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Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

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A Case Study of Military Transition to Civilian Life

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Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Transformational Leadership

Brandy Kamm, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

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Abstract

Service members experience significant challenges reintegrating into the civilian sector following military service. To research causes of the challenges new veterans face, a qualitative case study was conducted in which military veterans were interviewed and participated in a focus group to obtain information about their perceptions of military leadership and the transferability of their skills to the civilian setting. A review of artifacts, such as military basic training and leadership manuals, was conducted to check the consistency with which military veterans perceived their leadership and transition experience to match the military's stated expectations and training. The conceptual framework for this case study included principles of transformational leadership. In this study, veterans from Post-9/11/2001 appeared to experience military leadership training as stated in military basic training and leadership manuals. There was a discrepancy between the leadership training and transition out of the military experience between the Pre- and Post-9/11/2001 veterans, which provided insight into potential future studies as well as an understanding of how military training changed over several decades. The primary goal of the study was to obtain insight into how the experience of transitioning out of the military could be further eased for newly exiting service members. The implications included the need for further study in how recruits are trained and readied for service as well as other studies that not only identify roots causes for difficult transitions but also the best way to assist exiting service members.

Keywords: military leadership, transition, civilian application, transformational leadership

Dedication

I dedicate this body of work to my parents, Robert and Judy Castañeda, who taught me the value of education, love without restriction, and perseverance through all adversity. You inspired me to be my best. You believed in me and reminded me that I can accomplish anything through Christ. You taught me to never settle for less and hard work feels good. I love you and miss you.

To my children, Kyle and Zachary, you watched me endure this journey and kept me motivated with your laughter, humor, and encouragement. You inspired me to keep moving forward with your diligence, your efforts, and your personal successes. You helped me learn to better balance hard work with fun. I feel blessed to have such wonderful sons.

To my family and friends who stood by and "tolerated" my many, "I'm sorry. I need to finish . . . " You were my sounding boards and helped me work through some of the most difficult to complete parts of this work. Thank you for enduring with me. Thank you all for helping me make the connections that were pivotal to the successful completion of this project.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Military veterans comprise 10% of the United States population, with approximately 200,000 service members exiting the military each year (Derefinko et al., 2018). The transition from military to civilian life is met with multiple challenges including family, social, community, education, employability, and readjusting to a different structure of life (Pease, Billera, & Gerard, 2016; Regis University, 2018; Zogas, 2017). Derenfinko et al. (2018) noted 9.9% of exiting service members did not have a place to live, compared to the .18% of the general population, and 43% reported they were unemployed the first six months of their return to civilian life. This was contrary to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), which indicated the unemployment rate for veterans was 4.5% and the nonveteran, civilian unemployment rate was 4.2% as of August 2017.

Moreover, Biddle (2016) noted:

> We ask a very small number of our citizens to carry the full moral burden of the use of state-sanctioned violence to accomplish political aims. Indeed, most Americans have so completely separated themselves from this responsibility that they no longer realize they own it. Nevertheless, they do. (para. 3)

Military personnel are trained to do a specific job. They are also provided leadership training from the moment they enter reserve officer training corp institutions, candidate schools, one of the service academies, or one of the basic military training bases, as demonstrated in the new United States Air Force Basic Military Training curriculum with a course called “Creating Leaders, Airmen, Warriors” (Hawkins, 2018). Military training focuses on what being a leader entails, including principles of empowering personnel, communication, appropriate behavior, furthering personal and subordinate education, and professional development (United States Air

Force, 2017). Upon completion of military service, separating or retiring service members receive transition assistance training to learn how personal skills align with private sector organizational needs (Brunger, Serrato, & Ogden, 2013). Service members are met with misunderstanding and expectations of violence (Cochran, 2014), in addition to the stressors of a career change that involves great upheaval. Veterans leave the military expecting to find employment quickly and are motivated by a strong work ethic, but find progress stunted with low-paying, entry-level positions indicating starting over rather than moving forward (Zogas, 2017). Furthermore, exiting military members face a lack of understanding of how military skill sets apply to the civilian setting (Center for a New American Security, 2013; Rand Corporation, 2018; Regis University, 2018). According to Ahern et al. (2015), a veteran who served as a military emergency medical technician (EMT) was unable to work as a civilian EMT because the civilian employers would not honor his certificate.

In the Pew Research Center's 2011 study, 44% of veterans who served in the military after 9/11/2001 found reentry into civilian life difficult. This information was in alignment with the Department of Defense's efforts to ease the transition of exiting service members from a military setting to a civilian setting. However, the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (2018) reported the suicide rate among veterans was 30.1 per 100,000. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (2016), the national average was 21.3 per 100,000.

Congress made efforts to ease the transition experience of exiting service members with the introduction of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) in 1991. This program supported service members who were involuntarily dismissed from service due to military drawdowns. The program expanded when Congress passed the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act (Title II of P. L. 112-56) in 2011, which requires all service members to attend

preseparation counseling as early as two years before separation and mandatorily 90 days before discharge (Congressional Research Service, 2018). The TAP provides Career Readiness Standards (CSRs) information to service members at specific milestones throughout their careers so that they can review and adjust personal goals and objectives related to financial planning, individual development plans, and other development concerns that can lead to a smoother transition out of the military and into the private sector. These CSRs include information about career and employment options with the objective of identifying the transferability of service members' job skills into civilian employment, particularly how those skills relate to leadership and management. Derefinko et al. (2018) and Blackburn (2016) found four characteristics that affected exiting service members' ability to re-enter the civilian sector: commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers who graduated from college, personnel who graduated from college, had a clear understanding of their missions during military service, and maintained personal religious activity.

This research used a case study design (Creswell, 2013), with an in-depth analysis of experiences and perceptions of military service members who made the transition from the military to a corporate setting. It was expected that the veteran participants would illuminate what leadership principles were used to ease the transition experience, elucidate the accuracy of the CSRs they were given while on active duty, and the perceptions of how those CSRs assisted the veterans' transition into the civilian workforce. In this chapter, an introduction to the problem with background, context, and history is provided. The framework, as well as the purpose of the study, research questions, rationale, relevance, and significance of the study are described in greater detail. The chapter ends with a definitions of terms that was used throughout the study, along with acknowledged assumptions, delimitations, and limitations.

Introduction to the Problem

It was important to research perceptions of military veterans concerning the transition from a military setting to a civilian setting to obtain insight to how transformational leadership affects the transition and how military leadership training transferred into the civilian sector. A report by the Pew Research center (2011) indicated 96% of post-9/11/2001 veterans were proud of their service, and 74% of veterans felt military experience prepared them for future endeavors. The majority, 93%, said time in the military helped them mature, 90% stated they learned how to work with others, and 90% said they built self-confidence while serving in the military. The follow-up report indicated 60.6% of post-9/11/2001 veterans believed they were prepared for the civilian job market (DeSilver, 2013a).

Additionally, DeSilver (2013b) noted fewer elected government officials have military experience; yet, these Congress members make decisions about military personnel and resources. He reported that in 1975, 81% of senators had prior military experience, more than at any other time, and 1967 held the highest number of representatives in the House (75%). Today, just 18.8% of all Congress members have military experience (Manning, 2018). DeSilver (2013b) added that 71% of Americans indicated they know little to nothing about the problems faced by military members and veterans. Veterans are affected by the lack of knowledge regarding the transferability of military and leadership skills to the civilian sector. Moreover, they experience an almost 50% higher suicide rate than the national average (National Insitute of Mental Health, 2016; Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, 2018).

Background and Context

Eckhart (2018) reported that military veterans identified differences between military and civilian cultures as the most significant complications to a smooth transition from a military job

to a civilian job. In this study, military veterans explained that the habit of calling a boss “sir” caused a barrier between the veteran and his boss. When potential employees come for an interview, they are expected to talk about themselves as individuals, but according to those interviewed by Eckhart, military veterans talk about “we” instead. If military veterans and corporate leaders can recognize and understand the transferability of military skills to the corporate setting, it was possible that best practices and the most productive, efficient, and practical principles can be more available for benchmarking and easing the integration of military veterans into the corporate workforce (Center for a New American Security, 2013; Rand Corporation, 2018; Zogas, 2017).

In general, service members transition into corporate America after 15 years of service (Landon, 2017). Statistics from the Social Security Administration (SSA, 2018) showed that most Americans remain in the workforce for approximately 35 years; therefore, most veterans follow their careers with corporate employment. The military provides TAP to help outgoing, active duty personnel prepare for their transition to the civilian setting by providing information on what to expect, benefits, resumé assistance, and financial management (TAOnline.com, 2018). This program assists military members with goals and plans as they decide which path they take: education, employment, or owning a business. The soon-to-be veterans spend the first five days in the general transition training, which is mandatory, followed by two to five days of optional training related to their chosen path. These final days are meant to assist separating service members in meeting career readiness standards that were agreed upon with partnered organizations who participate with the Department of Defense (DoD) in helping service members make this transition from military to civilian life and employment.

Brunger, Serrato, and Ogden (2013) noted three specific challenges prior service members encountered upon leaving the military: characteristics of a military life, loss as experienced upon return to civilian life, and attempts to bridge the gap between the two lives. The Pew Research Center found similar challenges some veterans have readjusting to civilian life, particularly those who served in the years that followed 9/11/2001 (Morin, 2011). Though more than 60% of post-9/11/2001 veterans felt their military careers applied to civilian employment (DeSilver, 2013a), nearly half of the veterans surveyed found the transition difficult (Morin, 2011). The Pew Research Center study indicated there are predictors to whether or not service members would successfully make the transition to civilian life. These predictors include a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as they related to their missions while serving in the military. Other predictors include age at the time of discharge, time in service, and religious service attendance.

Conceptual Framework for the Problem

Previous research indicated transformational leaders affect the well-being and motivation of their followers. Transformational leaders work with their followers for "competence exploration" (Du et al., 2013) empowering the followers, which builds autonomy and dignity within them (Friedman, 2014). While serving in the military, service members who had transformational leaders are able to transition well with finding and developing their new sense of purpose, role, and responsibility in the civilian sector (Morin, 2011). Service members who did not experience challenges with switching roles, responsibilities, and finding a sense of purpose.

Bass (1990) advised that transformational leadership principles are demonstrated by a leader who helps subordinates connect with the purpose and mission of the organization. This

leader is also “inspiring,” “charismatic,” demonstrates “virtuous leadership,” and raises followers to achieve that which seems unattainable (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bangari, 2014; Chen, Tang, Jin, Xie, & Li, 2014; Hamad, 2015; Kasemaa, 2015). A transformational leader recognizes strengths and challenges in others and buids on followers’ strengths to bring out their best performance. It takes a transformational leader to recognize the value and needs of followers as well as to help followers recognize their value and be motivated to move forward with a sense of purpose, a sense that they are needed and they belong (Ahern et al., 2015; Castro & Kintzle, 2014; Derefinko et al., 2018; Hamad, 2015; Pease et al., 2016). Transformational leaders make a difference for transitioning service members because of transformational leaders’ ability to recognize strengths in others and assist followers to commit and be motivated to contribute to the overall mission and vision of organizations. Exiting military members reported such ability as a key factor to reintegrating into civilian life (Blackburn, 2016; Hamad, 2015; Regis University, 2018). Transformational leaders help military veterans see a new place for themselves in the civilian setting by giving them a new sense of purpose and responsibility within the civilian organization (Cathcart, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The problem that was addressed in this study is that nearly half of all separating military members experience problems transitioning from the military setting and attempting to reacclimate into the civilian setting (Pew Research Center, 2011). Due to the drawdown of forces in the 1980s, Congress established TAP in 1991 to assist separating military members (Congressional Research Service, 2018). The Congressional Research Service showed how a military person’s transition was prescribed to help ease the transition process. The exiting service member is expected to attend the TAP briefings beginning 24 months before exiting military

service. Then, 90 days before leaving military service, he or she attends a 5-day training that teaches resumè writing, job hunting, budgeting, buying a home, and other information military service men and women need to reintegrate into civilian society. Additionally, optional training is provided depending on the path the person chooses: educational or straight into the workforce.

Each step of the transition process is meant to assist service members to acclimate to the civilian setting; however, the exiting service members' transition is problematic as noted in the experiences of exiting service members who were leaders supervising several subordinates. Veterans reported they were not recognized as leaders and were given entry level positions rather than managerial positions related to their experience (Morin, 2011). Transition became more challenging, resulting in higher suicide rates among veterans than the national average. Another problem lies with examining what was most impactful in the transition process to ease the stress and burden of reacclimating into the civilian setting.

Unemployment statistics demonstrated 4.2% veterans are unemployed with 59% of these veterans between 25–4 years, 37% were 55 years and older, and 4% were 18–24 years of age (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). The national average for unemployment of 16 years of age and older was 3.7% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Though the unemployment rate for veterans is not much higher than the national average, 44% of exiting service members have a difficult time reintegrating into civilian life (Derefinko et al., 2018; Morin, 2011). Veterans find military experience, training, and skills are relevant in the civilian setting; however, the suicide rate among veterans is nearly 11% higher than the national average (National Insitute of Mental Health, 2016; Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, 2018). The disconnect lies in what military veterans believe they can do and what they actually can do once they leave the military (Ahern et al., 2015; Cathcart, 2017). One of the challenges veterans shared was finding

themselves in civilian entry-level positions when they held leadership positions in the military because personal experience and training are not formally recognized by employers (Pease et al., 2016). Additionally, veterans may find it difficult to adjust to the changes in culture in the civilian setting, such as releasing the indoctrination of military etiquette and expectations that are markers of military bearing and structure to reintegrate into the civilian culture, which is less structured and more focused on independence and self-reliance (Blackburn, 2017; Zogas, 2017).

Predictors of how well a former military member will reintegrate into civilan life include rank at the time of discharge, how well the mission was understood, education level, and religiosity (Blackburn, 2016; Pew Research Center, 2011). Possible causes of transition challenges faced by military veterans include skills translation, skills mismatch, negative stereotypes, and acclimation (Center for a New American Security, 2013). In another study, veterans voiced concerns about feeling as though they were starting careers over; therefore, they were required to begin at entry-level positions without consideration given to the soft skills veterans gained while serving in the military, such as teamwork, decision-making, handling stress, leading and motivating others, critical thinking, and communication (Ahern et al., 2015; Rand Corporation, 2018; Zogas, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to collect information on military veterans' perceptions of leadership training while serving in the military, how leadership training assisted with the transition out of the military, and how learned leadership training skills transferred into the civilian sector. Participants' perceptions were analyzed to determine significant themes and commonalities experienced by military veterans during the transition from the military to the corporate sector. Validating the difficulties veterans face may ease inherent challenges and assist

veterans in finding a sense of purpose, lessen feelings of isolation, validate experiences, training, and skills, so they contribute as diligently as they did in the service but as civilian members of society.

There are common themes in transformational leadership that may influence the ease with which some exiting service members experience the transition (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Chen et al.; Du, Swaen, Lindgreen, & Sen, 2013; García-Guiu, Moya, & Moriano, 2016); therefore, the framework of transformational leadership principles was used to analyze data gleaned from semistructured interviews, a focus group, and artifacts that included military service and leadership training manuals, adding depth to available research. It was anticipated that the participants' insights could assist decision-makers and military veterans with the development of training/programs that address challenges veterans experience and maximize lessons learned upon reintegrating into the civilian sector (Pease et al., 2016).

Research Questions

The following guiding research questions were used in the study to gain knowledge of military service members' perceptions of leadership, the impact of leadership on transitioning, and how leadership was applied from military service to the corporate setting:

1. What are the military veterans' perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training?
2. How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting post-military service?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

As noted in the Pew Research Center Report (2011), DeSilver (2013a), and Brunger, Serrato, and Ogden (2013), a disconnect exists between military leadership and corporate

settings. This disconnect affects the transition military veterans experience reintegrating into the corporate world. In preliminary discussions, veterans expressed concern about their leadership being validated and a shared desire for their experience, skills, and training to be perceived as legitimate leadership training. The participants contributed to the knowledge base by providing in-depth information pertaining to military veterans' experiences using TAP, how transformational leadership contributed to the transition experience, and how leadership training was applied to a corporate setting.

This research study was needed to provide support for military veterans as they experience challenges integrating into the civilian sector. It is difficult to communicate the importance of preparing for the transition or communicating in common verbiage the skill sets exiting service members hold (Rand Corporation, 2018; Regis University, 2018). Additional studies are necessary to develop working relationships, determine lessons learned, build on those lessons, and improve military to civilian transitions easing military veterans acclimation to civilian life.

Definition of Terms

To create a common vocabulary, definitions for terms used in this study are as follows:

Basic military training. Basic military training is the initial training given to recruits in the United States Armed Forces. The objective of rigorous training is to transform civilians into military members with basic skills, knowledge of military history, expectations of military bearing, exacting standards, leadership, and responsibilities for immediate readiness to serve (Blackburn, 2016; Naval Education and Training Command, 2016; United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017).

Commissioned officer. A commissioned officer is one who holds the rank of Officer 1 to 9 (O-1 to O-10) in the United States Armed Forces. An officer receives his or her commission by attending a United States service academy, Reserve Officer Training Corp through a local college or university, or holds a four-year degree and attends Officer Candidate School (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014; Naval Service Training Command, 2018).

Enlisted personnel. Enlisted personnel are members of the United States Armed Forces who hold the rank of Enlisted 1 to 9 (E-1 to E-10). Junior enlisted ranks are E-1 to E-4. Noncommissioned officer ranks are E-5 to E-6. Senior noncommissioned officer ranks are E-7 to E-9 (United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017; Naval Education and Training Command, 2016).

Mid-level leader. A mid-level leader is one who works as the liaison between upper management and lower level personnel in an organization relaying important information between the two levels. This person understands the organization's mission, vision, goals, and objectives and makes decisions regarding lower level personnel, resources, and other duties as assigned by upper management (Day et al., 2014).

Midshipman. A midshipman is a Naval recruit who is attending Reserve Officer Training or the Naval Academy (Naval Education and Training Command, 2016).

Noncommissioned officer. A non-commissioned officer is a mid-level, enlisted leader in the United States Armed Forces holding the rank of E-5 or E-6 (United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017; Naval Education and Training Command, 2016).

Officer candidate school. Officer candidate school is an institution with the objective to train college graduated civilians and enlisted personnel to serve in the United States Armed

Forces as commissioned officers who are prepared to lead enlisted personnel in organizational and mission goals and objectives (Naval Education and Training Command, 2016; United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017).

Pre-9/11/2001 veterans. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans are those who served in any branch of the United States military prior to 11 September 2001. This includes veterans from World War II (WWII), the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War, and Desert Shield/Storm.

Post-9/11/2001 veterans. Post-9/11/2001 veterans are those who served in any branch of the United States military after 11 September 2001.

Reintegration. Reintegration is the process in which a military veteran redefines his or her sense of purpose in life with healthy relationships, access to housing, education, employment, and other benefits while developing and maintaining life as an independent individual (Pease et al., 2016).

Upper management leader. An upper management leader is one who provides the mission, vision, goals, and objectives for an organization as well as the resources to accomplish the mission, vision, goals, and objectives (Day et al., 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

The reasonable assumptions anticipated in this study include the participants answering the interview questions with honesty, recognizing their perception of the reality they experienced. Because the participants self-reported, it needed to be clear that honesty and candid statements were necessary for a clear understanding of the problem, experience, and reflection of the experience based on the ways participants perceived how training, skills, and experience contributed to their transition into corporate employment. In discussions with the commander of a Californian veterans' organization regarding this case study, he advised that many veterans

would be eager to share their experiences with honesty and candidness because they want to share their stories to help future veterans (Martin, 2018).

