2019, a 25% increase from the previous year. Locally developed questions on the DEOCS and their ratings are as follows.

Figure 4 shows the overall Job Satisfaction ratings between 2018–2019.

Figure 4.   Job Satisfaction Ratings 2018–2019
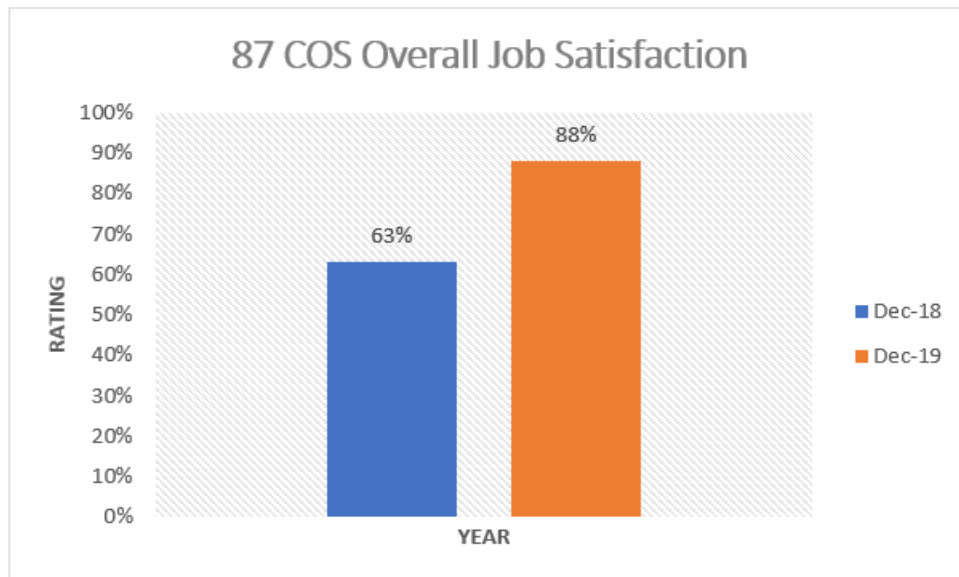
2.   **Survey Responses to Job Satisfaction**

The question, *"I am being fully utilized in my work center,"* received the following ratings: 5% Disagree, 84 % Agree, and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The question, *"I am recognized for contributing to a positive atmosphere in my workplace,"* received the following ratings: 11% Disagree, 78 % Agree, and 11% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

a.   ***Question***

What do you see as the most significant challenge currently facing this unit right now?

b.   ***Comments***

- Experience and training; retention of experienced personnel

- Squadron training/day-to-day tasks – Having a Contract Training Mgr. can ensure that squadron training day is scheduled consistently, and the training covers relevant material; this should help overcome training issues.

- Telework – There is a growing concern if this program is truly working and if members are using it honestly and effectively. When coordinating with coworkers, it is often difficult to determine if they are working, as their computer status usually says they are away from their computers.

- Suggest one day a week that ALL members are in the office at the same time

- "Out of Office" should not be on when members are teleworking

c.   ***Question***

If you could make one change within the Squadron, what would it be?

d.   ***Comments***

- Improve the training program

- Standardize processes/roadmaps to effectively accomplish the mission

- Develop local training (no webinars) from actual workload that are led by experienced CO's and specialists.

- Our facility is in dire need of a renovation. There is a known mold issue in the Basement, which is used for training and squadron-wide meetings; however, it is getting worse and becoming a significant health hazard.

- Make Thursday a "No telework/AWS" day

3.   Analysis

Based on the data above, Job Satisfaction responses can be grouped into three DEOCS Protective factors: Morale, Fairness, and Connectedness. Morale in an organization describes how employees' perceptions of their organization, assigned duties, and feelings about their coworkers affect Job Satisfaction and Retention. Employee Morale is essential to an organization's success linking high morale to high readiness and better employee retention (DEOCS 2022). The overall assessment of Job Satisfaction in the 87CONS shows a 25% increase in total Job Satisfaction from 2018 to 2019. In addition, ratings received for open-ended questions on employee utilization and recognition in contributing to a positive atmosphere were rated above 75% on the survey.

Looking at the Fairness factor, this relates to the employees' perceptions of their work environment and how they feel they are treated. Their perception of being treated a certain way, either positively or negatively, will most likely translate to their assessment of fairness in the organization i.e., being treated with respect, having the same opportunities as everyone else, and sharing the workload equally. A lack of fairness in the organization may also decrease the organization's readiness and retention abilities. In addition, a lack of fairness can increase the likelihood of racial and sexual harassment issues in the workplace (DEOCS 2022). The responses to the open-ended questions concerning the "significant challenge currently facing this unit" revealed a growing concern about training opportunities. The tone of the responses indicates the following assumptions. Employees feel there are not enough training opportunities to include consistency in carrying out tasks and retaining experienced personnel. In the face of these issues, experienced personnel carry larger workloads than less experienced and fewer available employees.

Lastly, Connectedness refers to how much employees feel connected to each other in a unit or organization. It is the level of satisfaction personnel may have with the support and relationships within the unit. Employees who feel less connected with their organization may exhibit decreased performance and higher turnover rates (DEOCS 2022). Responses to open-ended questions concerning physical challenges and potential changes in the unit indicate that people feel disconnected from coworkers, as many responses voiced concerns about telework. i.e., rarely see some people, suggest all in-office once a week and make Thursday a non-teleworking day. Although teleworking allows the organization to be more flexible with work locations, some personnel may feel lost and disconnected from workgroups. They may find it more difficult to complete job tasks when coordinating with coworkers who do not respond immediately via telephone, email, and texting.

The high ratings are a tell-tale sign that leadership is focusing on keeping morale high by meeting its workforce's needs. Their efforts should continue to result in high morale and job satisfaction increasing its capabilities in maintaining a work environment that stimulates personnel retention. However, the responses show that there are signs that not all are satisfied with the current work environment, lack of training opportunities, and the inability to connect with others in the organization, raising concerns about connectedness and fairness.

C.   ANALYSIS OF TRUST IN LEADERSHIP

1.   Trust In Leadership Category

A company's efficiency relies not only on its workforce but also on its vision and goals that motivate employees at all levels. Maintaining that efficiency relies on a productive workforce willing to comply with leadership decisions that may be complex, strange, and seem risky to the organization. A leader who wants to gain employee trust must maintain a sense of clarity and urgency around leadership endeavors, provide opportunities for dialogue, and be inspirational (Mineo, 2014)

The 87CONS DEOCS ratings for Trust in Leadership were rated at 82% in 2018 and 84% in 2019, a 2% increase from the previous year. Locally developed questions on the DEOCS and their ratings are as follows.

Figure 5 shows the overall Trust in Leadership ratings between 2018–2019.

Figure 5.   Trust in Leadership Ratings 2018–2019. Adapted from DEOCS (2022).
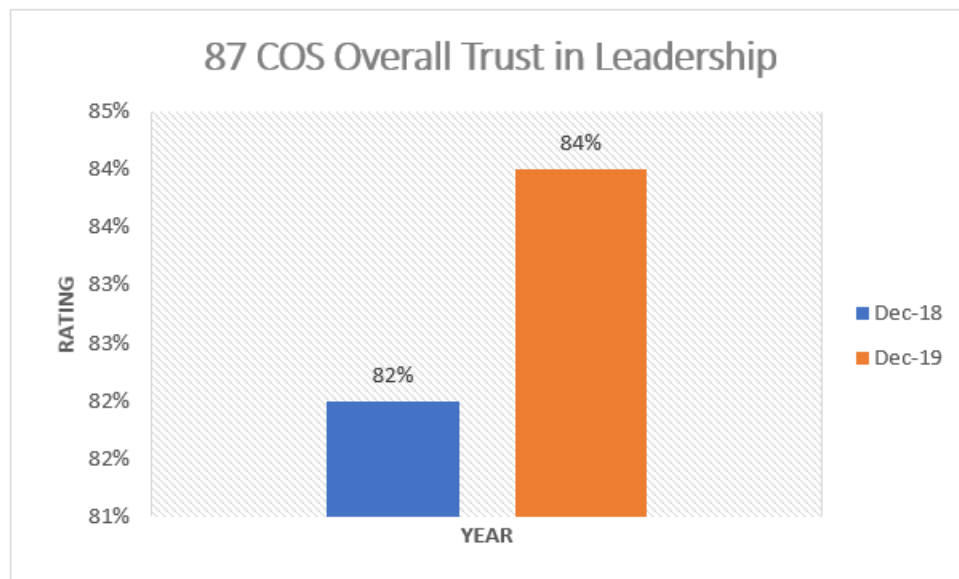
2.   Survey Responses to Trust in Leadership