Creswell (2013) advised that human beings create meaning based on their experiences. He recommended open-ended questions to obtain what meaning participants made of their experiences. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted that this type of internal validity was appropriate for qualitative research. They continued acknowledging that the validity of the participants' perceptions was relative to the participant and must be viewed in the context and purpose of the study. The framework provided the lens through which to view the participants' perceptions of the transferability of military leadership training, skills, and experience to the corporate setting. The authors noted that data collection through interviews with those who experienced the phenomenon was the closest to reality that a researcher can get. Specifically, Merriam and Tisdell (2013) explained:

> In this type of research, it was important to understand the perspectives of those involved in the phenomenon of interest, to uncover the complexity of human behavior in a contextual framework, and to present a holistic interpretation of what was happening. (p. 244)

There was an assumption that military veteran participants were more likely to share their lived experiences with the researcher because the researcher was a veteran who experienced basic military training, leadership school training, technical training, and other innate military experiences, such as living and serving overseas and transitioning into the civilian sector. Yin (2018) recommended transparency when reporting evidence to eliminate biases. Therefore, thorough documentation of the lived experience was useful when coding themes, similarities, and differences among the participants' experiences.

Limitations in a qualitative study include circumstances that cannot be controlled by the researcher (Creswell, 2013). In this study, one of the limitations was that life experiences may have affected the perceptions of military veterans. Observations may be misinterpreted or misconstrued, depending on the experiences and perceptions of military veterans due to the age and length of time military veterans were removed from the transition experience. The delimitation to address self-reporting misunderstandings or misinterpretations included member checking by the participants and comparing the information gained from the participants with the information from other participants, artifacts, and the focus group discussion.

Another limitation was any personal biases the interviewer may have had regarding the content of the interviews. Because the interviewer was a veteran from the pre-9/11/2001 era, the interviewer took Seidman's (2013) suggestion to refrain from analyzing the interview data until after all interviews are completed. When all interviews were complete, the transcriptions were perused and coded. Thematic patters were recognizable because the transcriptions were done together.

The innate flexibility of semistructured interviews did not prove difficult in keeping the respondent focused on the needs of the study. Data were not difficult to analyze due to limited extraneous information provided by respondents. To circumvent limitations, the researcher conducted member checks and audit trails (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The participants were asked to focus on the transition military members make following discharge to find and maintain employment while acclimating to the civilian sector. In so doing, the focus for the scope of data collection as well as the focus on those who provided the information were maintained. Interviews were limited to a specified time frame and group of

people (Creswell, 2013). Using neutral phrases not to bias the participants and a general working definition of central phenomenon narrowed the scope of the interviews.

Chapter 1 Summary

Military veterans experience not only a change in lifestyle but also a change in the application of learned skills and training upon retiring or separating from military service. Veterans shared the challenges they faced during that transition. By understanding how leadership influenced the veterans, best practices were expected to be ascertained to ease the transition process of future veterans. The next chapter includes information on the study topic, the context and significance of the study, and the problem statement. The conceptual framework is explained with a review of research, methodology, methodological issues, a synthesis of research findings, and a critique of previous research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Leaders are expected to provide not only a vision and a mission that is clear and inspiring but also the guidance and direction to achieve that vision and mission. Du, Swaen, Lindgreen, and Sen (2013) explained that responsible leadership theory evolved from a hierarchical or command-and-control tradition to relationship-oriented leadership based on ethically sound relations that are developed and nurtured.

Research exists indicating how military and corporate leaders develop skills to increase productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency; however, there was also research that indicates problems with demonstrating the interconnectedness between military and corporate leadership training (Brunger, Serrato, & Ogden, 2013; Center for a New American Security, 2013; DeSilver, 2013; Hussain & Hassan, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2011). It was essential to address this gap as the average military member remains on active duty for approximately 15 years (Landon, 2017), and, according to the Social Security Administration (2018), individuals must work 35 years to receive maximum benefits, which indicates that military personnel enter the corporate workforce at some time following enlistment or commission and spend the majority of their working life in a corporate setting. Veterans move into the corporate workforce with a military background, career, and leadership training. Almost half of veterans surveyed reported their military career prepared them for civilian employment (DeSilver, 2013a); yet, almost half of the veterans entering the civilian workforce experience a difficult time transitioning from a military setting to a civilian setting (Blackburn, 2016; Cathcart, 2017; Derefinko et al., 2018; Morin, 2011). Corporate employers appear to not recognize the compatibility between military leadership training and the corporate setting (Rand Corporation, 2018).

A general commonality was noted in how transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles are applied in military and corporate settings. The gap lies in the general understanding of military training, developed skills, and experiences (Zogas, 2017). This qualitative case study was needed to illuminate the transition experience through the lens of transformational leadership principles so that the transition challenges military veterans face can be eased, aiding veterans in finding a sense of purpose and belonging beyond their military careers.

An overview of available leadership principles assisted in understanding the effect leadership had on exiting service members as they transition from military to civilian life and corporate settings. The principles of leadership identified and defined for this study are transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles in the military and corporate environments (McCleskey, 2014). In this case study, the researcher inquired how service members perceived leadership training while in the military, how training was useful when transitioning out of the military, and how training was applied in a corporate setting. The researcher used the Concordia University library to peruse articles and dissertations with similar topics and Google Scholar, which provided books, articles, and pamphlets related to *transformational leadership*, *leadership in the military*, *transition from the military*, *civilian transition from the military*, *transitional assistance*, and other related searches. References from articles, dissertations, and books were used to find additional material that had potential for analysis in relation to the topic.

Conceptual Framework

Research findings demonstrate similarities between military and corporate leadership in the areas of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The military

setting was organized in a hierarchical order with rankings for officers and enlisted members. Military personnel are noted for results-oriented work, where leaders at various levels and situations use guiding principles to accomplish missions under the constraints of time, resources, and experience levels of the personnel involved (White, 2014). The corporate setting was different, in some cases, depending on the industry. Friedman (2014) explained Google incorporates a laissez-faire environment, as demonstrated by the relaxed, campus-like atmosphere, yoga classes, gym activity, and cafeteria discussions that result in new research and development. Bangari (2014) elucidated that leadership training was provided within both military and corporate work settings. Expectations can vary depending on the leadership principles applied. White (2014) noted that military leadership training begins at entry level with continued leadership development as military members progress in service. Hussain and Hassan (2015) found that corporate leaders generally receive on-the-job training or attend formal training at their own expense to develop skills to obtain promotions. Military promotions are based on time in service and time in grade for initial ranks of E1-E4, but require evaluations of the member's capabilities managing, leading, and interacting with peers and subordinates for rankings E5 and above (United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017).

Bass (1990) described transformational leadership as a leader's ability to help subordinates connect with the purpose and mission of the organization. Furthermore, McCleskey (2014) and Weiherl and Masal (2016) detailed four components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In military and corporate settings, leaders define a vision and mission. Weiherl and Masal (2016) described transformational leaders as those who encourage, motivate, and

stimulate their followers to embrace changes in organizational missions and goals while building employees' confidence in the changes. This basic principle applies in both military and corporate settings as demonstrated by leaders with and without military experiences.

Transactional leadership can be considered a version of "carrot and stick" leadership (Phillips, 1992; Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). This leadership style includes a clear definition of roles, responsibilities, task expectations, goals, and the reward or consequences of a job well done or one that was lacking. From a military view, transactional exchanges are noted in performance evaluations and awards, such as the Air Force Achievement Medal. Such accolades come from following the checklist of requirements or guidelines, a solidly written submission, and approval from those in authority (Sitterly, 2018). In the corporate setting, transactional leadership is a series of employer-directed tasks with feedback to the employee that carries similar task expectations, goals, and rewards as that of the military, though the rewards are usually financial (McClesky, 2014).

Jain, Mehta, and Malekar (2014) explained the laissez-faire leadership style is used when leaders have a workforce that is "highly skilled, experienced, and educated" (p. 35). Google leaders may be excellent examples of laissez-faire leadership because of the relaxed atmosphere, collaboration in the campus gyms, and so forth (Friedman, 2014). Contrarily, Saeed et al. (2014) explained that laissez-faire leaders are nonparticipatory and do not provide the needed direction or support to employees. The authors explained that this leadership style leaves employees on their own to make decisions without a firm grasp of the vision or mission of the organization, which adversely affects the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the staff. This leadership style may not have the same adverse effect as it does in military environments where, "any laxity means failure and swift death" (Bangari, 2014, p. 19). Herein lies an issue regarding

the appropriateness of corporate leadership styles within the military environment, which requires consideration when determining leadership style congruency.

Throughout the literature, a general focus on modern leadership centered on ethics. Malinowski (2015) emphasized a crucial point in current leadership is based on adherence to values and strong character in professional and nine-to-five ethics. Each setting, military and corporate, possessed areas of unique performance requirements, though the application of ethical leadership principles is congruent and replicable in either setting regardless of the initial application of the principle. However, there are specific instances when the consequences of using a particular leadership style can have irreparable repercussions (Bangari, 2014). The challenge was to determine if leadership principles are congruent and transferable from military to corporate settings in general.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Leadership drives the accomplishment of the mission, vision, goals, and objectives (Turner, 2007/2008). Various authors defined leadership, culminating in a general consensus that leadership was demonstrated by one who inspires, models, organizes, and demonstrates effective and efficient productivity to achieve a particular mission (Bangari, 2014; Bass, 1990; Cockerell, 2008; Fullan, 2011; McCleskey, 2014; Veríssimo & Lacerda, 2014). Moreover, the authors indicated great leadership includes ethical leadership traits, defined as developing trust and confidence between leaders and followers. The trend in the study of leadership includes transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. A common theme found was a focus on how leaders encourage and expect the best from employees (National Research Council, U.S., 2014). A leader guides personnel to the completion of a project or propels an

individual or group of individuals toward a more significant cause or purpose, increasing that sense of purpose within the group (Uzonwanne, 2014).

There are gaps in the literature regarding how military and corporate leaders use transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Researchers did not identify congruency or cross-functionality from the corporate perspective into the military perspective (Bangari, 2014). Some researchers, however, provided data on how to apply transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles from military perspectives to the corporate settings (Friedman, 2014; Saeed et al., 2014).

In the military, leadership is based on a hierarchical model, as shown by the rank system (United States Air Force, 2017). Promotion is given when a certain amount of time in grade is completed, but, as responsibilities increase, promotions become dependent upon personnel evaluations, recommendations, skill levels, fitness examinations, specialty knowledge skill tests, awards, experience, time in grade, and time in service (Cooper et al., 2018). Additionally, promotion is necessary to remain in the military. If one does not make a particular grade by a certain number of years within the service, he or she is exited from military service (Sheftick, 2011). Promotion affects duty assignments and additional promotional opportunities.

Financial resources within the military are based on need; however, the military is not in the business of making money (McGee, Matthew, & Basham, 2016). It is not a for-profit organization; instead, it is a government agency. Commanders are given a budget every year. At the end of that year, if the budget has not been fully used, the commander will likely have a diminished budget the next year. It is a delicate balance because if the commander uses the budget to its fullest extent without exceeding it, then there is a risk of receiving a lower amount the following year (McGee, Matthew, & Basham, 2016). If the commander extends the budget

beyond what was given, the commander can justify the need for more funds the following year, but if one does not manage the unit funds well, or is not perceived as using funds well, this reflects poorly on the career of the commander. If the commander saves money, it improves the standing of that commander, but it could also become defective if funds are needed the following year but are not issued in the given budget.

Leadership training is provided to military members from the day they begin the training unit or an academy, and high-level positions in the military are filled through internal promotion (Bangari, 2014). A chief master sergeant of the Air Force is not a corporate leader who applied for and received the top enlisted position (Secretary of the Air Force, 2016). Instead, a chief master sergeant of the Air Force is assigned the position following several years of military service, excellent performance evaluations, promotions, recommendations, and government screening.

Corporations, for the sake of this research, are considered for-profit organizations. In this setting, leaders obtain education and develop skills at their own expense or through on-the-job training (Hussain & Hassan, 2015). In this case, managers are considered successful when overhead is kept to a minimum and profitability increases (McGee, Matthew, & Basham, 2016). There are pay increases but not necessarily in conjunction with increased responsibility. According to Bangari (2014), if an administrative assistant chooses not to promote into management, a cost-of-living increase will be provided, but the position is not in jeopardy. Managers in a corporate setting may be hired from outside the organization, whereas military leadership are promoted from within the military.

A similarity between military and corporate settings is consideration given to personal motivation to become a higher-level manager, regardless of the setting. Specific roles and

responsibilities should be clear. Management practices can be hierarchical, pay scales increase based on the level of rank or position within the organization, and promotion is generally made based on merit. Upper management promotion is generally based on qualifications, experience, and ability (Bangari, 2014).

Methodological literature. Uzonwanne (2015) explained that leadership affects whether or not a company maintains opportunities to provide services and products or redirects money sources to competitors who hold the edge because the company has a diminished sense of entrepreneurial spirit. Additionally, researchers indicated that a sense of empowerment directly affects employees' commitment and effort toward goal achievement. Friedman (2014) explained those who are inspired by their leaders tend to look for opportunities to collaborate and streamline efforts to achieve objectives. Saeed et al. (2014) explained that leadership is a critical element of goal achievement. These authors demonstrated how purposeful leadership directly affects employees' sense of purpose and self-efficacy, reduces stress and anxiety, builds trust, manages conflict, and has a more direct approach to alignment within the organization so that work is focused on diligent effort. They concluded that a focus on positive leadership contributes to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

Transformational leadership was credited with developing leaders who maintain fulfilling relationships with employees. Transformational leadership goes beyond other leadership styles by not only addressing the employees' abilities and experience but also addressing how the employee and leader interact. Transformational leadership was also credited with producing a more collaborative environment, which affects recruitment and retention of employees (Rosen, 2013).

Transformational leaders are recognized for their ability to motivate and work beyond individual achievement and accolades toward whole group achievement, acting in virtue under all circumstances for the benefit of the whole (Moccia, 2012). Several authors included the importance of virtue, a leader who had a strong value system, and how this sense of virtue and morality affects the ability of the individual to be a transformational leader. Moccia indicated that a leader's value system sets the tone for the business as well as the military setting and is embedded in the work setting, which leads to the guiding principles of the organization and determines whether or not employees maintain a sense of commitment not only to the organization but also to the leader. Researchers have demonstrated that leaders who are considered highly virtuous with high moral standards are valued and appreciated and positively affect employee commitment and willingness to collaborate. Researchers have shown that where there is extraordinary effort and extraordinary commitment, regardless of the setting, leaders produce greater successes as defined by effective and efficient practices and models of behavior that are sought by other organizations (Friedman, 2014).

A virtuous leader was described as one who works with humility, trust, honor, ethical behavior, moral and intellectual honesty, dedication, resolve, openness, compassion, and creativity (Bangari, 2014; Friedman, 2014; Moccia, 2012; Moya & Moriano, 2016; Trépanier, Fernet, & Austin, 2012; Veríssimo & Lacerda, 2015). Phillips (1992) observed, "The best, most aggressive and successful organizations were the ones that stressed integrity and trust" (p. 63). Genuine caring inspires trust. Yardley and Neal (2007) explained how shared values and goals lead to a sense of extended family within the workplace rather than just a place to do a job. Moccia (2012) shared research demonstrating empirical evidence of how a virtuous leader's influence positively affects an organization and creates an environment of resiliency. Because of

positivity and resiliency, employee retention was higher with increased dedication to the organization's vision, goals, and objectives, creating a more solid and effective atmosphere. Moccia included General Alexander McCarrell 'Sandy' Patch's insight that the foundation of leadership is character, which includes or is part of being a virtuous leader. Cockerell (2008) and Collins (2005) reiterated this in their advice that virtues provide a moral authority that is lasting and stronger than any other kind of authority or influence and provides legitimacy to that authority. Moreover, Fullan (2011) noted how an organization's leader sets the value system for the entire organization.

Friedman (2014) explained that having goals where employees must extend themselves significantly as well as understanding how their colleagues assist them in achieving these challenging goals helps to unify the workforce within the organization. Because of this shared experience within the work environment, the opportunity to improve, progress, and create additional relevancy for the organization ensures the livelihood of that organization. Friedman's work also demonstrates how the learning organization maintains relevancy and strengthens the life of the organization while including the bonus of employee retention, which was not related to salary but related to the commitment and confidence in the organization, its efforts, and its purpose. When people are confident in their organization, it is evident in their work, efficiency, and productivity. It is also evident in their motivation and increases managers' ability to communicate with subordinates. Saeed et al. (2014) shared this view as well, providing research on how virtuous leadership affects the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.

In the military setting, leadership development is required and expected. As one increases in rank, there is increased responsibility and increased leadership roles. A lack of promotability equals a lack of continued military career. Strengthening one's leadership skills, then, becomes

imperative (Bangari, 2014; Chamberlin, 2010). Saeed et al. (2014) gave counsel regarding the importance of people management and how organizations should train leaders to help employees manage anxiety and conflict while encouraging optimism and confidence, which in turn fosters trust. Integrating these ideas results in keeping organizational goals and objectives in alignment with employee involvement adhering to the principles of transformational leadership. The research demonstrated that a transformational, collaborative environment produces greater success than simple management of resources as demonstrated in the transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles. Du et al.'s (2013) research also demonstrated organizations that incorporate a mix of leadership styles had success.

McClesky (2014) elucidated that modern leadership requires the ability to be flexible as well as adaptive. Weaver (2017) found military members who followed their military careers into public service maintained valuable management skills characterized by adeptness and effectiveness. He credited the development of the skills to the arduous conditions military leaders face while on active duty. The development of these skills increases leadership capacity, providing greater efficacy affecting the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the employees. Stothard, Talbot, Drobnjak, and Fischer (2013) explained the role of leaders in learning organizations from the military institution point of view. Stothard et al. described the hierarchy of the military with its high-level standards of discipline, expectations for obedience, and the conformity required by regulations inherent in the military system. The hierarchical military ideals might not give way to the expectations or principles of a corporate leadership style because of the nature of the military profession of arms; however, Stothard et al. discovered how the elements of the learning culture of the Australian Army Brigade promoted greater agility and responsiveness. They found that a supportive environment that includes transformational

leadership principles encouraged adaptation and change as well as collaborative efforts that made the Australian Army more adaptive. Malinowski (2015) echoed the lessons learned from Stothard et al. (2013) in his research on the Canadian model of military leadership. Malinowski (2015) included the mixture of civilian and military information and explained a leader's characteristics include expertise, cognitive abilities, social skills, the ability to adapt to change, and professional ideology.

Bangari's (2014) research included an empirical study based on the military environment, as well. He included professional expertise as part of the framework for transformational leadership in the military. Bangari's framework involved not only transformational leadership but also transactional leadership factors and laissez-faire leadership practices. Research detailed clearly and definitively the importance of leadership within the context of military practice as the setting where one should always be prepared for the next duty assignment or operation. Bangari expressed the significant difference between military and corporate environments in that, in the military, one could not become lazy or negligent in his or her duty because that could lead to death.

White (2014) explained an additional difference between military and corporate leadership styles. The military, according to White, begins leadership training as soon as the recruit enters the military. Leadership was not viewed as a gift one with which one was born. Instead, it was a skill that can be developed continuously. The practice of that skill was expected. Hussain and Hassan (2015) noted that, within the corporate setting, managers and leaders obtain or develop skills through on-the-job training or seminars, often at personal expense. The authors explained both military and corporate settings shared similarities involving the human factor, and regardless of how leaders obtained their training, leadership styles are similar. Hutchison (2013)

delineated an analysis of military culture regarding leadership. A finding was the inclusion and emphasis of leadership values as an extension of military values. The United States Air Force core values are Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in all We Do, and these values are integrated into all leadership training (Headquarters of the U.S. Air Force, 2015).

Yardley and Neil (2007) researched the culture within the military context and explained how value sets affect the competitive advantage within an organization and detailed how military training at all ranks contributed to leadership development. The research discussed how teams should maintain solid leadership where leaders are humble and willing to be open to the contributions of the employees. Similar to Stothard et al. (2013), Yardley and Neil (2007) provided information regarding the subcultures and rank affect in the military setting. Cockerell (2008) noted the military brings in corporate consultants to train military leadership on best practices so the military organizations maintain relevancy and an edge over national enemies or areas of concern.