The question is, "*My immediate supervisor sets the right example with his/her actions*," received the following ratings: 5% Disagree, 84% Agree, and 11% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

The question is, "*I trust management to handle complaints, problems, or issues seriously*," received the following ratings: 21% Disagree, 78% Agree, and 5% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

a.   Question

"How effective is communication within this unit? How could it be improved?"

b. *Comments*

- "Communication is improving, but can always be better."

- "Communication between Flights regarding lessons learned, current challenges could improve."

- "Lack of standardization in processes can lead to a feeling of lack of communication."

- "Roll calls and emails are effective; would like to hear more "Staff Meeting" level information passed down."

3. **Analysis**

Based on the data above, Trust in Leadership responses can be grouped into one DEOCS Protective factor: Leadership Support. As part of fostering trust among its workforce, leadership support promotes effective communication in the organization, provides necessary resources, encourages goal achievement, and puts professional development at the top of the agenda. In addition, Leadership Support is essential to the organization as its effectiveness strengthens its readiness and retention capabilities (DEOCS 2022). The ratings of the questions indicate that 87CONS leadership may need to work a bit harder on building and maintaining trust between leadership and employees, which goes hand in hand with leadership support. If employees receive the support they need, the likelihood they will trust leaders increases. In addition, the responses concerning communication indicate that leadership needs to promote more effective communication practices. As the responses states that communication is improving, the concern is that it still needs to improve further to reduce the feelings of poor communication among departments and leadership.

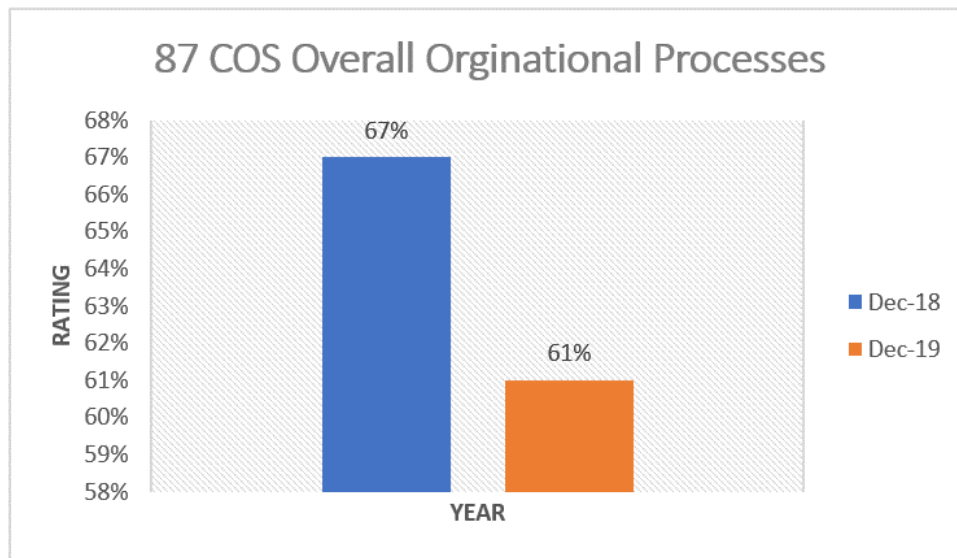D. **ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES**

1. **Organizational Processes Category**

Organizational processes that are not standardized may create confusion and frustration in accomplishing tasks. Productivity decreases, raising frustration among

employees who start questioning the leadership decision-making processes. However, when the organization's processes are structured and applied effectively, the results can help deter bottlenecks, waste resources, and reduce productivity. Confidence in an employee's abilities to get the job done can be a testament to the consistent and fluid processes within the organization. Compared to an orchestra, the organizational process shows that music is possible when many different instruments playing different parts come together in harmony, creating a musical masterpiece. The 87CONS DEOCS ratings for Organizational Processes were rated at 67% in 2018 and 61% in 2019, a 6% decrease from the previous year. Locally developed questions on the DEOCS and their ratings are as follows. Figure 6 shows the overall Organizational Process ratings between 2018–2019.

Figure 6.   Organizational Processes Ratings 2018–2019.
Adapted from DEOCS (2022).

2.   Survey Responses to Organizational Processes

The question, *"Standards are upheld and enforced in this organization,"* received the following ratings: 11% Disagree, 78% Agree, and 11% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

The question, *"I receive periodic formal feedback from my rater,"* received the following ratings: 16% Disagree, 68% Agree, and 16% neither Agree nor Disagree.

3. Analysis

There were no other locally developed questions under Organizational Processes; therefore, the analysis of the topic is limited to the two questions listed above. Nevertheless, based on the data, the Organizational Processes' responses can be grouped into one DEOCS Protective factor: Transformational Leadership. A transformational leader leads through change. The goal is to motivate employees to take on new challenges and encourage them to exceed their expectations (DEOCS 2022) A study on transformational leadership and organizational processes stated that transformational leadership also influences the outcomes of an organization. It raises the argument that the established and standardized processes are there precisely to translate the vision of leadership; without these processes, the vision will not see fruition (Sun & Henderson, 2017). The responses indicate that some personnel still believe that enforcing standards throughout the organization could still use improvement. The overall ratings from 2018 to 2019 showed a 6% decrease in how personnel viewed the organization's processes. In addition, 16% Disagreed that periodic formal feedback from raters was not getting done. Personnel in disagreement may have valid concerns about enforcing organizational standards if feedback is not conducted at set intervals. Overall standards appear to be established and followed; however, there is room for improvement.

E. ANALYSIS OF COMMITMENT

1. Commitment Category

Commitment in the organizational setting refers to employee loyalty to their employer. Employees connected with their organization tend to have high motivational levels influencing a sense of obligation and pledge to do a good job while meeting the organization's demands. Studies have shown that organizational commitment is categorized into three distinct areas: affective, continuance, and normative. A commitment that fits into the affective category is reflected in dedicated employees whose core values coincide with their organization. Those who show continuance commitment feel that the cost of leaving the organization is too high, and the effort needed to start over elsewhere is too much. Lastly, employees who exhibit normative commitment feel their investment in

their organization is too significant at this point to throw it all away and start somewhere else (Posey et al, 2015)

The 87CONS DEOCS ratings for Commitment were rated at 63% in 2018 and 81% in 2019, an 18% increase from the previous year (see Figure 7). Locally developed questions on the DEOCS and their ratings are as follows.