Zareen, Razzaq, and Mujtaba (2015) studied the impact of transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles on employee motivation. The researchers found, with the use of multiple techniques, that employees were more committed and felt more valued within organizations and demonstrated the importance of values, particularly a leader's value system and how the system affects success, as defined by the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the organization. This research applies not only to how a virtuous leader affects each of the leadership styles used in the workplace but also how each of these leadership styles was employed in the military and in corporate settings.

Transformational leadership transforms one from self-interest to interest in the common good and inexorably links leaders to employees' needs (Northouse, 2015). Bass (1990)

recognized it as a superior leadership style. Fullan (2001) explained that transformational leadership instructs and changes employees for the better. According to Du et al. (2013), the transformational leadership style is an excellent way to initiate and design socially responsible practices, explaining transformational leadership should build the capabilities of employees. Saeed et al. (2014) explained transformational leadership focuses on long-term outcomes and tends to result in fewer conflicts within the workplace. Moccia (2012) described transformational leaders as those who looks beyond themselves to the benefit of the entire organization while providing direction and motivation to accomplish goals and objectives. Transformational leaders encourage higher order thinking as well as enabling not only the leaders but the employees to move above self-interest toward the benefit of the entire organization (McCleskey, 2014; Weiherl & Masal, 2016).

The four components of transformational leadership include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (García-Guiu, Moya, & Moriano, 2016; McCleskey, 2014). Trépanier et al. (2012) indicated four dimensions of transformational leadership, including charisma, which they found led to an increase in autonomy, motivation, and self-efficacy among employees. Bodenhausen and Curtis (2016) provided six categories to describe transformational leadership: identifying and articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering and accepting goals, expecting high-performance, providing life support, and promoting intellectual stimulation. Fitzgerald and Schutte (2010) identified six characteristics of transformational leadership: identifying and articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, communicating high-performance expectations, providing individualized support, and having high levels of charisma.

Researchers identified various characteristics of transformational leadership. The idealized influence characteristic includes the charismatic role of leaders who mobilize trust and respect from subordinates (Chen et al., 2014). Inspiring motivation and identifying and articulating vision are linked to innovation, which in turn is linked to intellectual stimulation. Coaching and mentoring can be related to individualized consideration and individual life support. When these principles of transformational leadership are used consistently within an organization, the research shows that there is greater autonomy, empowerment, collaboration, and successful goal attainment as well as corporate harmony and effectiveness (Kazmi, Naarananoja, & Wartsila, 2016).

Du et al.'s (2013) research indicated that transformational leadership better demonstrates employees' competence than other leadership styles. Friedman (2014) determined that leaders can motivate employees more effectively with the use of transformational leadership rather than relying on bonuses (as noted in transactional leadership), and by motivating employees, leaders encourage the development of employee pride and more creativity, more engagement, and more energy within the working environment. Additionally, the more motivated the employees are, the greater the retention of those employees (Hussain & Hassan, 2015). Empowerment and autonomy are basic psychological needs that are addressed with the use of transformational leadership principles, including the mediation between transformational leadership and work–family conflict, as noted by Hammond, Cleveland, O'Neill, Stawski, and Tate (2015). Kasemaa's (2015) research indicated that there was a positive correlation with the amount of effort employees contributed to work, satisfaction with leadership, and the perceived effectiveness of job-related efforts when leaders employed a transformational leadership style. Likewise, Lehmann-Willenbrock-enbrock, Meinecke, Rowold, and Kauffeld (2015) demonstrated

transformational leadership sets a culture of solution-focused communication and promotes functional team interaction, which discourages negative behaviors within the team environment. This behavior also encourages a sense of collaboration and commitment to the team cause (Phillips, 1992). Contrarily, some of Du et al.'s (2013) data showed that transformational leadership negatively affected the relationship between corporate and social responsibility and organizational outcomes. Transformational leadership also assumes a reasonable amount of resources are available and that the culture within the organization is receptive to change (Shim, Jo, & Hoover, 2015).

García-Guiu, Moya and Moriano (2016) explained in more detail how transformational leadership looks in the military:

> Military leaders of the most basic level, with a transformational leadership style, promote group potency by developing group identification and cohesion in the squad. In the armed forces, squads are key to undertake missions in the complex in uncertain environments that are so characteristic today. In the military units, group potency was considered as a critical human factor to reach the perforation required and be able to conduct the missions and trusted by society to its Armed Forces. (p. 151)

Additionally, Bangari (2014) discussed a nine-factor leader framework in which military leaders demonstrated various facets of self-development and applied transformational leadership principles to military commands. In an empirical study, Bangari demonstrated how the nine facets applied by leaders developed more stable organizations and led to a greater empowerment of the organizational members. Bangari explained the military environment and how low vigilance costs lives. Hussain and Hassan (2015) described military leaders using

transformational leadership principles to increase military personnel commitment and convey that the common goal was worth the cost of their own lives when high vigilance was not enough.

Because of the nature of the military, a professional of arms, military officers acquire management skills that manage crises and provide the experience for public service beyond the military career (Weaver, 2017). Weaver (2017) concluded that military professionals exemplify the principles of transformational leadership. Hussain and Hassan (2015) found the more successful military leaders used relationship-oriented transformational strategies, as opposed to the average military leaders who were task-oriented. In addition, Bass (1990) noted military leaders, as well as religious ministers who exhibited transformational leadership behavior, possessed higher performance appraisals and recommendations with higher church attendance. He also noted that the United States Air Force Academy included transformational leadership in leadership development courses.

In the corporate setting, Cockerell (2008) advised that leaders provide employees with everything they need to be their very best. Fitzgerald and Schutte (2010) corroborated Cockerell's advisement, stating that managers who believe that relationships within the workplace are meaningful are better able to inspire and encourage others toward a shared sense of purpose. Bodenhausen and Curtis (2016) explained transformational leadership affects trust within the work environment. Transformational leadership requires active participation of both leaders and employees, which develops trust and empowerment within the organization. Eckhaus (2016) showed that transformational leadership had significant, positive financial returns, while Fitzgerald and Schutte (2010) explained that transformational leadership leads to higher levels of self-efficacy among employees. In Bass's (1990) study, transformational leadership was found to breed confidence in the organization. In the educational field, Niessen, Mäder, Stride, and

Jimmieson (2017) found teachers who follow transformational leadership thrive and have fewer incidents of emotional exhaustion. Peters and Waterman (2006) identified corporations, such as Disney, McDonalds, 3M, and Delta, as those that exhibit the principles of autonomy, entrepreneurship, value-driven activities, and relationship building with employees, all of which are elements of transformational leadership.

Transactional leadership provides the foundation for the many leadership models available (Northouse, 2015). Saeed et al. (2014) described transactional leadership as an exchange of task completion and rewards and clarifying expectations for employees. It was defined as a leadership style that concentrates on exchanges between leaders and employees, maintains the status quo, and encourages rewards based on positive performance, much like carrot and stick task orientation with the occasional reward-style of leadership (McCleskey, 2014). This leadership style focuses on the maturity and experience levels of employees as well as the situation in which personnel are placed (National Research Council, U.S., 2014). The National Research Council, U. S. (2014) examined how the situational context requires an understanding of the needs of personnel and how they should be led to accomplish tasks and found existing research lacking regarding size, responsibility, and mission that would be cross-functional between military and corporate settings.

Because transactional leadership provides the basis for many leadership models, Uzonwanne (2014) illuminated how this leadership style tied to organizational goal achievement outcomes by how leaders influence subordinates. Transactional leadership was used when implementing and deriving business benefits from corporate and social responsibility (CSR) practices, as demonstrated in the studies by Du et al. (2014) in which transactional leadership showed positive outcomes while transformational leadership did not. The researchers explained

that data showed a mixture of transformational and transactional leadership provided the best complement of capabilities for the relationship between CSR and organizational outcomes. Data showed that transactional leadership provided the necessary feedback to keep organizations on target for achieving CSR goals and honing specific knowledge and skills.

Zareen et al. (2014) found transactional leadership had a significant effect on employee motivation, unlike those that combined transactional and transformational leadership styles. Transactional leadership works well for new leaders who are focused on data-driven performance efforts (Friedman, 2014). Saeed et al. (2014) found transactional and transformational leadership styles to be complementary, especially when managing conflict. According to McCleskey (2014), the main benefits of using transactional leadership include the efficiency of fast, simple, flexible, adaptable, and cost-beneficial attributes. Furthermore, Northouse (2015) discussed a study from Rowold and Heinitz (2007) in which transformational leadership was found to augment transactional leadership, creating a greater impact on employee performance and profitability.

Friedman (2014) demonstrated monetary rewards worked well when the task was simple; however, when work was complicated, the rewards did not provide the inspiration or motivation for elevated performance. Transactional leadership style's strength lies in task-oriented behavior but does little for relationship building (McCleskey, 2014). It does not call for tailoring of leadership styles to address individual needs (Northouse, 2015). Bass (1990) indicated that transactional leadership was known for disciplinary threats to motivate personnel to perform to at the desired level. Bass believed transactional leadership is self-satisfying because the focus is on the exchange between a promise and reward or a penalty for poor performance. Rewards and penalties are useful if the leader maintains control over those rewards and penalties.

Military leaders use a form of transactional leadership style when completing performance evaluations that lead to a promotion or giving specific, temporary duty assignments to military members based on the performance of duties (National Research Council, U.S., 2014). In order to be part of the United States Air Force Honor Guard, service members are recommended based on their ability to change duty stations, physical requirements, clear speech, lack of fear of weapons, consistent demonstration of impeccable character, discretion, loyalty, and performance (United States Air Force, n.d.). Northouse (2015) explained how politicians, teachers, and managers employed transactional leadership. Politicians promise certain benefits in exchange for constituents' votes. Teachers give grades in exchange for students' work. Managers provide promotions based on employee performance.

Laissez-faire leadership is defined as a style of leadership that is often seen as hands-off, where responsibilities and decision-making authority is delegated to employees (Jain, Mehta, & Malekar, 2014). Saeed et al. (2014) described it as an avoidance leadership style. Leaders who use a laissez-faire leadership style tend to leave it to employees to learn the approach and solve problems within the organization; yet, this leadership style can be immediately effective and seen as one that empowers employees to make decisions (Zareen et al., 2014). Employees may gain a greater understanding of the broader functions of the organization because of the freedom given with the laissez-faire approach (Rosen, 2013). Rosen (2013) counseled laissez-faire leadership style works well with employees who are educated, highly experienced, and highly skilled. When employees maintain a track record of completing tasks well, this can be effectively used, increasing employees' organizational commitment level. Zareen et al. (2015) specified laissez-faire leadership requires leaders provide necessary resources and expectations of goal accomplishment before approving employees to complete the tasks assigned.

Zareen et al. (2014) noted the laissez-faire leadership style may hurt productivity and employee motivation if the employees are not willing to take on the delegated duties. Also, this style of leadership may be seen as a passive leadership or abdication of responsibility, rather than empowering, and can be seen as a less effective way to lead (Wong & Giessner, 2018). Hussain and Hassan (2015) explained that military leadership requires a combination of leadership styles relevant to situations military commanders face. White (2014) identified situational leadership, which incorporates principles from the transactional leadership style, as one that applies to military organizations as well as corporate organizations.

Military leadership training. The perceptions of military veterans of the leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training appears to be shaped by the veterans' experiences in basic military training as well as subsequent leadership training as the service member is promoted through the ranks. As noted in the Navy, Air Force, and Army training manuals, military leadership training begins from the time a new recruit steps off the bus at the military training installation (Naval Education and Training Command, 2016; Naval Service Training Command, 2018; United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017). The artifacts, two interviewees, and one focus group participant indicated military leadership training began when initial basic training began.

In the NSTC M-1533.2C (2018), the Professional Core Competencies of the Navy, leaders are specifically told that trainees and subordinates "will be treated with the common human dignity and respect that they deserve . . . the use of vulgar, obscene, profane, sexually explicit, racially/ethnically-slanted, or otherwise offensive/disrespectful language, either directly or indirectly is prohibited" (p. 3.2). The Navy has entire chapters on Indoctrination within their training manuals in addition to chapters on Command and Leadership Training, the Concept of

Honor, and Principles of Performance Counseling. Midshipmen are indoctrinated on the meaning and use of military customs, courtesy, military expectations, terminology, equipment, information technology, professional conduct, professional training, physical conditioning, and other requirements related to their duties as future leaders of the Navy.

Per the Navy Basic Military Training Core Competencies Manual (BMTCC; 2016), training instructors are tasked with the following mission: "Develop civilians into smartly disciplined, physically fit, basically trained Sailors ad instill in them the highest standard of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Supplying the fleet with top-quality Sailors, ready for follow-on training, is why we are here" (p. 3). In basic training, former civilians learn militarization, seamanship, programs and policies, firefighting and damage control, watchstanding, personal financial and professional development, and other required tasks and procedures. In the Department of the Navy (2016) training manual, understanding one's responsibilities includes understanding the guiding principles of the Navy:

> We develop dedicated Sailors who operate as a team and are mission-focused.
>
> We develop professional Sailors who show initiative and are ready for follow-on training.
>
> We develop physically fit and motivated Sailors who are committed to personal growth.
>
> We develop resilient Sailors who overcome challenges and prevail in the face of adversity.
>
> We develop well-disciplined Sailors and instill in them the highest standards of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. (p. 7)

As part of military training, naval recruits are explicitly told they need to "comprehend the teamwork needed to achieve a common goal" and "comprehend behaviors that undermine teamwork" (Department of the Navy, 2016, p. 14).

Navy veterans of pre- and post-9/11/2001 discussed being mission focused while in service. All veterans discussed the need to be resilient and the need to find a job post military service. All veterans discussed the challenges they faced and how they overcame their challenges, such as going out and getting a job in order to provide for themselves and their families. They indicated the need to go and do rather than wait for something to happen.

The Air Force Handbook 1 (2017) included Air Force history and heritage, such as the early days of aviation, Tuskegee Airman, and the Global War on Terrorism. There are milestones of each war, conflict, police action, et cetera. The Air Force organization from command authority to the functions of each service are discussed. In the Air Force, contingency plans are the norm, and incoming airmen are expected to learn emergency management. There are contingency plans for natural and man-made disasters, as well as personnel sheltering and response procedures. The Air Force handbook has complete sections on the standards of conduct, law of armed conflict, protection of war victims and classes of persons, enforcing law of armed conflict rules, and rules of engagement, as do the Army and Navy. The code of conduct sections include policies and overviews of everyday conduct, ethical values, professional and unprofessional relationships, fraternization, consequences, responsibilities for professional relationships, financial responsibility, and more. The rules and expectations are laid out for ethics and conflicts of interest, prohibitions, and political activities. The handbook explains how standards are enforced and the ramifications of violating expectations. Following training, there are no questions as to what the expectations of all airman, enlisted and officer, are.

Military customs, courtesies, and protocol for special events are included but not limited to military etiquette, courtesies to other services, respect and recognition, drill and ceremony, honor guard, and order of the sword. This is the ritualistic side of military involvement, the pomp

and circumstance. The handbook details Air Force leadership levels with the enlisted force structure, its purpose, levels, tiers, ranks, and roles. Each enlisted level has specific responsibilities, which are explained, particularly those related to special duties. Additionally, professional military education is discussed, providing developmental tools and institutional competencies. In the enlisted force development, professionalism and the profession of arms is taught with additional information regarding the warrior ethos, valor, courage, sacrifice, readiness, and core values, which are integrity, service before self, and excellence in all one does.

The art and science of leadership are discussed, differentiating leadership and management qualities as well as followership and mentoring. As in the Navy handbook, developmental counseling strategies and performance evaluation responsibilities are included in the leadership training. Not only are trainees given personnel management training, but they are also given government property, equipment, accounting, facility, and energy management and conservation training. Installation commander responsibilities are disclosed. Trainees are given detailed information regarding organizational management including managing organizational change, conflict management, problem solving, and continuous process improvement. The Air Force provides a breadth of information about leadership with specifics on communicating effectively, as noted in the section entitled "Principles for Effective Communication" (United States Air Force, 2017):

1. Analyze purpose and audience
2. Research your topic
3. Support your ideas
4. Organize and outline

5. Draft
6. Edit the draft
7. Fight for feedback and get approval. (p. 312)

Army training has similar traits to those of the Navy and the Air Force. The Army's *Blue Book* is the training manual for soldiers and provides "the fundamentals every Soldier needs to know to succeed" (McFarland, 2017, p. 11). Indicated in the Headquarters Department of the Army (2017) training pamphlet, the Army provides explicit expectations regarding sexual harassment response and prevention and continues with information regarding the purpose of serving in the Army and the Army's Motto, "This We'll Defend," with the explanation:

> The Army's motto remains as relevant today as it did at our Nation's founding. The pronoun 'We' reinforces our collective or team effort and 'Defend' remains our Army's main mission. The Army continues this pledge into the future, as we have done since 1775. (p. 18)

Army values are Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage and are remembered through the acronym LDRSHIP (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017).

The Soldier's Creed and Warrior Ethos demonstrate the essence and selfless commitment to the nation, mission, and fellow Soldiers that is required of all Soldiers. Recruits are advised, "As Soldiers, you will always b under some level of physical and mental stress, regardless of your rank or specialty. Living by the Soldier's Creed and Warrior Ethos provides the inner strength and motivation you need to continue performing your duty and executing your mission" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, pp. 36-37). Specific elements of the Soldier's Creed that apply to this study are as follows: "I will always place the mission first; I will never

accept defeat; I will never quit; I am an expert and I am a professional" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 38).

In regard to leadership training, the *Blue Book* explains that the Platoon Sergeant is responsible for guiding "Soldiers through the transition process" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 62). Platoon Sergeants are expected to counsel and mentor to help soldiers develop their skills as soldiers and as team members. They begin helping soldiers make appointments, provide guidance on assignments, training or family issues, and keep providing guidance throughout AIT training. The advisement is very different from the activities Platoon Sergeants demonstrated as reported by the Pre-9/11/2001 veteran participants who indicated their supervisors gave them their orders and, maybe, they were told "Good luck" as they walked out the door to board a plane to go home (P5, 2019).

The ranks and responsibilities are provided for recruits so that they can learn the organization of the enisted and officer force as well as the responsibility levels of each. The Soldier's *Blue Book* also explains professional and unprofessional relationships, fraternization, improper relationships, sexual harassment, how to handle sexual harassment, sex rules, and reporting procedures (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017). The Army Ethic is explicit in the explanation that it "includes the moral principles that guide our decisions and actions as we fulfill our purpose to support and defend the Consitution and our way of life" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 170). Army servicemembers are expected to be competent professionals, committed professionals who will "do what is right legally and morally" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 172).

Recruits are given information about what they should expect from their training unit as well as infoamtion on warrior tasks, battle drills, personal appearance and uniforms, rank,

customs and courtesies, bugle calls, drill and ceremonies, physical readiness, health and safety, discipline, and the Army Ethic. The Army also provides information on what recruits should expect from their first duty station, how they should prepare for their move, and where they will serve. Specific information is provided in for leave and earnings, managing personal finances, Tri-Service Health Care (TRICARE), group life insurance, dental, army emergency relief, and more. Army servicemembers are provided resources they can refer to as they go on in their careers as well as information about where to go when they have questions. There is a heavy reliance on the heritage of all the serices and the contributions that make continuation of traditions viable as noted in the Headquarters Department of the Army (2017) handbook:

> We are an Army made up of individuals, and the strength of each one of us contributes to the strenth of the whole. We gain strength from training, and the basis for our training stems from a past deeply rooted in determination and adaptability. (p. 9).

"Through their perseverance and sense of duty these dedicated troops practiced to the highest standards. . . . Training to standard and gaining the inner strength to adapt and overcome adversity became the theme for our Army's training model" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 10). All services discuss facing and overcoming adversity. It is indoctrinated from the first training day of all recruits, whether officers or enlisted.