Figure 7.   Commitment Ratings 2018–2019. Adapted from DEOCS (2022).
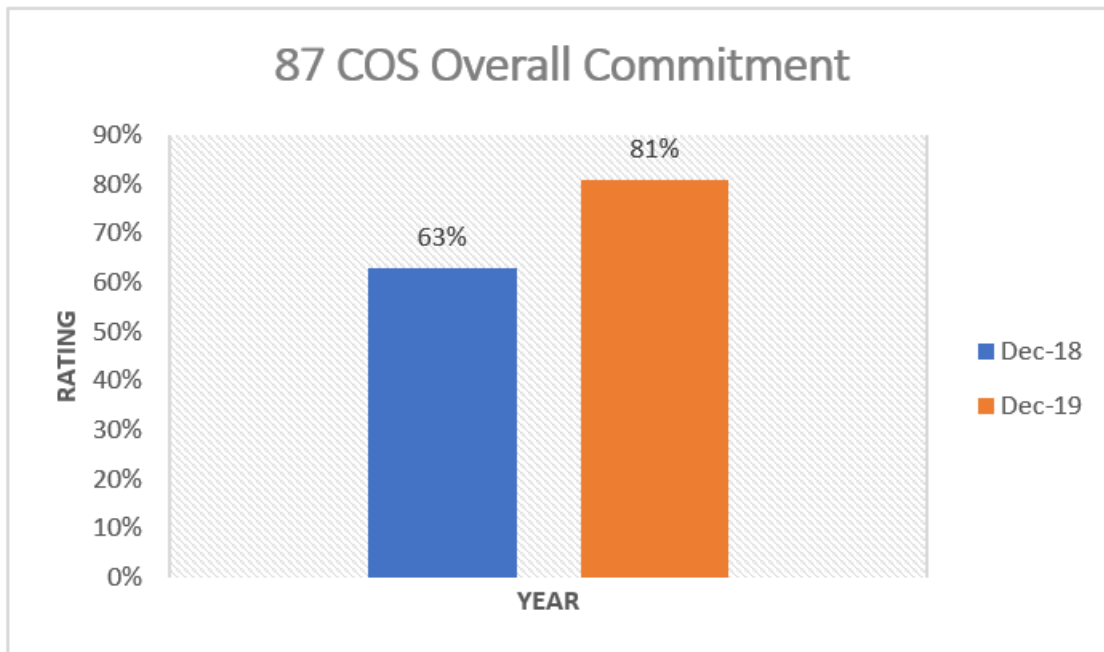
2.   Survey Responses to Commitment

The question, *"I believe this unit works as a team,"* received the following ratings: 16% Disagree, 79% Agree, and 5% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

The question, *"This working group makes me feel like I belong,"* received the following ratings: 0% Disagree, 84% Agree, and 16% neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

a.   Question

How is the overall climate of this unit, compared to one year ago? Please explain.

b.   *Comments*

- "Very Good and Improving"

- "Uncertainty surrounding the re-org has been a negative factor"

- "It has gotten worse or the same"

- "Still some perceptions of favoritism and bias"

- "Virtual suggestion box to submit innovative ideas"

- "Need to hold flights/individuals accountable"

3.   Analysis

Based on the data above, responses for the Commitment category can be grouped into one DEOCS Protective factor: Engagement and Commitment. Engagement and commitment in an organization refers to how rewarding personnel feels about their duties. Employees committed to their organizations are dedicated and passionate about their work, resulting in high retention and readiness (DEOCS 2022). With an 18% increase from 2018-to 2019, the 87CONS have shown steady progress in the right direction when it comes to promoting commitment in the organization.

Locally developed questions concerning "teamwork and belongingness" show characteristics of an affective commitment among personnel. Although some personnel disagrees that teamwork and belongingness still need more improvement, most feel that the unit's core values coincide with their own and that the organization does promote teamwork and respect that lets people in the organization feel like they belong. Other locally developed questions concerning the organization's overall climate seem to share a mixed view on how well the organization's climate is. In addition, those responses share commitment characteristics of both continuance and normative behaviors. Some responses indicate a continuance commitment. Personnel seems to have an optimistic outlook, hopeful that things get better, and are willing to stick it out instead of bearing the costs of leaving the squadron and starting over elsewhere. While other responses show signs of normative commitment, saying things are "very good and improving," favoritism and

accountability issues still need attention. They feel their investment is too great and unwilling to withdraw all their contributions to start over elsewhere, although climate improvement is needed.

F.   RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides possible recommendations based on the findings of this research.

1.   Recommendations for Job Satisfaction

87CONS Leadership should maintain their efforts in promoting high morale, fairness and connectedness in the unit focusing their efforts on employee training, facility maintenance and building relationships. Personnel who feel satisfied with the work and position in their respective organizations will most likely emphasize factors that may not directly apply to their specific job tasks. For example, compensation, benefits, working conditions, training, growth opportunities, making a difference in the community, coworkers, location, amenities, and any other applicable perk or advantage that are valued by that employee specifically will help define job satisfaction for them (Robbins & Judge 2012). Robbins and Judge state that job satisfaction and employee attitudes are the same. Job satisfaction relates to an employee's positive experiences and feelings about their job, and dissatisfaction relates to negative ones (Robbins & Judge 2012).