The Army as a profession and what it means to be a soldier is explained along with the explanation of what soldiers are not. For example, "The Army is an honored profession, founded on a bedrock of Trust—trust between Soldiers and Army Civilians; trust between Soldiers, their Families and the Army; and trust between the Army and the American people. By our solemn oath, we are morally commtted to support and defend the Consitution" (Headquarters Department of the Army, 2017, p. 23).

The literature and artifacts that were reviewed for this study indicated transformational leaders set the tone for the organization by inspiring, modeling, organizing, and demonstrating effective and efficient productivity to achieve the objectives that ultimately achieve the overall vision of the organization. The transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles are prevalent within the civilian environment, while transactional leadership seems to be appropriate at times within the military setting. The laissez-faire leadership style may be appropriate for some civilian settings, but the literature indicates it is inappropriate for the military setting. In the military setting, basic military and leadership training manuals published within the last five years include the same transformational principles as articles for civilian leadership. It appears leaders can assist exiting military members' transition to the civilian sector through the application of transformational principles to provide an increased sense of purpose, understanding of one's position in the organization within and out of the military, and the knowledge that there is support from their leaders as separated members transition. Military personnel appear to have the background training in transformational leadership.

Review of Methodological Issues

The research reviewed for this study includes information regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The researchers used quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to determine the validity of hypotheses and results (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bangari, 2014; Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Kasemaa, 2015; Saeed et al.; 2014; Shim et al., 2015; Stothard et al., 2013). Each method possesses strengths, limitations, and opportunities for further study. Researchers used surveys and observations to compile data. Qualitative data were obtained through self-reporting with surveys and email questionnaires during team meetings to observe team dynamics. Other methods used included experimental designs, single-

informant technique, cross-sectional studies, single-random sampling, with various statistical methods used to compile and display data. Researchers used various statistical methods for quantitative results.

There were several limitations noted within the research for this case study, such as cultural specificity, validity, personal bias variables, validity concerns with single method approach, social desirability, the minimum sample size was too small, and site locations. Little empirical evidence was found to measure and develop integrity and virtuosity in leaders. Researchers centered on self-reporting, which created problems with common measure bias. Researchers could not control the variables. Generalizations and replications had limits due to a single country or single industry study, social reliability, and responses and cross-sectional limits generalization. Researchers noted a need to test the validity of models and comparative context as well as limitations with time constraints, resource constraints, and cultural limits. Sample size was a significant issue noted by several researchers. Researchers noted unknown factors influencing leadership perception. Questionnaires posted online meant body language could not be observed. Shim et al. (2015) conducted longitudinal studies while other researchers recommended them for future study. The Multifaceted Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was criticized for limiting factors, cultural factors, and replication concerns (Antonakis & House, 2014; Kasemaa, 2015; Saeed et al.; 2014; Shim et al., 2015).

Researchers recommended further study regarding the cross-sectional relationships over time where further longitudinal designs could be used to measure variables with an examination of generalization to measure transactional leadership components and how they affect transformational leadership. Researchers also need to address personality factors and characteristics of organizational development within public and private sectors, as well as

various manufacturing and industry sectors. Another option for further study would be to extend the research to include senior managers, supervisors, team leaders, department heads, and other high-level leadership personnel to verify and validate the findings. McCleskey (2014) recommended further study between development and efficacy while Stothard et al. (2013) encouraged further study regarding what and how learning experiences affect leadership styles, especially when a hierarchical ranking system is in place. Bangari (2014) recommended using an itemized survey instrument to provide quantitative research as well as providing a comparison study that addresses cultural factors and how those affect previous study results. In a study regarding military settings, Hutchison (2013) recommended distinguishing the hierarchy from social influence skills and how graphic portrayals of leadership are perceived in military and civilian settings. The researcher encouraged the emphasis of intercoder reliability and replicability related to the arguments within the research framework.

Bodenhausen and Curtis (2016) encouraged opportunities for more detailed and complex studies to investigate millennial generational preferences within the hospitality business to confirm or refute their findings recommending an investigation with older personnel within the hospitality workforce. Ghasabeh, Soosay, and Reaiche (2015) recommended further study to show how transformational leaders are effective within global markets. Additionally, Eckaus (2016) and Trépanier et al. (2012) recommended effective management styles as they relate to financial performance. Fitzgerald and Schutte (2010) suggested a 360° measure to eliminate concern and assess how transformational leadership is effective in increasing organizational performance with a focus on how emotional intelligence affects leadership programs, though their study may have limitations in replicability because it was based on a single Australian organization.

Trépanier et al. (2012) recommended using information gleaned from people other than managers. These authors recommended experimental or longitudinal designs while paying attention to variables such as job design and stress factors that may influence leadership perceptions. Another recommendation was focusing on multiple informants' views so that innovation performance could be measured and replicated in other industries and countries in regard to corporate entrepreneurship and linking the variable of entrepreneurship with CEO transformational leadership in various institutional settings and different cultural settings.

Urban and Govender (2017) recommended a longitudinal study to find causal inferences. They also recommended doing the same study with different contacts to see what influences an entrepreneurial mindset as well as entrepreneurial orientation, both of which they claimed are affected by transformational leadership principles practiced within the workplace, which in turn affects innovation within that workplace. Hammond et al. (2015) recommended expanding the current model to include other variables with additional resources. Other recommendations included resources should build on a more dynamic approach where emotions are reviewed and how work-family management influences leaders. They also recommended a longitudinal study for conclusive results, increasing reliability and validity of the study. The strength of their study included a proximal separation with varied response format.

Shim et al. (2015) studied leader-member exchange (LMX) theory and recommended longitudinal research designs to consider whether or not there was a link between leadership in culture or between culture and commitment. Authors of this particular study reviewed the South Korean police force, which had limitations with generalizability to other industries as well as cultural limitations. They noted limitations between the culture within the police department, not necessarily related to department size, but to the specific mission of each subsection within the

department. There may be additional considerations when studying other hierarchical organizations with diverse missions. Kasemaa (2015) recommended a second subscale to determine the further development of intellectual stimulation because there appeared to be an unintended reliability issue with the results. There was concern the results were affected by mandatory service rather than a volunteer service within the military. Mandatory service affected the perceptions of those within the specific category, as they did not see themselves as part of the long-term vision or mission of the organization.

One of the biggest considerations regarding the limitations of these studies was self-report, which led to common method bias (CMB; Trépanier et al., 2012) issues and the use of the single measuring system. García-Guiu et al. (2016) recommended a multilevel theoretical model to improve the phenomenon within the organization, broadening the levels of analysis of the psychosocial phenomenon while using a longitudinal study to analyze the role of leadership in the cohesion and identification within the group. They also recommended considering other factors related to transformational leadership that influence mediator variables. Garcia-Guiu et al. recommended setting up a framework that would analyze operational social identification and organizational identification constructs.

Weiherl and Masal (2016) determined further study was needed in both public and semipublic sectors to review the influence of transformational leadership on types of change other than regarding the mission of the organization. Weiherl and Masal found possible common methods variants bias. Therefore, the authors provided a recommendation to collect data from followers and leaders to eliminate variants while providing insights into how transformational leadership and commitment to the mission interrelate and foster followers' commitment to mission changes.

Lehmann-Willenbrock et al. (2015) focused research on substantiating hierarchical leader-follower settings. The researchers found links between leader communication and the emergence of transformational leadership, which provides an opportunity to explore how different industries generalize the findings not only between different organizational settings but also with different gender compositions and across cultures. Hemsworth, Muterera, and Baregheh (2013) recommended further research on individual contributions of transformational leadership behavior (TLB) dimensions and the impact on key outcome variables that could lead to generalizing findings with cultural implications. Studies are needed to determine if a difference exists between the military and corporate settings.

Zareen et al. (2014) recommended testing the impact of specific leadership development training on how different leadership styles are applied to developing and emerging economies. Wong and Giessner (2018) found empowerment the expectation, and there are endogenous variables demonstrating potential multicollinearity issues; therefore, multisource data collection methods were used to limit CMB. Recommendations include investigating how implicit leadership theories (ILTs) relate to a laissez-faire leadership style considered by followers and used to conceptualize leader behaviors in the realms of transformational and transactional leadership. Future recommendations included studies regarding adaptability and clarity of expression affecting how healthcare employees adjust expectations of leaders and the ability to empower employees.

Experimental design was mentioned to explore the reciprocal effects of followers and leaders concerning empowerment expectations and behavior adjustments respectively. Wong and Giessner discussed encouraging time intervals within the study to causality in the leader-follower relationship. Day et al. (2014) focused on further research on how data were collected, whether

or not they were process oriented with the relevant outcome variables, personal trajectories, 360° feedback, and other methods that broaden the developmental focus, thus minimizing the cross-cultural leadership conflict limiting how political perspectives influence the development of effective leaders.

Niessen et al. (2017) recommended assessing at three measurement points with the mediator and outcome results at different times, while Antonakis and House (2014) recommended testing the model with objective outcomes on multiple points in time or using an experimental design that drew stronger causal inferences. Large multicultural samples following work performance and satisfaction account for individual differences for variants in leader behaviors. Future research was recommended to determine whether or not intelligence is linear or curvilinear. The authors encouraged researchers to retest the measurements of the organization intelligence links to the full range leadership model. In this study, the MLQ was explained, and the authors recommended a revamping of the MLQ so full range constructs are precise and objective. Antonakis and House (2014) argued for using instrumental variables and combination methods to increase reliability and validity.

Previous research included quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to determine the validity of hypotheses and results for the application of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Considerations needed to be made for cultural specificity, validity, personal bias variables, validity concerns with single method approaches, social desirability, minimum sample sizes, and site locations. Researchers deemed longitudinal studies appropriate, though a longitudinal study requires more time and resources than allowed for this case study. With that in mind, the various methods recommended by previous researchers possess strengths, limitations, and opportunities for further study. The researchers' studies reviewed for this case

study used surveys and observations to compile data. Additional methods that were used included experimental designs, single-informant technique, cross-sectional studies, single-random sampling, while various statistical methods were used to organize and analyze data. Researchers used the MLQ for quantitative results.

Synthesis of Research Findings

The research findings included in this case study demonstrated the strength of transformational leaders as they work alongside their followers. The researchers' information shows how transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles are useful in some settings but appear to not provide the leadership exiting military members need as they transition into the civilian sector. Friedman (2014) explained the pluralistic approach to leadership increases effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, Saeed et al. (2014) explained five dimensions—integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating, and avoiding—were shown to affect the organizational climate and structure. Stothard et al. (2013) found rank had a significant impact on the unit as a mediating factor to questioning, developing agency, and autonomous empowerment. Bangari (2014) cautioned to move forward with further research recognizing cultural factors that influence the study and influence results of the study. Hutchison's (2013) findings were generalizable to military and nonmilitary settings. The recommendations included the need for a conversation about ethics and leadership with comparison and analysis of the gaps between leadership theory and practice in civilian settings. Hussain and Hassan (2015) explained no military or businesses fail when everyone works in harmony together and performs at 100% levels. The authors stated the key to effective leadership activities relates to stated values that go beyond individual values and resonates through the entire working environment and where risk is accepted and required for transformation.

Shim et al. (2015) explained that full mediation pathways linking transformational leadership to commitment with group culture were not consistent with previous research; therefore, the commitment link was better manifested in collectivist culture rather than individualistic cultures. The authors considered the work, group, and agency variants, duty type, and departmental size within the constructs of a paramilitary organization within a South Korean police department. National cultural issues affected the results, though departmental size did not influence the constructs. A highlight of the research demonstrated the value norms of loyalty and group cohesiveness that was better supported in the context of the South Korean police.

Kasemaa (2016) researched the Estonian military regarding how the transformational leadership research instrument (TLS) was used with reliable and valid results as an alternative tool to the MLQ to measure transformational leadership. Additional sampling was needed, but because this method was short and easy to administer, reliability and validity were increased. Weiherl and Masal (2016) believed transformational leaders foster and demonstrate a significant link between transformational leaders and team member behaviors with greater influence on the meeting process and team interaction patterns. Phillips (1992) stated, “The best, most aggressive, and successful organizations are the ones that stressed integrity and trust” (p. 63).

Wong and Giessner (2018) explained that leadership style had a greater effect on the usefulness of ILTs in the organizational context. Conceptualizing the full range leadership model demonstrated potential development implications associated with cross-cultural leadership with conflict over competencies that should be developed, including political perspectives that influence what an effective leader should be. The authors focused on developing leaders and leadership programs. Niessen et al. (2017) focused on the interactive effects between

transformational leadership and emotional exhaustion at different high schools to protect changes in thriving, task mastery, and productivity, which would be less affected by CMB.

Critique of Previous Research

Consideration was given to narratives of participants' experiences within different industries, missions, and focal efforts in different countries and fields as they regard the principles of transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The various researchers used quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. However, researchers did not perform longitudinal studies to determine the long-term effects of the various leadership styles. The information gathered from these various sources indicates that each leadership style was used in various settings with similar findings. Furthermore, studies required self-reporting, which affected CMB, generalization, and replication problems along with a focus on a single industry/country. Future studies, based on the various researchers' recommendations, should include longitudinal studies, multiple sources of participants at multiple levels, and additional studies if cross-sectional studies are used.

As the research applies to the purpose of this study, a transformational leader is one who sets the values of the organization and encourages and empowers employers and employees through the development of relationships and good communication (Du et al., 2013; Friedman, 2014; Saeed et al., 2014). In so doing, there was less employee turnover, increased motivation and job satisfaction, acquisition of new skills, and resiliency in the workforce (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2015; Niessen et al., 2017). Additionally, a transformational leader provides employees with what they need (e.g., training, resources) to be successful when fulfilling goals and objectives and does so in a manner that allows employees to accomplish tasks with dignity (Moccia, 2012).

How transformational leadership eases the military transition into the civilian setting is the missing dimension of the prior research. Morin (2011) indicated exiting military members who adjusted better to their transition understood their roles and responsibilities. Additional predictors to how well someone would transition included the service member's age at the time of discharge, how long the member served, and personal religiosity. Previous research does not show how tranformational leadership specifically assists with transition or what leadership principles make that transition easier to bear.

Summary

Chapter 2 reviewed literature related to addressing a problem faced by military veterans. They are provided leadership training upon entry into service and spend an average of 15 years in the military. During that time, they receive additional leadership training (Landon, 2017). However, instead of obtaining leadership positions following discharge, many veterans are placed in entry level positions, adding to an inherently difficult situation (Blackburn, 2016; Cathcart, 2017; DeSilver, 2013a; Rand Corporation, 2018). The conceptual framework for the study focuses on previous research, which demonstrated the benefits of transformational, transactional, and laissez-fair principles.

Review of the research literature indicated there was versatility between the leadership styles in both military and corporate settings. Retention of employees and military members was based on the manager-employee relationship (Saeed et al., 2014). Employees who have a workplace culture built on virtue was resilient and capable of withstanding changes (Rosen, 2013). Additionally, leaders who practice transformational leadership principles are recognized as virtuous, inspiring, humble, compassionate, and trustworthy (Cockerell, 2008; Collins, 2005). They motivate their employees and aid personnel in seeing not only the vision and mission of the

organization but also their contributions as valuable and necessary for the achievement of that vision and mission. Yardley and Neal (2007) found that effective leadership was directly affected by enduring values that applied across environments. Following a synthesis of the research findings and critiqueing previous literature, a gap in the literature was found in the leadership training veterans received in the service, how leadership affected their tranisiton from military to civilian life, and how their training pertained to work in the civilian sector. A case study was needed to obtain information about the discrepancy between what military members can do, what they were trained to do, and how the training can be applied in the civilian workforce so veterans' transitions into the workforce are less challenging.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The case study used transformational leadership principles as the lens to review the experiences of exiting service members, their perspectives on their transition to the civilian sector, and how they believe military training applies to civilian employment in order to find ways to ease the challenges exiting service members face as they adjust and reintegrate into civilian society. To address the perceptions of leadership training, skills, and experience of exiting military members, a qualitative research case study with purposive sampling and a constructivist approach was used to acquire military veterans' perspectives and meanings regarding the study topic (Yin, 2018).

Participants took part in semistructured interviews and a focus group with open-ended questions regarding perceptions of transitioning from a military setting to a corporate setting and how leadership practices and transition training within the military prepare exiting service members for the transition into corporate settings. Also, military veterans were asked to share thoughts on the transferability of military skills through the lens of transformational leadership. This information may improve the transition procedures meant to prepare service members for a civilian lifestyle (Biddle, 2016; Castro & Kintzle, 2014; Zogas, 2017).

Previous research involving the military transition to the civilian sector included methodologies of qualitative designs, such as case studies, narratives, and the interpretation of data, while quantitative research focuses on using statistical methods and procedures to test objective theories in which variables are specifically used to measure the accuracy of the research theory (Creswell, 2013). A case study design was used in this research to explore participants' perceptions of military leadership training, the effect leaders have on the transition

of exiting service members from military to corporate settings, and how participants applied their military leadership training in a civilian setting. Data from semistructured interviews with open-ended questions, a focus group, and artifacts were collected with the expectation that additional information would be gained concerning the nuances of the participants' experiences within various settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Similar open-ended questions were used in the interviews and focus group in order to guide the conversation and encourage authentic responses. Relevant materials, such as training manuals, professional development handouts, and documents were used to corroborate the information provided by the participants from the interviews and focus group.

Research Questions

The following questions were used as a guide:

1. What are the military veterans' perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training?
2. How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting post-military service?

Purpose and Design of the Study

A constructivist approach, one in which observation and interviews are used to acquire participants' perspectives and meaning regarding a study topic, was used (Yin, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative case study was to collect data on military veterans' perceptions of leadership training while serving in the military, how leadership training assisted with the transition out of the military, and how leadership skills transferred into the civilian sector. Transformational leadership principles are critical to goal achievement, affecting a follower's sense of purpose and self-efficacy, reducing stress and anxiety, building trust, managing conflict,

and approaching alignment with organizations (Saeed et al., 2014). Transitioning service members experience changes in jobs, lifestyle, home, relationships, and other areas of their lives, indicating a need for transformational leadership support in order to reintegrate into civilian life successfully with minimal disruption (Derefinko et al., 2018; Zogas, 2017). In this case study, former service members provided insight into the transition experienced when reintegrating into civilian life.

The case study consisted of semistructured interviews with 10 individuals and a focus group with eight participants who were all military veterans, purposively sampled based on the level of military leadership attained, time in service, and leadership positions held within the civilian setting (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Artifacts were collected to assist with data triangulation. The artifacts used in this study were training manuals from the United States Army, United States Navy, and United States Air Force. The artifacts indicated expectations and principles taught to military service members at various levels of training and leadership responsibility. Additionally, each artifact was perused for reinforcements or contradictions of the participants' statements as well as providing additional information that was not otherwise available or elucidated by interviews or focus group data (Given, 2008; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The method used to address the perception of leadership training, skills, and experience of exiting military members was a qualitative research case study with volunteers selected from a veterans' organization located in California. A constructivist approach was used to acquire the participants' perspectives and meanings regarding the study topic (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) explained the constructivist approach emphasizes the lived experience of the participants; thus, the participants construct the themes, meanings, and knowledge that describe the lived

experience. Participants included 10 military veterans from all services who transitioned into the private sector but were working or retired from corporate organizations. Most veteran participants achieved a rank of Non-Commissioned Officer or higher (E-5 to O-9) with a minimum of five years of experience to include leadership training beyond basic military training, entry level officer candidate school (OCS), reserve officer training corps (ROTC), or a service academy.

The method to acquire information from exiting military members was a case study with purposive sampling. The total number of participants for the interviews and focus group included 18 military veterans from all services who transitioned into the private sector but were working or retired from nonmilitary or non-paramilitary organizations. Because additional target participants could not be found, three participants who held the rank of E-4 and served between 2–4 years were accepted as volunteers. The participants provided perspectives regarding preparedness and ease with which they transitioned from military service to the civilian sector, how leadership and training affected their transition, and how the training applied within the civilian workplace.

A focus group consisting of eight veteran participants provided additional information about their perceptions of military leadership as well as direct experience with the military–civilian transition (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). The nature of the focus group was that data gleaned from the group was socially constructed. It was imperative participants were purposively sampled to ensure they did not know one another before the focus group meeting; however, the group of veterans was more comfortable with familiarity with one another. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated it is preferable for focus groups to not know one another, but, because of the limited availability of volunteers, the willing participants knew one

another. Focus groups provide a constructivist perception relying on the interaction between participants in which views are shared, participants hear the views of others, and participants may hone views of the subject (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Challenges to the perceptions discussed and opportunities to verify data gained from individual interviews were provided.

A qualitative, constructivist approach was used to develop this research case study (Yin, 2018). A qualitative study was appropriate because the researcher obtained in-depth information from the perspectives of participants as well as narratives regarding the experience (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Potential implications of the transition experiences across military and corporate settings in this study required collecting qualitative data, which was useful in providing platforms for further study.

The researcher conducted semistructured interviews with 10 military veteran participants. The interviews were semistructured in order for the researcher to attempt a rapport with each participant with a set of "how" and "why" questions that required thorough answers. At the same time, the researcher had the flexibility to follow the respondents' interests or concerns as well as delve into a clearer understanding of the respondents' perceptions of personal experiences (Yin, 2018). The researcher obtained depth and understanding of the nuances of transitioning from one setting to the other.

The researcher used specific questions that were verified by leadership personnel familiar with corporate and military leadership settings and styles to ensure the questions asked provided an in-depth understanding of the transition. Participants were asked to recall experiences with the military to civilian transition. Participants were asked to review personal experiences through the lens of leadership and to express what they noted about leadership that provided better transition

results for themselves. This assisted in building the narrative of the overall transition experience and the effect of various leadership styles.

Research Population and Sampling Method

The research population was composed of voluntary participants who were military veterans. Participants were military veterans from all services who transitioned into the private sector but were working or retired from nonmilitary or nonparamilitary organizations. Members of a local veterans' organization were asked to voluntarily participate in the study. Volunteer participants were obtained through connections with the DAV and the American Legion. Most veteran participant achieved a rank of Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) or higher (E-5 to O-9) with a minimum of five years of experience to include leadership training beyond basic military training and entry-level OCS, ROTC, or service academy. There were three volunteer participants with less rank and time in service, though their input provided similar insight and points for further discussion. All of the personnel had experience in both military and civilian leadership roles, in which case the participants were asked to share both.

The sampling method was purposive based on participants' volunteering from a local veterans' organization in which participants' semistructured interviews were conducted as guided conversations (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Open-ended questions were used, making it possible to add follow-up questions for participants to clarify experiences. A transcription of the participant's interview was provided for each participant to review for member checking and conducted and aimed at verifying that the transcription of the first interview represented the meaning and intentions of each participant (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Participants were assigned numbers that corresponded with a list of names. The list was kept confidential and separate from the transcriptions (Derefinko et al., 2018). A meeting place

was provided to conduct the interviews and focus group, but participants preferred to sit in the open, in sight of their fellow veterans. The reason for this was unclear, as the veterans avoided the question. The researcher did not press the issue, choosing instead to respect the participants' preferences.

The semistructured, face-to-face interviews did not last more than one hour each and was followed by a member check. The focus group was asked similar questions. The researcher moderated the interviews and focus group discussion. The participants were encouraged to share opinions with supporting experiential data. Upon interview transcription verification, transcripts were analyzed. Saldaña (2016) described the qualitative coding methods in vivo and attribute as useful when determining leadership themes, similarities, and experiences; therefore, they were used in order to capture the participants' perceptions accurately.

Instrumentation

Semistructured interviews with 10 military veterans were conducted. Military veterans, rather than active duty personnel, were asked to participate in the to ascertain the meaning and significance of transition experiences. Veterans were more convenient to interview because permission from a local veterans' organization was obtained. Interviews and the focus group discussion were recorded upon written consent of the participants, then transcribed for coding and analysis.

A focus group discussion was conducted. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) recommended that the participants not know one another before the focus group meeting so answers are authentic. However, voluntary participants were not receptive to that arrangement. Rather, they preferred to participate in the focus group with their fellow organization members. The focus group participants were asked similar questions as those used in the individual interviews in order to

note themes between the responses from the interviewees and focus group participants. Any information provided that was contrary to what was attained through the interviews was noted and compared to information gleaned from artifacts.

Artifacts were used in order to provide a broad scope of the research topic (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). In this study, artifacts provided tangible evidence of leadership in military settings as well as training, practices, and application expectations. Military training manuals and transition materials were analyzed, coded, and compared with the data collected from the interviews and focus group, helping discern the congruency of the data with data matching, illuminating rival data, and showing how exiting service members were trained for and experienced the transition to postmilitary life. Additionally, the three primary source artifacts were used to verify the training, practices, and application expectations. Each of the armed forces generate training manuals for use in basic military training, leadership training, and other troop development training (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Naval Education and Training Command, 2016; United States Air Force, 2017; United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2017). Documents used as artifacts provided the material for content analysis to analyze information. Then, the information was coded, analyzed, and compared to interview and focus group information to detect themes, similarities, and differences.

Demographic information was requested, including the rank, job title, military experience, years of service, years within the corporate environment, level of management, years of leadership experience, roles, and duty assignments. Other identifying information was not collected. As Creswell (2013) recommended, interview participation was entirely voluntary and unpaid. Informed consent was obtained from all participants in the study, no deception was used, and the privacy and confidentiality of identifying information was maintained (Yin, 2018). No

questions or discussion caused discomfort, and participants were welcome to excuse themselves with no penalty. None did so. Each participant was given the opportunity to review the transcript of the interview, providing additions, corrections, and clarifications so the context of the information provided represented each participant's intended meaning.

Data Collection

Individual, semistructured interviews, in which participants were informed of the purpose of the study and asked to sign a consent form voluntarily, were used. The participants provided insight on leadership experience related to transitioning out of the military. It was imperative that the transition from a military to a civilian setting was the focus, so as not to open sensitive issues causing harm or disruption to the well-being of the participants (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Each interview was recorded with the participants' informed consent. Confidentiality was maintained by having each recording secured on an iPad with a passcode, as recommended by Creswell (2018). As a form of member checking and internal validation, each participant was given the opportunity to verify their transcripts via secure email and hard copies to ensure that his meaning had been received correctly as well as providing each participant the opportunity to provide additions, corrections, or clarifications (Yin, 2018). Only four participants chose to validate their transcriptions. Recordings and transcriptions were deleted when they were no longer required. The transcription information and artifacts were coded and analyzed to note themes, similarities, and conflicting information so inferences could be made.

The research population included military veteran volunteers, accessed through members of a local veterans' set up through the organization commander. All but three participants had attained a military rank of E-5 or above, a minimum five years in service, and worked (or working) in a mid-level management position or higher in the civilian setting. The three were

willing participants, attained the rank of E4 and served 2-4 years in the Army (2) and Navy (1). The following information was collected: demographics, rank/job title, military experience, years of service, level of management, and roles.

Identification of Attributes

For the purpose of this study, transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership style attributes are specifically described. Transformational leaders in the military demonstrate a genuine concern for their followers by developing the followers' job skills, leadership skills, and personal goal achievement. Military transformational leaders mentor their followers to help each follower become the best person and military service member he or she can be by modeling desired behavior and exemplifying the stated values of the military branch for which the leaders and followers serve. Transactional leadership is different from transformational leadership in that the person in charge manages situations based on meeting specific objectives. Mentorship is not part of the model as the supervisor gives an order, and the subordinate follows that order. Laissez-faire leadership is considered a "hands-off" approach where subordinates are left to their own devices to figure out what needs to be done in order to meet objectives and the overall vision and mission of the organization. In this study, it is understood that military members will not have used the laissez-faire leadership style because doing so is likely to cost lives. Instead, transformational leadership is the standard by which the military transition to civilian life is reviewed, specifically in how transformational military leaders provided the mentorship and training needed prior to the services members leaving the military and how exited service members applied their military leadership training in the civilian sector.

Data Analysis Procedures

Following the initial interview, data were transcribed and analyzed. An opportunity to review the transcriptions was provided as member checking, and four participants reviewed their information and gave further information to clarify their statements. Upon review, the information was submitted to the researcher as complete and accurate. Transcriptions of the interviews, focus group, and artifacts were coded and separated by categories: military leadership training, transition to the civilian setting, application of leadership in the civilian setting, perceptions of Post-9/11/2001 veterans, and advice from Pre-9/11/2001 veterans to post-9/11/2001 veterans. Comments and narratives on leadership style were noted. Transcribed and collected data were color coded based on themes and synthesized into a narrative. Multiple perspectives, contrary findings, and composite profiles were reported and developed to show the general make-up of participants and the responses (Creswell, 2013).

As Yin (2018) recommended, the use of multiple sources as evidence maintains construct validity. Pattern matching, explanation building, and addressing contrary findings secure internal validity. Maintaining a chain of evidence from multiple sources and participants contributed to the overall reliability of the study. Recorded data were maintained with password security and deleted when all transcription was complete and no longer needed for the study.

In vivo coding and attribute coding were used to analyze the data. In vivo coding, also known as literal or verbatim coding, uses words and phrases specifically stated by participants so that the unique vocabulary provided insight on the topic discussed during interviews and the focus group. Attribute coding includes demographic information, time frame, the contexts for analysis, and the data format from which the information was gained. Saldaña (2016) recommended these styles for new researchers and qualitative studies involving interviews. He

also recommended coding minute details that may appear insignificant because organizational, hierarchical, or chronological information can flow and indicate correlations that may not be noted otherwise. Attribute coding was created from the principles of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and was applied to the analysis of the in vivo coding to create categories and subcategories from the common words and phrases stated by the participants.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design

The expected limitations of the study included the extended time needed to conduct semistructured interviews and the focus group activity. The interviews and focus group were 20–60 minutes each. Lengthy interviews were not held; therefore, no reflexivity in which a relationship between interviewer and interviewee was built resulting in subtle influence. The shorter interviews did not seem to affect the thorough explanations of the lived experiences (Saldaña, 2016). It was imperative the interview stayed on task while allowing the opportunity for participants to experience a meaningful exchange vital to the study. Participants did not require additional time to explain the context of experiences; therefore, a balance between timeliness and allowing time for expression for meaning and clarification was maintained (Moustakas, 1994).

Limitations included the time between the experience and the interview in that time may have distorted the memory; however, additional experiences may have clarified the participants' transition experiences. Also, observations may have been misinterpreted or misconstrued. There may be biases based on the interaction between the interviewer, interviewee, and focus group participants. Though there was flexibility in the semistructured interviews, the interviewer did

not experience difficulty keeping the respondents focused on the needs of the study. Data were not difficult to analyze due to minimal tangential information provided.

The delimitations the researcher placed on the study included using veterans' organizations from which to obtain volunteer participants for the study and specific rank and time in service for participation. Participants were asked to maintain focus on the transition they experienced as they left military service (Creswell, 2013). Interviewee and focus group participants were made aware of time restraints so that the discussion remained on the research topic, thus providing an additional delimitation. Using neutral phrases not to bias the participants and a general working definition of the framework terms narrowed the scope of the interviews and focus group as well as distinguishing the lens through which the participants were asked to view the transition experience.

The researcher is also a veteran, which could have caused personal bias. This limitation required the researcher to pay particular attention to what and how questions were asked, ensuring nonbiased, neutral verbiage was used, and rival explanations, convergent evidence, and correct inferences were analyzed with audit trails of documentation (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). Also, there was an assumption that military veteran participants may connect easily with the researcher; therefore, they were more likely to share transition experiences. The researcher used the veteran participants for member checking to validate the interview interpretations, actively seeking variations with perceptions and focus on the saturation of similar data.

Because training manuals and other leadership development documents were not produced for research, the information was not in a form that was readily useful or understandable to the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, using primary source

documents for current armed forces training helped eliminate this limitation. These training manuals were easily accessible and were not made for research but demonstrated the training values of the armed forces. Data were less biased than the data obtained from the participants in which the artifacts provided an objective indicator to compare interview and focus group data.

Validation

In order to provide validation for the instruments used in a study, one must have credibility and dependability with those instruments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Researchers use credibility and dependability to check the data received from participants with the reality of what additional research illustrated. Credibility and dependability rely on the consistency of the information obtained.

Credibility. Due to the nature of self-reporting, the limitations to the accuracy of participants' recollections due to time, desire to appear more favorable, or other challenges were considered (Creswell, 2013). To alleviate these limitations, member checking and comparative data were collected, such as asking the participants to consider a specific timeframe while serving on active duty or within the corporate setting. Considerations for the specific job, job title, and leadership level were made to provide consistency, and thus credibility.

Dependability. Dependability relied on the facilitation of the interviewer and the consistency of the participants' answers; therefore, experts in the field reviewed the questions before they were used to ensure they measured the intention appropriately. Multiple interview questions were reworded to verify the accuracy and credibility of the responses, securing the dependability of the information provided by the participants (Creswell, 2013). Dependability also relied on the researcher's ability to follow the document trails of primary sources that contained insights and information relevant to the research and yielded authentic, accurate

information from which to compare data. Additionally, the researcher needed to clearly note similarities and differences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Expected Findings

It was expected the findings would show congruency between transition experiences military veterans face. Military veterans were likely to reiterate principles learned from military training, as the training did not disappear when the service members are discharged (Blackburn, 2016; Derefinko et al., 2018). It was expected that participants would provide insight into the transition process similar to available research; however, participants introduced additional insight that may assist decision makers to tailor transition programs to better meet the needs of exiting service members.

Ethical Issues of the Study

The researcher obtained permission letters from two local veterans' organizations per Concordia University Institutional Review Board (CU-IRB) requirements. Then, the researcher compiled and submitted specific information to demonstrate to the CU-IRB the purpose, design of the study, research questions, population, sampling, instrumentation, data collection procedures, methodology, data analysis procedures, limitations, and required consent forms. Upon approval, the formal research began.

Conflict of interest statement. No participant had an employee/employer relationship with the researcher. The participating organizations were chosen because there was no employee/employer relationship to the other organization or the researcher. No participant was paid for their time or participation. No deception was used within the study's design, as transparent, honest, and specific information regarding leadership styles was necessary for research accuracy. Participants were given protocols describing the purpose and procedures of

the study before providing consent to participate. Ten veterans participated in 20-60 minute, semistructured interviews. Then, upon transcription, the participants were given the opportunity to provide any additions, corrections, or clarifications to verify accuracy. A focus group with eight veterans was held in which similar interview questions were used as an outline for discussion. Artifacts that were relevant to the research questions and meaningful to the participants were obtained via public record (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). No financial or professional benefits were held or obtained by the researcher.

Researcher's position. The researcher's role was data collector, interviewer, and focus group moderator. The researcher is a veteran of the United States Air Force, who served in the Pre-9/11/2001 period. The researcher experienced similar challenges the participants shared. While discussing research opportunities with fellow veterans, the researcher realized similarities in the group's transition experiences, including the various challenges discussed in previous research. The researcher reviewed more data provided from other researchers and realized the difficulties exiting servicemembers faced were more widespread than the researcher's group of colleagues and fellow veterans, which lead the researcher to question if leadership, or a lack of leadership was part of the problem. Personal experience became a drive for the study.

Ethical issues in the study. Informed consent was acquired before interviews or focus group discussion commenced. A clinician was on call in case the discussion caused distress to participants as it was understood that veterans may have combat experience. Though the interview questions were leadership and transition-based, participants had commanded or were led under combat conditions.

Each participant's right to privacy was honored by limiting identifying information, though demographics relating to rank/job title, military experience, years of service, years within

the corporate environment, level of management, years of leadership experience, and duty assignments/roles were noted on documents. Each participant was assigned a number to maintain confidentiality. A corresponding list with the participants' names and numbers was kept separate and password secured. The documents and digital data were destroyed upon dissertation defense and approval with a shredder and deleting all information from digital clouds and hard drives. Any participants who knew the researcher personally or professionally were excluded in order to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

Chapter 3 Summary

Exiting service members face challenges affecting the ability to reintegrate into society, obtain gainful and purposeful employment, and provide a sense of belonging with new roles and responsibilities. In this study, military veterans participated in semistructured interviews and a focus group with open-ended questions, in which participants shared experiences and perceptions of military leadership training, transition training, and the applicability of training in the civilian setting. Military training manuals, as artifacts, were analyzed for themes, similarities, and differences in leadership training. Information was reviewed through the lens of the principles of transformational leadership using in vivo and attribute coding. This information added to the available research on the transition procedures used to prepare service members for a civilian lifestyle, keeping transition activities in the forefront to ease challenges service members may experience (Biddle, 2016; Castro & Kintzle, 2014; Zogas, 2017).

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

This chapter provides the case study results as they apply to the transition service members make from the military setting to the civilian setting. The data collection process is explained, including how the data were collected, from where participants were gathered, the data collection results, as well as the coding, themes, and results of the data collected. Demographic modifications were made because the veterans' organizations' membership and willing participants did not provide the anticipated cross-section of rank, experience, ethnicity, race, and gender. Members of the local veterans' organizations from which participants were obtained were primarily White or White/Hispanic men. Though the participants were representative of the local community, the demographic needed for the study was unobtainable. Additionally, no female participants were available. The commander of one of the veterans' organizations indicated they had one female member, but she rarely attended. Another participant explained, "You have to understand, this is a bar. Women don't usually hang out in places like this."

Research Questions

The following guiding research questions were used in the study to gain knowledge of military service members' perceptions of leadership, the impact of transformational leadership on transitioning, and how leadership was applied from military service to the corporate setting:

1. What are the military veterans' perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training?
2. How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting post-military service?

The researcher utilized a case study format with an in-depth analysis of experiences and perceptions of military service members (Creswell, 2013). The veteran participants described leadership principles that applied to their transition experiences, though the principles were different for veterans who served Pre-9/11/2001 compared to those who left service Post-9/11/2001. As the research accumulated, it became apparent that the experiences of the two groups were different. Additionally, the Pre-9/11/2001 and Post-9/11/2001 veterans elucidated the challenges they faced when they left military service. Each group of veterans shared their perceptions of how CSRs assisted the veterans' transition into the civilian workforce. Primarily, the research highlighted the difference between the transition experiences of Pre-9/11/2001 and Post-9/11/2001 veterans, the significance of which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Purposeful sampling with a constructivist approach was used to obtain participant perspectives and meanings regarding transformational leadership affecting transition out of the military. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) clarified, snowball, or chain, sampling was used to obtain "a few key participants who easily [met] the criteria . . . established for participation in the study" (p. 98). Participants referred the researcher to other participants until all interview and focus group volunteers were obtained. The veterans' organizations provided access to veteran participants who engaged in individual, semistructured interviews with open-ended questions (Yin, 2018). Transcriptions of the interviews were reviewed and verified with the participants for member checking (Creswell, 2013). The focus group participants provided additional information and insight on direct experiences with military–civilian transition.

Artifact data were useful in verifying the alignment and consistency of the experiences veterans shared during the interviews and focus group meeting. Tangible evidence was found that corroborated the post-9/11/2001 veterans' experiences with leadership training, transition,

and civilian application of skills. In vivo and attribute coding were used on the interview transcriptions, focus group transcription, and artifacts to compare the data gleaned and identify patterns and differences. Themes became apparent and the differences between pre- and post-9/11/2001 veterans became clearer.