2.   Recommendations for Retention

87CONS Leadership should focus efforts on improving the work environment by promoting a culture that fosters effective leadership, job satisfaction and balance. Employee retention is contingent upon each employee's respective work environment; therefore, organizations need to take into consideration the following issues: leadership, culture, job satisfaction and work-life balance. (Phillips & Connell, 2003). To earn trust in leadership, leaders should be genuine. They must try to show that they can be trusted through knowing their people, showing that they are human and not perfect, delegating responsibilities, and being realistic with their proposals and promises. Doing these things will allow leaders to develop trust in the organization, strengthening bonds and increasing the desire to stay with the organization (Mineo, 2014)

3. Recommendation for Climate

87CONS Leadership should keep doing what they have been doing. Although there are perceptions that the climate needs a little work, overall, the organizational climate is heading in the right direction. The organizational climate depends on the collective perceptions of the organization rather than the individualistic view; it is the shared view of how things are versus how things should be. Therefore, 87CONS should keep building on its climate's perception through communicating business best practices, standardization of tasks, and improving the work environment. i.e., facility maintenance and morale-building events.

G. SUMMARY

This chapter provided insights on the Findings, Data, Analysis, and Recommendations of data listed on the 87CONS DEOCS. Categories, findings, and analysis looked at four focused areas: job satisfaction, Trust in Leadership, Organizational Processes, and Commitment. In addition, this chapter highlighted locally developed questions and recorded comments received from the DEOCS for consideration when making recommendations. The following chapter will provide the summary, conclusions, and areas for further research.

V. SUMMARY AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the research conducted. This section provides an overall summary of the areas researched and proposes potential topics related to organizational culture that can be used for further research.

B. SUMMARY

This research aimed to extend the study of Collins and Garcia (2018)'s to consider the culture at an Air Force contracting unit with a specific focus on 87CONS and its 2020 organizational climate survey. Data from the 2020 Defense Organizational Climate Survey was used as the basis of the research. The survey data were analyzed to assess the organizational climate, job satisfaction, and the effects on employee retention. Based on the findings, organizational leaders can focus on areas of concern and consider the recommendations of this study.

The study found that organizational climate, culture, and job satisfaction significantly impacted how satisfied employees felt about their jobs and their willingness to stay with an organization. The data analyzed from the 87CONS 2020 DEOCS' revealed that employees want more than an attractive paycheck from their employers to remain productive and have high job satisfaction and retainability within one organization. Employees need to feel that leadership can provide clear direction to organizational goals while providing ample resources such as training, environment upgrades, and growth opportunities. In addition, employees' willingness to stay with one organization will also depend on how well leadership can deliver those promises made for improvement and how consistent they can be in maintaining morale, motivation, and belonging among personnel. Lastly, this research found that job satisfaction and employee retention are linked to the culture and climate promoted within an organization. Higher job satisfaction and personnel retention will follow when leadership fosters a culture and environment that enhances employees' needs and wants.

C.   AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused on organizational culture and job satisfaction. It looked at how each area affects the retention capabilities in a military contracting organization that is comprised of both military and civilian members. It was noted during this research that each organization has its own culture. Therefore, subculture is likely to develop within an organization based on a group's shared experiences and struggles. (Robbins & Judge 2012).

The assumption is that these subcultures most likely exist within other military units; however, the data analyzed did not specifically note any subcultures within the 87CONS. One area for further research is to determine what subcultures exist in other Air Force contracting Units. Comparing and contrasting the organizational culture with its subcultures can help to determine how subcultures affect the organization's ability to recruit, retain, and maintain a competent workforce. Further research into Air Force contracting units can help shed light on other cultural dimensions such as work life balance or workplace hostility that may be unknown to leadership, causing bottlenecks in the organization's productivity and progress of its overall cultural goals.

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