Description of the Sample

Because the number of female veterans or veterans with the required rank or time in service were not available following multiple attempts to obtain them, three interviewees did not meet the minimum rank or time in services requirement. However, their information provided additional insight and correlation of military characteristics found in more seasoned veterans, as discussed later in this chapter. Seven interviewees were representative of the intended study. In the focus group, eight volunteers participated, though two of the participants joined the group late. Initially, they did not want to participate. The manager explained a focus group discussion was in progress, and the two participants joined the group from a side door. They listened for about five minutes and began to contribute to the discussion. Consent forms were subsequently signed without detracting from the group discussion. The participant demographic included 12 White men, of whom one served during WWII, 1 served in the Korean Conflict, eight served during Vietnam War, and two served post-9/11/2001; six participants were Hispanic and served during the Vietnam War. See Table 1 for the participants' demographics. Participants will be identified hereafter as P1 for Participant 1, P2 for Participant 2, etc. and FG1 for Focus Group Participant 1, and so on.

Research Methodology and Analysis

The research methodology used was qualitative, and the design was a constructivist approach to data collection in which attention was given to "*how* the interview data are

constructed through such tools as discourse analysis, narrative analysis, and conversation analysis" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 112). The analysis was completed with the use of in vivo and attribute coding. Participants were members of a California veteran's organization. As stated previously, there were 18 veterans representing the United States Air Force, Army, Army National Guard, Navy, and Marines who transitioned into the private sector but are working or retired from nonmilitary or nonparamilitary organizations. The volunteers participated in semistructured interviews and a focus group where open-ended questions were used to discuss their perceptions of transitioning from a military setting to a corporate setting. The 10 interviewees chose to be interviewed while the eight focus group participants chose the focus group because they were not willing to be interviewed individually. Further questions allowed for discussion regarding leadership practices and transition training within the military that may have contributed to the participants' preparation prior to exiting the military. The veterans were asked to share their thoughts regarding the transferability of their military skills through the lens of the principles of transformational leadership. The discussions had both expected and unexpected results.

The researcher attended two memorial events and a fundraiser to obtain participants. The veterans expressed support for the research but did not participate because they felt they "had nothing to contribute." After two months of attending additional meetings and gatherings, the researcher opted to sit and visit with veterans at one of the approved veteran organizations and discuss the research informally with various organization members. After establishing informal camaraderie, the researcher was able to meet with 10 interviewees and eight focus group participants. The demographics were as follows (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participant Information

Number of Participants	Era	Rank/Time in Service	Ethnicity/Race
1	WWII	E-6	White
1	Korean Conflict	E-4	White
8	Vietnam War	E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, O-3, O6	White
6	Vietnam War	E-4, E-5, E-6	Hispanic
2	Post-9/11/2001	E-7	White

The interviews were 20–60 minutes to allow participants to express experiences and narratives thoroughly (Seidman, 2013). Participants did not require additional time to explain the context of experiences. It was imperative that the interviewer was on task while allowing participants to express personal experiences that were meaningful and vital to the study. A balance between timeliness and allowing time for expression of meaning and clarification was needed (Moustakas, 1994).

Each interviewee participated in semistructured interviews with open-ended questions and provided member checking and transcription verification during a follow-up meeting. The participants provided clarification of some of the details regarding transition and training. Though it was intended that focus group participants would be purposely selected, obtaining willing participants proved to be a challenge; therefore, the intention to have participants who did not know each other was an obstacle. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated it is preferable to have strangers; however, they also recommended that focus group participants needed to be those who knew the most about the subject. Finding strangers who had the requisite knowledge was unrealistic due to the timeframe, availability, and willingness of participants. Moreover, it

appeared that the participants appreciated the familiarity with each other as well as the familiarity the researcher had with military issues and concerns. The researcher was then required to pay particular attention to the familiarity of military camaraderie in order make sure her influence did not impede the free flow of conversation. This was useful when two additional participants arrived after the focus group began. Initially, they did not want to participate, but they became curious and came into the conference area through a side door. When they heard what was being said, they began to voice their own opinions. By the end of the hour, the two new participants had provided more information than the other six participants who had joined at the beginning. Consent forms were signed by all participants, though the two late arrival participants signed their forms following the meeting.

Seidman (2013) recommended completing all interviews prior to analyzing the information in order prevent one interviewee's remarks from influencing the possible meaning of subsequent interviewees, and the interviewer would be less likely to conduct subsequent interviews with bias. Then, as explained by Saldaña (2016), in vivo and attribute coding were used to analyze the data provided by veterans and the artifacts. The verbiage used for in vivo coding was applied to general categories as military transition, transition out of the military, civilian application, perception of Post-9/11/2001 veterans, and advice to newly exiting service members. Common phrases from the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans were "management," "pulling yourself up by your bootstraps," "get a job," and "work it out." Common words and phrases from the Post-9/11/2001 veterans were "leadership," "side-by-side," "management," and "finding what motivates your people." One Army National Guard participant from the Pre-9/11/2001 era who served during Vietnam used terms similar to those of the Post-9/11/2001 veterans. Categories and subcategories from the common words and phrases as stated by the

participants were used, though there were differences in the common words and phrases between pre- and post-9/11/2001 veterans. Within the artifacts, the common words were *management* and *leadership*. Attribute coding was used to apply principles from transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles to the analysis of the in vivo coding.

The attribute data included demographic information, time frame, the contexts for analysis, and the data format from which the information was gained. Saldaña (2016) recommended coding minute details, which resulted in the awareness that the participants had similar reactions to certain words used. For example, when asked about how leaders helped the veterans prepare for leaving the military, every Pre-9/11/2001 veteran shrugged their shoulders and stated their supervisors provided little to no support. The Post-9/11/2001 veterans looked down and contemplated the question acknowledging that the experience with leadership was different as they prepared to leave. Another initial reaction the veterans gave was dismissing that leadership helped, at all.

Data Analysis

Using in vivo and attribute coding, the researcher perused the transcriptions of the interviews, focus group, and artifact data. Analysis began with uploading and retrieving transcriptions of all interviews and the focus group. Each interview and the focus group were saved with a number designated for each participant and the date of the focus group. The confidentiality of the participants was protected by having the numbers and list of names separate from the voice recordings. These were secured and saved separately. Interviewees were given the opportunity to review the transcriptions in order to member check, verifying that their meaning and intent were accurately portrayed. The research questions were reviewed multiple times in order to keep the focus on the desired information. Furthermore, initial analysis of the

interviews, focus group, and artifact data were reviewed over the course of weeks to prevent the influence of one person's meaning to create bias over another's.

Once initial coding was determined, in vivo coding helped determine themes, which demonstrated the differences and similarities responses to the interview and focus questions between the Pre- and Post-9/11/2001 veterans. Additionally, the information gathered from the artifacts showed a clearer division between the two groups of veterans, particularly of what the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans described as their training, leadership, and transition experiences.

Following the coding of the data and notation of themes, narratives and summaries of artifact data describing veterans' experiences were written. The information was shared with a military veteran who served 15 years Pre-9/11/2001 and two military veterans who retired Post-9/11/2001. The veterans were chosen because of their work as transformational leaders and experts who were familiar with the transition process for both groups of military veterans, as well as their willingness to participate in the study. Following discussion of the data, these leaders provided insight and acknowledgment that the findings were in alignment with what they had experienced in military and civilian settings.

Summary of the Findings

The data showed Pre-9/11/2001 veterans speaking little, if at all, about transformational leadership concepts and principles. Most of these veterans went into the service as young men, drafted or volunteered, and came out as adults who found jobs within four months. Three Pre-9/11/2001 veterans returned to their previous positions as their jobs were saved for them due to the draft. No leadership supported them in their transition. One participant stated his supervisor advised him to get his education so that he would be more successful in life. FG1 had a supervisor who advised he not leave the military, yet. This was the mid-1970s, and jobs were

scarce. The man did return to the service within two years stating he should have listened to that supervisor. He stayed in for 30 years. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans did not experience transformational leadership. Instead, they described their experience as “management.”

Post-9/11/2001 veterans discussed the principles of transformational leadership. They discussed how they demonstrated virtuous leadership, though they did not call it virtuous leadership. Rather, they described their leadership styles as “common sense.” They described their leadership school experiences as scenario based and a resource to learn how to lead more than manage. The principles of transformational leadership permeated their language and explanations of how they motivated their personnel.

The literature accumulated for this study did not illuminate the differences between Pre- and Post-9/11/2001 veterans. The division of experiences was an unexpected finding. The literature indicated transition challenges that seemed to apply to all veterans, but the interviews and focus group data revealed the expectations to which the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans acquiesced, that of getting out of the service, finding a job, and providing for oneself. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans suggested Post-9/11/2001 veterans are unprepared for the challenges of war, as two of the participants, P3 and P4 stated: “These kids come from a time where everyone gets to play ball, everyone gets a trophy, and everyone gets something” (P3). The veteran participants used the phrase, “Kids getting out now are entitled” (FG1). Because they are entitled, they do not have the strength of mind to handle the stresses encountered in war. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans acknowledged that shell shock, or PTSD, existed when they were drafted or volunteered, regardless of era (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Shield/Storm), but they were stronger because they had already experienced life’s little disappointments when they were youths. P3 and FG1

used the phrase, “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps” to indicate the expectation of getting a job and moving forward. Giving up or relying on someone else was not an option.

At the same time, these same Pre-9/11/2001 veterans showed compassion and empathy for the Post-9/11/2001 veterans in their donations to organizations such as Wounded Warrior and creating a business to help Post-9/11/2001 veterans obtain the Veterans’ Administration (VA) services and benefits they require in order to acclimate back to civilian life and deal with the repercussions of the war they experienced; thus, as much as the “old guys” stated they are harder than the “new guys and girls,” they care about what has happened to them. The older veterans discussed their desire to help the newer veterans deal with the tragedies of war. They wanted the newer veterans to become members of the veterans’ organizations so that the newer veterans can benefit from the camaraderie they experienced while in the service. Ironically, even the veterans who said they did not like or appreciate their military service are members of veterans’ organizations and discussed how they value the brotherhood that comes with military service. They can go to their bar, discuss anything they want, and they do not have to explain why they feel a certain way about the military or the wars in which they served because the other veterans “already know.” They already understand. They find comfort in that. Moreover, many of them wanted the newer veterans to experience this because maybe they will not have such a hard time coping.

The focus of the study was to find out how transformational leadership affected the transition from the military to civilian setting. The most significant finding was there was a difference between Pre-9/11/2001 and Post-9/11/2001 veterans. The expectation was that there might be a difference between each war era, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Shield/Storm, and Post-9/11/2001, but the participants revealed a distinction between Pre-9/11/2001 and Post-

9/11/2001. The information the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans contributed was valuable because their experiences elucidated the differences as well as expounding on the perceptions of the experiences of Post-9/11/2001 veterans. None of the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans begrudged the benefits active duty and exiting service members receive presently. Their experience, varied as it was between WWII and Vietnam, only strengthened their resolve to have this generation of veterans receive the best care and benefits available, another indicator of the potency of the camaraderie developed from military service.

Presentation of the Data and Results

The data were collected with expected and unexpected results. The artifact data showed a concentration on basic military policies, procedures, mission, values, guiding principles, leadership expectations, military expectations, guidelines for promotion, and history of the services. The interview data revealed an unexpected result: the distinction between veterans who served and exited prior to the events of 9/11/2001 and those who exited following the events of 9/11/2001. While 1 interviewee reinforced military leadership training while serving during the Vietnam War, 6 others indicated different military leadership experiences with training and supervisors. The focus group information reinforced the distinction between eras as well as the military leadership training distinctions. The primary themes resulting from in vivo coding were Military Leadership Training, Transition Out of the Military, Civilian Application, Pre-9/11/2001 Veteran Perceptions of Post-9/11/2001 Veterans, and Advice to Newly Exiting Service Members. The first research question, “What are the military veterans’ perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training?” addressed two themes: Military Leadership Training and Transition Out of the Military. The second research question, “How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting

post-military service?" addressed three themes: Civilian Application, Pre-9/11/2001 Veteran Perception of Post-9/11/2001 Veterans, and Advice to Newly Exiting Service Members.

Research question 1: What are the military veterans' perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training? For research question 1, participants shared information in which two themes were identified: *military leadership training* and *transition out of the military.*

Military leadership training. P1 explained the NCO Academy and Senior NCO Academy. He recognized that his training helped his reputation, and he was able to immediately obtain a contracting position doing the same job he had done while servicing in the military. He stated they teach philosophies, theories, and concepts, but not "real world stuff" (P1), which was corroborated by two other veterans. P2 described the different levels of leadership training, Airman Leadership School ALS for E4 to E5, Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (NCO Academy) for E5 to E6, and Senior Non-Commission Officer Academy (SNCO Academy) for E6 and above. In these schools, the focus of leadership is similar in the leadership principles shared, but different in regard to certain Air Force management responsibilities and expectations. As military members increase in rank, so does their level of responsibility. P2 reiterated the scenario-based learning strategies as well as acknowledging that tools necessary to supervise others are taught and part of the scenario learning. He shared that once someone has graduated from ALS, "the Air Force has essentially given you its blessing that you are now qualified to become a supervisor of other younger airman in an official capacity" (P2). Once someone graduates from the NCO Academy, he or she has accomplished the second tier of leadership training, which, he reported, is more intense. The focus is on leadership in a wider scope and dealing with more people. Plus, one is managing systems and implementing management

philosophies. One learns how to evaluate performance and results and change or modify one's leadership style or management technique. Assignments, presentation skills, speech, and scenarios were based on leadership or management challenges with active exercises on how to deal with them. One also learns to problem solve when handling challenges in the workplace. P2 found the NCO Academy provided valid instruction and met his needs regarding leadership and management as a midlevel enlisted supervisor.

When one attends the different leveled leadership schools, P2 shared that those in other career fields of the Air Force, and sometimes other services, were in attendance, which provided more "flavor" to the training. In all cases, he noted that regardless of leadership, the definition of leadership, how one motivates people, whether through charismatic leadership or otherwise, the focus was on the real-world situation where people die if someone does not accomplish their portion of the mission. He continued and indicated recognizing that the people make the difference. He advised that at the core, "It's your people, what you have to use and how you respect and care for them and keep a focus on the goal and the mission that needs to be accomplished with your people and with your material that you have at your disposal."

There are aspects of leadership that cannot be taught. Some of it is charisma. Some of it is an ability to make people wish to follow your lead. P2 realized that managing and leading people in the best possible way requires the right mix, skill set, and experience levels of people at the right time, and applying it is the challenge that remains with leadership. P2 used a mix of hands-on instruction, mentorship, and leading by example as a leader. He discovered that figuring out what motivates people is a contributing factor to success. P2 had good results in being honest with his subordinates, sitting down and explaining things, showing them how to do something, and analyzing how his people learned. He expounded on how to best teach one's

personnel is a “critical part of leadership and getting it right, brings success and getting it wrong will frequently bring failure or lessened results.” P2 discussed the need to let go of one’s ego, as it gets in the way of leadership. Being humble has a greater effect on the mission over time than ego. In this way, one recognizes where the leader needs assistance and improvement as well as being open to that assistance in order to best utilize his people to get the job done. In addition to humble leadership, a leader must be inventive, innovative, and creative because people may not always have all the resources needed in order to accomplish the objectives. P2’s assertions regarding humble, inventive, innovative, and creative leadership was indicative of transformational principles found in the literature discussed in Chapter 2 of this case study.

P3 talked about his basic training as one that involved brainwashing. He stressed how Marines were “first and foremost grunts, ground pounders, shoot the enemy. That’s our first job” (P3). While in the service, P3 knew his job well and trained others to do his job. He was tasked with sharing explicit and tacit knowledge. Because of his training, P3 was able to transition well and move forward in the civilian setting with other companies that involved the aviation industry.

P4 explained that basic training did not involve transformational leadership. Instead, they were told what to do, when to do it, how to do it, and there was no deviation from that unless one wanted to drop and give the drill instructor 20 push-ups or some other form of punishment that involved physical fitness. Such experience is indicative of transactional leadership in which reward and punishment exchanges are made. His transition was much like P3, in that he was in one day and out the next with his orders in hand. His supervisor wished him luck but did not provide insight or guidance on what to do next. P4 chose to immediately look for a job to provide for himself and found one within three months. He did not receive assistance from the

military or VA to obtain his first job out of the military. P4 noted that in the military, one was told to do something, and it was done. He recognized the team and worked within the team.

P5 initially did not state he received leadership training while in the service, but as he explained his job of firearms trainer, he decided he had received some managerial training. He described transactional leadership principles stating there was no option whether or not to follow whatever the supervisor, or he, when he was supervisor, said. When he left the military, he experienced a fairly smooth transition. He was drafted during the Vietnam Conflict; therefore, his job was saved for him. He went back to that job upon leaving military service.

P6 revealed that most of his leadership training was on-the-job training and involved directing, giving orders, and taking orders. Seeing the work that was done made it easy. Knowing that one was expected to work and follow orders was not a challenge and did not affect his transition out of the military. He explained that his most useful lesson was about survivability. It gave him the mindset to survive instead of worrying about dying. “If you sit around and worry about dying, you’re going to die because then you’re not paying attention. You’re not vigilant and you had to learn how to change your mindset” (P6). Seeing other guys killed motivated the mindset change.

P7 was put in charge of his detail and kept an eye on his group of recruits during basic training. He was not impressed with his military experience. P7 stated he did not think much of the leadership. He revealed his supervisors were transactional as he felt they were more managerial than leading. P7 was given a set of objectives to accomplish, and that is what he did. When it was time for him to leave the service, his supervisor gave him his paperwork, and he left. Because he was drafted, he had a civilian job to which he returned. P7 was also part of the union. P7 discussed how he felt being in the military made one a different person, that one was

subjected to brainwashing (P7). P7 was not the only one who discussed this. In separate interviews, on different days, with different people, the same term, brainwashing, appeared. Additionally, his transition was quick since he went into the military, did his job, got out, and went back to his civilian position. P7 discussed how people went back, or they did not because they had been killed. There were not many in between. Also, he talked about how he did not apply any of his training to his civilian position. P7 did not have any recommendations for those getting out of the military at this time.

P8 learned how to do his job while on the job. His supervisors gave him orders, worked alongside him and his shipmates, and motivated them by modeling, as in transformational leadership. His experience with transformational leaders was unique when compared to his Pre-9/11/2001 veteran peers. His transition from the military included guidance from those leaders. Similar to his Pre-9/11/2001 veterans, he felt the sense of urgency to get a job directly following military service (P8).

Transition out of the military. TAP class is for exiting service members to "share best practices for transitioning into the civilian workforce" (U.S. DOL Employment Workshop, 2014, p. 6). Participants apply information from a pre-separation counselor, a career interests assessment tool, and translate their military experience into civilian occupation verbiage. Exiting service members use the information to complete an individual transition plan (ITP). Upon completion of the 5-day course, the service members are expected to understand principles that assist managing change, identifying personal strengths and skills, completing a job application, resumé, and interview strategies. Significantly, the course includes recommendations for managing change, such as, "stability in knowing that you are employed, have a support system,

and a paycheck" (U.S. DOL Employment Workshop, 2014, p. 4). These factors that demonstrate stability were also listed in previous research done by the Pew Center (2011).

The TAP workshop continued with participants receiving instruction regarding best practices: maintaining emotional support systems, optimism for job search, planning, and support help with the transitions stress. Instructors explained the differences between positive and negative stress and how each stress is still stress. "Positive short-term stress is balanced by the expectation of benefit and the evaluation of resources available to cope with change" (U.S. DOL Employment Workshop, 2014, p. 4). Furthermore, instructors of the class illuminate symptoms of negative stress, which include physical ailments, internal confusion of identity, loss of self-esteem, and control with recommendations to identify coping skills to mitigate the consequences of change. Not only are participants given information about the stresses of transitioning out of the military, but they are also given information on how to identify cognitive, physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms of stress as well as stress management practices, as the U.S DOL Employment Workshop (2014) elucidated:

Maintain important relationships

Attend cultural and religious events

Engage in hobbies and recreational activities

View work as only one part of your life

Schedule a routine as similar to your previous schedule as possible. (p. 6)

Each of the symptoms and stress management practices were also indicated in the literature and Pew Center (2011) study. The workshop information included minimizing stress by identifying primary goals and objectives, breaking the goals into manageable chunks, working to overcome small challenges weekly, and seeking professional help when needed.

P1 discussed the needs of the Air Force came first and sometimes that meant changing duty stations (PCS) or changing units or jobs (PCA). When he left service to become a contractor, some things changed, such as wearing a uniform, whether he was seen as the subject matter expert or dismissed as “just a contractor,” but changing jobs every year or two did not change. When P1 became employed as a government civilian, he was able to choose to stay in specific job for as long as he desired. P1 explained that the greatest help to his transition out of the military was the TAP class where he learned how to tie a tie and look professional outside a uniform, interviewing skills, how to write a resume, how to conduct oneself during an interview, how to relate one’s skills from the military to the civilian setting, and how to follow up after an interview. P1 did not, however, experience support for attending to his out-processing of the military. His commanders expected he would still perform all his duties and take care of the out-processing responsibilities on his own time, regardless of when that time was. P1 was slammed with mission requirements and found it difficult to get everything done in the required time. He was working shift work; therefore, he would have to make a push to get things done in between. P1 reported it was a very stressful time. P1 did receive guidance from retired military prior to his exit for which he was grateful because he had joined the service directly after high school. All he had known was the military. He found that he did not understand what was needed with a 1099 as a contractor. P1 learned the hard way about how taxes are not taken out from a 1099 employee; rather, they have to make arrangements to pay taxes throughout the year or expect to pay upon tax filing. This was something he did not learn in TAP class.

P1 noted the difference with how military personnel look after their members and provide assistance in myriad ways. When one leaves the military for the civilian setting, that safety net is no longer there. He accentuated that the mission in the military is such that if someone does not

do their job, people's lives and national security are at stake, as are government resources and equipment. As with Pre-9/11/2001 veterans, the reference to a slip up means someone's life. Because the military expects one to perform duties with excellence, there is a positive reputation that enables some prior military members to obtain government contracting or civilian jobs over the average American citizen. P1 shared he was hired within three to four months because the job he did in service, "catapult me . . . because that's where the military, my reputation . . . in the military of getting things done and working hard." He learned to make his commanders look good while in the military and discovered that in so doing, as a civilian, benefits the whole, as well. Also, P1 stated that one of the biggest transitions was not needing to check in, clock in or out, or ask anyone if he could use the restroom. One of his coworkers informed him they did not need to know his every move. P1 realized how ingrained it was to be told where to go, what to do, and telling people where to go and what to do. He had some difficulty getting used to just going about his business, even eight years later. Still, he learned to be flexible and stated that was his best lesson from the military.

P2 discussed his perceptions of the TAP classes. He attended two, the Air Force and the Navy TAP classes. Each was a week in duration. P2 felt the curriculum was evolving for both. Each had blocks of instruction on how to write resumes and interview. He found that most of the material was useful to him and his transition. He took his time to readjust and reframe his circumstances. P2 was in a position where he could take the time to decompress following his military service, as he put it, "stay in pajamas all day" (P2).

Transitioning was very different for P2, and he did struggle the first few months. P2 discussed how he worked hard to attain his E7 rank, and then, one day, it was no longer on his sleeve. When people see him, they do not know with whom they speak. He struggled with that

for a time because it is different when one is in the military. P2 could tell someone he was a senior NCO, but, unless someone served or was familiar with the ranking system, that information is meaningless. P2 said it is different than when someone says, “Oh, I retired as the CEO of such and such company.” He admitted that he did not always handle that realization well. P2 works at a local grocery store. He had a discussion with a customer who complained about shopping carts being wet. P2 stated he did not handle the situation well. He had an epiphany. P2 was having difficulty adjusting to civilian life because his previous job required precision and excellence. If anything was lacking, the operation could fail, and military personnel or noncombatants could die.

Neither P1 nor P2 had someone checking in with them to find out how transition was going. Neither had someone making sure they were getting what they needed from TAP class or anything else. Instead, they were expected to go, take care of business, and get as much done as they could before they exited service.

P2 explained further that the transition was difficult because he had to decide whom he was without the military identity. What made it even more challenging was that he grew up as a “military brat.” His whole life was influenced by the military, military moves, and so forth. Defining his new sense of self did not come easily. As he shared, “There are things that can happen in the course of your mental readjustment to whom you are and whom you’re not.” He found the experience very humbling and, again, stated, “The weight of that should not be underestimated.” He took time off to have that mental readjustment of which he spoke. He noted that he wanted to be helpful and be of service as he had been while active duty. He also found he was having to face some demons, such as alcoholism, which he shared was a coping mechanism to handle the high stress of his military environment. He elucidated the affect it had on his family

and other military members. He chooses to pass on his knowledge and experience so that others do not have the difficulties he had.

P3 explained his transition from the military was quick. He received his orders to go home and proceeded to contact one of the companies with which he was familiar due to his position in the Marines. P3 shared that he left the service with confidence, believing he was the best because they were taught in basic training and onward that being a Marine means one is the best. He did not question it, which helped him get his first job out of the military within two weeks. P3 expounded by saying, “I didn’t think I had to adjust” and “If you’re halfway intelligent and approach it in the right way, they’ll listen to you” (P3, 2019).

P10 explained that his experience in the military prepared him for transitioning out of the military. P10 received a letter with several of his peers’ names on it. His name was highlighted. The group of them were being discharged on the same date. His challenges came when he realized he did not have the same VA privileges as regular Army because he was Army National Guard. P10 did receive a $10,000 bonus for his service during Vietnam, however, to pay for school.

P9 was drafted and returned to his position upon his end of service. His transition experience was seamless. He did not think he had any leadership training in the military. When P9 left, he was still wearing scrubs. A military officer gave him a letter of recommendation. He started his civilian job the day after he left the military. His supervisor was no longer a military person, but a civilian. He found that the civilians were more difficult to work for (P9, 2019). However, P10 explained that leadership training in the military was effective if one took it seriously. He noted that many who were drafted did not take the training seriously (P10, 2019).

Research question 2: How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting post-military service? Participants' answers to research question 2 fit into three themes. The first was an expected theme: civilian application. Two other themes, Pre-9/11/2001 veteran perceptions of post 9/11/2001 veterans and advice to newly exiting service members, were not expected, but provided insight and ideas for future study.

Civilian application. P1 found that transitioning his administrative skills was easy. He found it challenging to figure out what he wanted to wear each day because a uniform was no longer required. He missed wearing his combat boots, and, though it had been eight years since he left the military, he still found reasons to wear them as they are more comfortable than regular shoes. P1 also elucidated the lesson he learned and applied from the military to civilian setting was "treat others as you'd want to be treated." "You can go into book knowledge all you want, but you got to know people, you know. You got to see what's important to them . . . try to find something that interests them." When former subordinates or personnel approached him, he was told he was one of their mentors. It was one of the greatest things he had heard. He learned that leading by example really worked for him and those whom he led. P1 found civilians to be more "laid back" than the military because people's lives are not on the line the same way as when one is serving as active duty military. The mission is different. Civilians have time to think long-term and plan continuous improvement and projects where military commanders are not given the luxury of time. They are in their positions 1-3 years, and they need fill in the checklist; thus, they think short-term, change things, save money where they can so that it looks good on their performance evaluation so that they can promote. As a military member, P1 rushed through his projects, his emails, his reports. He was not concerned about sending drafts rather than polished,

final copies. As a civilian he is able to take that time, take a breath, reread his work, polish it, have it peer reviewed, and make a stronger impact. There are deadlines, but the deadlines are not as short. P1 also revealed that in the military, one is expected to know a lot about a lot of different jobs and be a jack of all trades, master of none. As a civilian, he is able to work the same job and become a real expert. He can do many things, but he is the master of his current position, which he knows he can continue to hone as long as he stays in that position. Moreover, P1 stated he can stay in that position for as long as he prefers.

P1 also noted that, while in the military, one observed ranks and privileges and subordinates usually followed the chain of command. Within the civilian sector, people are not able to "pull rank." Instead, one is expected to develop the relationships and leadership skills that receive respect from their peers and supervised personnel. He stated having charisma is one way to accomplish this, but one must still know his people, what skill sets they have, their focus, and their motivation. They cannot be denigrated into submission. That would lead to a human resources complaint. One needs to understand the needs of personnel, how to communicate with them, and motivate them for positive effort. P3 and two others indicated finesse and communication skills. One cannot talk to civilians the way one does to military members. Using one's finesse and charisma, learning to communicate with civilians, and getting used to working with women was discussed heavily during the focus group discussion.

P2 chose to work at a grocery store to not have that level of responsibility or stress or perpetuate the "military industrial complex" or be "a servant of the war machine" (P2); however, as he learned, the military had been part of him for more than half of his life. He incorporated philosophies that made him an excellent manager and leader in the military. Making the transition to the civilian setting was difficult. Letting go of those philosophies and recognizing

that no one would die over a wet shopping cart was, even for a moment, an obstacle. He noted laissez-faire leadership styles that did not include the expectations of excellence. Instead, he noted that personnel were pleased with bare minimum effort and doing just enough to get by. To cope, he began managing his expectations, realizing that he would not find the level of commitment or excellence to which he was accustomed from those with whom he works presently. Furthermore, he frequently stated, “It should not be underestimated.” This was stated by P1, as well.

P2 learned that leadership in the civilian world is different than leadership in the military. He saw a lack of effort, commitment, competency, and accountability. It was dissatisfying for him, but it was part of his reframing, recognizing that the situation at a grocery store is very different to what he was accustomed to while active duty. He attended to his duties with the 100% attitude he had while serving and was in “constant frustration” with those who do the bare minimum. He found he was not willing to compromise or lower his standards. It was out of alignment with his values.

When discussing how he modified his leadership style for the civilian setting, he reiterated that the transition from military to civilian should not be taken lightly. He is not willing to engage in some of the activities of his coworkers because it is less than what he would consider acceptable. If he modified to meet the standards of his coworkers, he stated he would not be true to himself or his values. He found the compromises too disagreeable. “It’s been an issue for me. I’m having a hard time dealing with it.” He decided to manage his expectations and stop worrying. “Stop worrying about the team and the results of the team.” He recognized his company as a well-run organization, but he feels strongly that it can be so much better. P2

acknowledged that he needed to learn to be more selfish and not focus on the team as a whole; rather, he tried to focus on his responsibility and leave the others to their own.

In the civilian setting, P3 learned that one had to talk with his employees to inspire them to do what he needed them to do. This was not training he received from the military. It was a skill he learned as a civilian manager and leader. When he first got his civilian jobs, he utilized the work ethic he learned in the service: work hard and get the job done as quickly and correctly as possible. He was told by his coworkers that he needed to slow down because he was making them look bad (P4). This is similar to the experience P2 had where others were not keen to perform excellently. Instead, they did the minimum to keep them out of trouble. Though P2 and P4 served in two different eras, their civilian setting experiences were similar.

P4 obtained a job within a month or two following his drafted service in the military. He found that he was able to get the job, but his dealings with civilians were challenging. He reprimanded a female employee for mistakes she made on a job and found out from the human resources department that he could not talk to her the way he would talk to a new recruit in the military. This took some adjustment as he was not familiar with how to tone down the military voice or management principles. When he told someone to do something, he expected it to be done immediately, but that was not how civilians responded to his requests.

P5 shared he had to learn upon getting out of the service that not everyone would take orders. P6 noted that, while in the service, he was able to give an order and it would be followed. This was not the case in the civilian setting to which he had to learn to adapt. He learned that he needed to pay attention to what motivated the personnel. He had to instill in his people that they needed to do things right the first time and not do anything halfway. He learned in the military that one does what one needs to do. He carried that into the civilian workforce and learned to talk

to his people in a manner that would motivate and get them focused on completing their assigned tasks.

P8 left the service to work for a newspaper, where he applied what he learned about working beside people and modeling the behavior he wanted to see from his personnel, as expected from transformational leaders. P8 expounded his civilian supervisors encouraged him to go to college and obtain his bachelor's degree so he could promote within the newspaper business. He felt he had better training as a civilian and had more mentors while in the civilian setting. He learned how to deal with people better. He determined that he learned his solid work ethic within the military and realized he needed to be more than a manager; he needed to be a leader.

P10 did not have a problem getting work. He was an engineer and was sought out for his skills. He saw that those with the rank of O3 and above were purposeful in their leadership. He learned from them and applied what he learned to his civilian position. He was young, 23 years old, when he left the military and was expected to lead personnel who were over 30 years old. He found it more difficult to lead in the civilian setting. People did not take him seriously, initially. He had to earn their respect. He decided to join clubs where he could hone his charisma and speaking abilities.

Pre-9/11/2001 veteran perceptions of Post-9/11/2001 veterans. P1 (2019) stated relating to the younger generation requires a "new level of education or communication, but it's really a different way of communicating." P1 counseled it is essential to encourage exiting service members to attend the TAP classes. Exposure to business administrators from the civilian setting was helpful, teaching the participants in the TAP class what they could look for, expect from interviews, how to follow up, how to write résumés for different purposes, how to present

oneself, and how to get the next job. One does not simply leave the military. P1 advised one has to go out and find a job, as several Pre-9/11/2001 veterans recommended.

P3 explained his perceptions of military members getting out in the last 15–18 years. He is concerned about how many have PTSD and acknowledged that that was similar, if not the same, as shell shock from when he was in the service. He did not feel he bent under the pressure of war and considered the young men and women coming home from war today are at a disadvantage because they are the generation where everyone got to play t-ball, everyone got a trophy, and none of them had to really learn what that type of disappointment was. He discussed how that developed a military force that does not understand what it means to be yelled at, cursed at, or receive 20 push-ups because he or she messed up. He explained that makes them less able to handle the stressors of war. He said, "The kids who are coming out now, they're a bunch of babies now . . . [military training instructors] are babying them." Still, P3 donates to the Wounded Warrior Project because he recognizes the difference from when he served. Those coming home now are maimed or otherwise injured. When he served, one either made it or was dead. According to P3, "In a lot of areas, they need to be rehabbed and then helped to adjust to their new bodies, so to speak, and how they can adapt those to the workforce, and that's not always easy." P3 found it difficult to understand how some veterans have been out for the last 10 years, but they are still not acclimating to society. To him, the first thing one does is go out, get a job, organize housing, and get to work. For veterans to come home and not be able to do that made him shake his head in disbelief, but he will do what he can to help support them so that they can one day be a contributing member of society, again.

P4 reiterated perceptions similar to those of P3 in which the present exiting service members do not understand what it means to be yelled and cursed at by their drill instructors. He

noted that today's military is all volunteer. No one is drafted as they were during Korea or Vietnam. P6 discussed how exiting service members can join their local veterans' organization, but some do not. He pointed out that many do because it is "cheaper to drink" there, and they have access to a camaraderie that is not available when one goes to a regular bar.

Advice to newly exiting service members. P1 advised that exiting services members learn what their skill sets are and what that looks like outside the military. They should be able to explain how many years of experience they have, what degrees/credentials they have, and know a generalization of how much money they can expect, ask for, and negotiate for with potential employers. He highly recommended learning interviewing skills and how to write different types of resumés. The TAP class shares multiple types and databases of resumés. He recommended they use them. Also, her recommended they take advantage of the various job websites that are available, particularly if the exiting service member wants to continue with a position where a clearance is required. There are specific job sites for those positions. Moreover, veterans should talk to people who have already left the service to learn what they learned the hard way or what they found to make the transition easier.

Both P1 and P2 explained they did not have the time to conduct their out-processing responsibilities, having to fit them in wherever possible because their commanders required their regular assignments to be accomplished as if they were not transitioning out of the military. They both recommended that exiting service members plan and prepare two years in advance so that they are not bombarded with the required activities that apply to the civilian setting, such as getting one's resumé ready, getting a job, deciding where to live, and so on. P2 specifically stated that transition is "a bumpy road" and "you better pay it the attention it deserves."

P4 recommended that newly exiting service members need to get education so that they can be more marketable in the civilian setting. He also recommended that they go back and be with their friends and family. P5 reiterated P4's comments about getting whatever training is available so that they can find a job. When one has the training and skills, he counseled, "You will find a job" (P5).

P8 specifically looked for people with prior military service because of the commitment and work ethic with which they have been indoctrinated. He encouraged exiting services members to keep up with that level of commitment and work ethic. P9 recommended that exiting service members get to work. "If you've got a wife and kids you gotta support, you get to work" (P9). They should get job skill training and counseling and be themselves. Further, they should not become dependent on drugs or alcohol, especially alcohol. "It's easy to do it. Screw up your life." P10 advised one needs to get the right medical assistance. If one thinks he or she has problems, he or she needs to go talk to somebody and get the needed guidance. Exiting military personnel should go to school and develop skills.

Post-9/11/2001 veterans were not trained as Pre-9/11/2001 veterans were. Post-9/11/2001 veterans were taught about values such as integrity, honor, leadership, and the difference between management and leadership. They were expected to be mentors, whereas the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans revealed the expectations their supervisors had were simply that they would do what they were told, do it right, do it well, and move on to the next. Post-9/11/2001 veterans were trained to train, trained to lead through example, as well as manage government resources and funds without yelling, cursing, and demanding push-ups.

Though it was expected that differences would exist between the separate war eras, such as WWII to Korea to Vietnam, the unforeseen finding was the similarities between those

veterans with a significant divide between Pre- and Post-9/11/2001 veterans. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans had transition and life experiences, though they were different in that they were expected to find a job and housing and move forward without the assistance of the VA or other veterans. They knew what was required to overcome the challenges they faced. They knew how the VA system worked and how to get medical care and assistance that was not available upon their immediate departure from service. However, the perception that more recent veterans do not turn to Pre-9/11/2001veterans for advice is pervasive, as demonstrated by the comments from interviewees and focus group participants.

The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans offered the camaraderie that "cannot be found in just any place" (FGP1). When military veterans speak together, some things are not explained but are understood. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans wanted Post-9/11/2001 veterans to grasp that concept so that the older veterans can be part of the newer veterans' support systems. It appears to be part of the long-standing legacy that was indicated in the artifact data, interviews from all eras, and the focus group. It is the concept of being part of the team that protects the country, and, when they are done protecting the country, veterans have a need to protect each other.

Summary

The artifact data, interviews, and focus group generated general categories of information: military transition, transition out of the military, civilian application, perceptions of post-9/11/2001 veterans, and advice to newly exiting service members. The artifact data showed how one transitions into the military, detailed specific information and requirements for which military members are responsible, and, as in the cases of the Army and Air Force, information is given in preparation of leadership and management responsibilities that are applicable in the civilian setting. The distinction between pre- and post-9/11/2001 veterans became more apparent

as the interviews were conducted. The information provided by Pre-9/11/2001 veterans was not in alignment with the artifact data. Interviewees and focus group information demonstrated more transactional or laissez-faire traits, though some of these veterans discussed more transformational leadership experiences once they left the military.

The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans had similar perceptions of Post-9/11/2001 veterans. They noted the different world climate, public acceptance, and VA benefits. They discussed how during their time in war, regardless of whether it was during WWII, Kora, or Vietnam, their comrades were killed or went home. There was no real in-between, as post-9/11/2001 veterans experience. The older veterans commented on how younger veterans do not experience as many of their comrades dying, but there appears to be more maiming of their comrades. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans shared the compassion they feel for the Post-9/11/2001 veterans and shared their concern about the unprepared nature of the youth entering service today. They discussed the sense of entitlement the older veterans feel younger veterans exhibit; therefore, they had some advice for the younger veterans. “Get a job.” “Get your education.” “Get back to your family and friends.” “Get help.” “Talk to people.”

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the qualitative case study, discussion of the results, the results as they relate to the literature, the limitations experienced within this case study, implications of the results that can be applied to practice, and recommendations for further research. The Department of Defense has programs to assist military members transitioning from the military to the civilian setting. The Transition Assistance Program requires active duty military members to attend a 5-day training within 90 days of discharge. The idea behind the program is to brief exiting service members on how to write résumés, search for jobs, buy a house, and other important details that were not necessarily part of military day-to-day operations. However, as evidenced by the statistics regarding homelessness and finding a job upon discharge, the transition is not met with ease (Pew Research Center, 2011). Current literature and information provided in this case study corroborated the statistics from 2011.

The problem appeared to lie in the perspective veterans had regarding their military service, expectations of what will happen upon discharge, and what actually happened when they were discharged. Upon researching this problem, the current literature supported that veterans were affected by the lack of knowledge regarding the transferability of military and leadership skills to the civilian sector and work in entry level positions that were not commensurate with their level of training, familiar levels of responsibility, soft skills (e.g., teambuilding, decision-making, handling pressure), or leadership capability. The case study participants' experiences were in alignment with previous studies.

The conceptual framework for the case study was based on the principles of transformational leadership and how those principles develop an individual's sense of purpose and understanding of the mission or objective of the organization. Specifically, a transformational leader recognizes the strengths and challenges in others and builds on the followers' strengths to bring out the best performance (Ahern et al., 2015; Derefinko et al., 2018). It takes a transformational leader to recognize the value and needs of followers as well as help followers recognize their value and be motivated to move forward with a sense of purpose, a sense that they are needed and they belong (Castro & Kintzle, 2014; Hamad, 2015; Pease et al., 2016).

Transferability from a case study may be difficult, but it can be transferable to theoretical propositions if not to populations. The goal was to expand and generalize a theory. The case study focused on transition with the before, during, and after application of leadership principles. A constructivist approach was used in which the participants explained their reality and interaction with their comrades, supervisors, family, and friends, and their understanding of the meaning of their experience. In order to obtain an in-depth description of the experience, interviews, a focus group, and artifacts were used.

This research case study was needed to illuminate the transition experience through the lens of transformational leadership principles so that the transition challenges military veterans face can be eased, aiding veterans with finding a sense of purpose and belonging beyond their military careers. Volunteer participants were obtained through local veterans' organizations in California. Though the intention was to have participants who achieved a rank of E-5 or above with a minimum of 5 years of experience including leadership training, 3 participants of the 18 attained the rank of E4 and had 2–4 years of experience. These participants' input was needed in

order to obtain the minimum of 10 interviewees. Moreover, their input revealed that there are transition challenges for service members who have less than 5 years of experience, and their information regarding leadership training and practices added depth to the information gathered from other volunteers who had higher rank and more time in service. The only identifying information collected was demographics, rank/job title, military experience, and years of service.

The instrumentation included open-ended questions for interviewees and focus group participants (see Appendices B and C). The interviews and focus group were recorded and transcribed. The interviews included 10 veterans participating in semistructured, 60–90 minute interviews, a focus group comprised of eight veterans, and four primary source artifacts in the form of military training manuals and military leadership development materials to verify the training, practices, and application expectations. The interviews had open-ended questions with the focus group using similar questions for discussion. The participants were given the opportunity to review the transcriptions of their interviews, as member checking, to verify their intentions and meanings were accurate. All recorded data were maintained with password security and deleted when all transcription was complete and no longer needed for the study. The artifacts included training manuals from the TAP class, Air Force, Army, and Navy. These artifacts were analyzed to verify training practices and leadership principle application and expectations.

Two types of coding were used to analyze the data: attribute and in vivo (Saldaña, 2016). Attribute coding (setting/context) was appropriate for this case study as the study involved multiple participants with a variety of data forms such as interview transcript, field notes, and artifacts. Attribute coding provided essential participant information and contexts for analysis and interpretation. Unanticipated patterns of interrelationship influences and effects, cultural

themes, and trends were noted to reveal the differences between the pre- and post-9/11/2001 veterans' experiences.

In vivo coding was used to derive themes from the actual language of the participants. The categories developed from the participants' own verbiage were used to analyze the artifacts to maintain consistency. Discrepancies were noted and are enumerated in this chapter. Pattern matching, explanation building, and addressing contrary findings were used to secure internal validity while maintaining a chain of evidence from multiple sources and participants enabling the overall reliability of the study.

Summary of the Results

The first research question was: "What are the military veterans' perceptions of leadership skills and knowledge they learned in military training?" The current training handbooks and TAP class book enumerate transformational principles as good leadership practices and how to provide balanced leadership, modeling desired behavior, encouraging good physical, mental, and emotional health, while counseling financial stability and social norms, guidelines, and procedures. Veterans from different eras had different experiences. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans indicated they did not receive military leadership training, as shown in the artifacts where transformational leadership principles were heavily represented in present military training manuals. The Pre-9/11/2001 veterans explained military leadership training and transition out of the military were significantly different than those provided Post-9/11/2001 veterans. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans experienced the draft and had jobs waiting for them upon their discharge from the military. Their supervisors operated under transactional leadership principles; objectives were stated, and orders were followed. Most Pre-9/11/2001 veterans did not experience laissez-faire leadership principles. They explained that it was necessary for everyone

to do their jobs because if they did not, someone would die. Also, they did not indicate serious transition issues once they got out; rather, they returned to their jobs, reconnected with family and friends as best they could, and acquiesced to the expectation that they needed to leave the military, get a job, provide for themselves and their families, and keep moving forward.

Post-9/11/2001 veterans indicated military leadership training began as soon as basic training started, and transformational leadership principles, such as motivating one's personnel, mentoring, leading by example, were key to their successes. They explained much of their leadership experience involved transactional leadership principles, but they elucidated the need to balance transactional principles with transformational leadership principles in order to keep their personnel motivated, less stressed, and focused on the mission in its entirety. Understanding the need for family and friends and having frequent contact with them encouraged personnel, as long as they remained positive. The consequences if someone did not do their job was as fatal as it was with Pre-9/11/2001 veterans.

Post-9/11/2001 veterans shared their difficulties transitioning out of the military, especially in regard to being recognized as someone with skills and expertise. For example, P2 discussed how a retired CEO can indicate the position he or she had prior to retiring, and people, in general, understand the depth and breadth of the role and responsibility. However, when a person identifies as a retired Master Sergeant of the Air Force, only those with military experience understand the depth and breadth of the position. The veteran does not share with the general public what it meant to be in charge of combat operations, making strike plans, and watching those plans executed for the sake of national security. The achievements go unnoticed and, at times, unappreciated, which, as P2 explained, made his transition into the civilian setting

difficult. Though it had been eight years since he retired, his bumpy transition was still evident as he faced sobriety and the challenges that led him down the path of alcoholism initially.

The second research question was: “How do military leadership skills and training prepare military veterans for the corporate setting post-military service?” Many of the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans had jobs to return to while the Post-9/11/2001 veterans needed to build resumés and go to job interviews assessing their military skills with a civilian perspective. Veterans in both eras discussed that the military displayed more transactional leadership principles, though one Pre-9/11/2001 veteran who was in the Army National Guard and both Post-9/11/2001 veterans described the transformational leadership principles they encountered while serving in the military and following military service. These three veterans were familiar with transformational leadership principles as best business practices in the service and out. The other veterans explained they saw their civilian leaders had charisma and finesse and seemed to know how to motivate their people. As civilians after the military, some of them learned how to use transformational principles to motivate and get their personnel to me more productive.

Discussion of the Results

In this case study, Pre-9/11/2001 veterans reported their leadership training consisted of transactional leadership principles and explained it was an appropriate leadership style due to the nature of the missions they performed. Additionally, they did not have difficulty finding employment following military service, as many of them had been drafted; therefore, they were able to return to their previous jobs. Post-9/11/2001 veterans and the Pre-9/11/2001 veteran who served in the Army National Guard experienced transformational leadership while active duty. They were encouraged to use transformational leadership as a holistic approach to leading. The three veterans reported increased motivation, productivity, and efficiency. One Pre-9/11/2001

veteran and one post-9/11/2001 veteran did not have difficulty finding employment following their service because both had jobs lined up prior to discharge. One post-9/11/2001 veteran did have difficulty, though the two post-9/11/2001 veterans discussed changes in their mindsets from Senior NCOs to civilian one day to the next. They had difficulty making the transition from uniform to civilian attire.

Results of the artifact data indicated military leadership training begins as soon as basic military training begins and continues as one achieves higher ranks. Guiding principles, such as honor, integrity, and faithfulness, are represented as virtuous leadership in the literature as well as the training manuals, interviewee perceptions, and focus group participant perceptions. Transformational leadership principles were found in each source of data collected. However, transformational leadership principles were more evident in the perceptions of post-9/11/2001 veterans than in those of the Pre-9/11/2001 veterans. Initially, the distinction between service eras was not a concern. It was presumed that all veterans would have similar leadership training, leadership experiences, and leadership applications. Artifact data reinforced the presumption that transformational leadership guided leadership training; however, with the first interview of a Pre-9/11/2001 veteran, it became apparent the perceptions were vastly different. The difference became clearer when P4 specifically stated, “I don’t have any perceptions of military leadership training. I didn’t get any.” Subsequent interviews with Pre-9/11/2001 veterans were similar. Only one participant indicated a cursory knowledge of transformational leadership, P8, who served in the Army National Guard and received much of his training from military and civilian leaders during the Vietnam War era. The interview and focus group data did not show indications that leaders used transformational principles to ease the burden of the transition experience.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

Key literature conclusions included the challenges researchers noted between military and civilian culture, which affected an exiting service member's transition from the military to a corporate setting. Many former service members found it difficult to redirect their purpose following service and demonstrated difficulty in finding a new sense of purpose, reconnecting with family and friends, and transferring the skills they learned in the service to the civilian workforce. The Pew Center (2011) also indicated former military members thought they were prepared to apply their skills in the civilian setting but had difficulty making the transfer and connection with new, civilian employment.

Participants discussed transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and their perceptions of the experiences they had with each, which seemed to corroborate what was found in the literature. For example, Moccia (2012) advised that a tenet of transformational leadership is a leader's ability to inspire personnel. Uzonwanne's (2015) study provided support by indicating a correlation between leadership style and rational decision making. The veteran participants' experiences demonstrated the differences between transformational and transactional leadership styles while explicitly stating a laissez-faire leadership style had no place on the battlefield. To reiterate:

> In turbulent environments and conflicting situations, transformational leaders are likely to be more effective because they seek new ways of working, positively managing conflicts, seek opportunities in the face of risk and are less likely to support the status quo. (Saeed et al., 2014, p. 222).

Transformational leaders make a difference for transitioning service members because of the transformational leaders' ability to recognize strengths in others and assist followers to

commit and be motivated to contribute to the overall mission and vision of organizations (Blackburn, 2016; Hamad, 2015; Regis University, 2018). Exiting military members report such ability as a key factor to reintegrating into civilian life. Transformational leaders help military veterans see a new place for themselves in the civilian setting by giving them a new sense of purpose and responsibility within the civilian organization (Cathcart, 2017).

McCleskey (2014) explained how transformational leaders help their personnel transcend self-interest toward doing what is best for the organization as a whole. This principle is in alignment with veterans' shared experiences and the training manuals in which recruits and military members were and are expected to work for the team, regardless of the era in which they served. The persistent looking out for one's comrades, doing one's job so that no gets killed, was pervasive in all eras of military service. Moreover, Zareen et al. (2015) explained that a laissez-faire leadership style was a means to allow independent, experienced, and knowledgeable personnel the autonomy and creative license to get a job done without micromanaging, which would provide personnel the opportunities to build their independence further and develop a more innovative and motivated workforce. None of the participants seemed to appreciate or subscribe to the laissez-faire leadership style. Rather, they indicated the need for transactional leadership principles based on mission objectives or using transformational leadership principles, which equated to higher profits, better personnel relations, and smoother operations within their businesses.

Transformational leadership principles build relationships and encourage interconnectedness and a sense of purpose among stakeholders and employees (Du et al., 2013), encourage the hiring of people who want to lead (Chamberlin, 2010), and motivate employees intrinsically, without monetary rewards (Friedman, 2014). Transformational leaders act in

humility to develop others, sharing honors and recognition, giving followers a sense of purpose and meaning, and inspiring employees (Moccia, 2012). Further researchers explained successful military leaders build relationships as indicated by transformational leadership principles (Hussain & Hassan, 2015; United States Air Force, 2017). Bangari (2014) indicated military leaders who adhered to these principles showed sincerity of purpose, genuine care and concern for the command, impeccable moral integrity, and a compassionate approach toward all in general. The participants within this study shared similar observations of transformational leadership traits.

Building relationships, developing a sense of purpose and value, inspiring individuals, motivating them, encouraging self-less leadership, communicating, developing each individual's sense of value and purpose within the organization, and a sense that goes beyond the individual are tenets of a transformational leader, as P1, P2, and P8 shared in their experiences as leaders. P1 and P2 elucidated that genuine care and concern, impeccable moral integrity, and compassion encouraged resiliency and built one's ability to withstand the changing environment. The TAP textbook advised that using these principles would help ease the transition process (United States Department of Labor, 2014). Several Pre-9/11/2001 veterans explained, in different verbiage, that managing the transition included connecting with family and friends, getting a job, and moving forward.

The literature indicated that transformational leadership has an impact on personnel that inspires and motivates while promoting a general sense of well-being and value within an organization. When people encounter this type of leadership, retention increases. Employees feel compelled to be their best, not for monetary gain, but intrinsically, based on the relationship and connection they feel with their leaders and teams. The influence of transformational leaders

seemed to help 3 of the 18 participants with supervising personnel. P1, P2, and P8 indicated they learned transformational principles and were able to inspire and motivate their personnel by modeling the behavior they wanted to see in others. They also learned from other transformational leaders and military training courses how to effectively supervise and communicate the objectives and mission they were to perform. Transformational leadership principles seemed to be a significant aspect of training for post-9/11/2001 military personnel. Artifact and interview data showed these principles to be integral to the training of the newest recruit to officers.

Limitations

The researcher intended to speak with male and female veterans who served five or more years and attained the rank of E5 or higher; however, this was not possible based on the number of willing participants from the local veterans' organizations. Potential participants indicated their trepidation about being interviewed and being involved with the study. Many stated they were supportive of the study, but used the same rationale for not participating, "I have nothing to contribute." This was a consistent sentiment by several participants; thus, no women participated as none frequented the events or meetings at which the researcher made announcements and lingered in order to obtain participants. Additionally, three of the 10 interviewees served two to four years and attained the rank of E4. The choice was to obtain their input and include the data as it may provide additional, significant information that pertained to the research questions. This did occur, as one participant was an E4 from the Army National Guard who had experienced transformational leadership principles in action while active duty, unlike his peers who were active duty Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force during the same timeframe (Vietnam).

Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

The purpose of this study was to find suggestions to ease the transition from the military to civilian setting; however, it appears that focusing on that transition only treats the symptom, not the root problem. The implication is the root cause of difficult transitions may be a lack of understanding of the social-emotional processes or cycles one may endure following major career changes (Conroy & O'Leary-Kelly, 2014). Evidence indicates that transformational leaders created a culture and environment where there was a clear purpose and subordinates understood their roles and responsibilities. Transformational leaders provided support to their personnel, helping to prepare them for the transition. As Bass (1990) advised, transformational leaders empower and develop their followers by informing and engaging the followers in the mission and purpose of the organization, which enables the followers' resiliency beyond their work within that organization. Transitioning military members who experienced less stress and challenges also had support from family and friends and personal religiosity (Ahern et al., 2015; Zogas, 2017).

Pre-9/11/2001 veterans indicated they knew once they got out of the military they needed to go straight to work and provide for themselves and their families. The assumption is that current exiting military members do not have the same expectation. Instead, the perception is that post-9/11/2001 veterans will have challenges adjusting; therefore, their communities must give them time to adjust, and they should go to the VA and receive mental health help, receive job counseling, and compensation pension for their apparent PTSD. While Pre-9/11/2001 veterans believe Post-9/11/2001 veterans have PTSD and the challenges that come with it, they still want to see the young veterans get to work and find a renewed sense of purpose working in the civilian environment. They do not diminish their experience except in regard to basic training,

where Pre-9/11/2001 veterans perceive Post-9/11/2001 veterans as babied and coddled through training, making them less effective as warriors (P3, 2019).

Another implication was discussed by interviewees and examined during the focus group. Participants expressed frustration with the services provided by the VA Hospitals, especially in regard to recently separated military members. They talked about how newly separated veterans seem to not understand or know of the many benefits allotted them following their active duty service, particularly if they served in a combat area. These participants explained the difficulties they noted while attempting to obtain their benefits and how they attempted to help the new veterans get their benefits; however, as FG1 explained, the process is inherently difficult. FG1 works with new veterans and helps them through the appeals process as many of the veterans initially are denied benefits. This participant continued by sharing that much has been done to ameliorate the situation, but not enough. Many veterans, pre- and Post-9/11/2001, tend to give up because the process is too arduous, and they tell him it is not worth fighting for their benefits.

Military training changed from how it was before the events of 9/11/2001. In today's military, post-9/11/2001, transformational leadership principles are demonstrated in how military members are taught, trained, and expected to act, as evidenced by the integration of transformational leadership principles throughout the training handbooks for each of the services as well as those listed in the TAP class textbook. Also, it appears how new recruits are trained in the military affects how these recruits respond to war. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans indicated their surprise and disbelief that current recruits do not have to "drop and give me 20" (P4), get yelled at by a training instructor with the brim of that instructor's hat bumping the brim of the recruit's hat, are not cursed at, or any other manner of what is now considered verbal abuse. One retired veteran compared his experience to that of his son's. He was drafted during the Vietnam War

while his son joined following the events of 9/11/2001. He shared that his son was not yelled at, was not belittled in any way, and completed a survey at the end of basic training in which he was asked if his training instructor was respectful and did nothing to berate or belittle him. The veteran was appalled and speculated that the reason there are so many young veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is because they are not prepared to face the stresses and challenges of war.

The data implies that current policies for recruits may not screen potential recruits well enough to determine a recruit's capacity for the rigidity, flexibility, mental, and emotional strength required for serving well in the military. The data also implies that exiting service members are expected to follow through with TAP objectives, but those objectives are challenging to meet when one is dealing with an identity that is different. The TAP participant book does not identify the mental or emotional process one encounters upon leaving military services. There appears to be a need to include the process of accepting the new identity of civilian, retired or separated military veteran, and so on. The theory that provides the basis for basic military training and TAP may need to be reviewed in order to address how the lack of verbal stressors does or does not develop mental and emotional strength for new recruits or the change in identity and role of exiting military members. Research that delves into whether current policies and practices that indicate the rigidity, mental, and emotional strength may be necessary to identify whether or not current policies support new recruits. Theories that provide the foundation for training may or may not encourage, required mental and emotional strength are encouraged, strengthened, or nonexistent.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research for transitioning military members needs to be specific for Post-9/11/2001 veterans. Having been in a constant state of war since the events on 9/11/2001 as well as having a much less traumatizing basic military experience appears to have affected the way current and upcoming military members view war, their roles, responsibilities, and coping skills or lack of coping skills. It is recommended to determine what the root cause of difficult transitions is, as well as to determine the root cause of PTSD. It might be useful to know if military training commands prepare recruits so as to minimize the effects of PTSD if not PTSD occurrences as a whole; or, perhaps a study can be done to determine if PTSD is collateral damage.

Further study should begin by determining if those entering the military have a predisposition for PTSD or other stress or anxiety related predispositions. Then, researchers could determine how basic military training exacerbates or prepares one to avoid the pitfalls of the stressors that lead to anxiety related issues or PTSD. Another opportunity for research includes following the military members through their careers, using a longitudinal study, to determine if there are controllable elements within service that reduce PTSD occurrences. The need to provide transition assistance may still exist, though Post-9/11/2001 participants indicated their supervisors did not provide time out of work to take the TAP class. Instead, they were expected to continue with their responsibilities until the very last day, which added additional stress to an already stressful transition. A study could be done to determine if that has an effect on the difficult transition experience.

Additional studies to answer these questions could use a similar study design. Using the qualitative case study with interviews, focus groups, and observations, researchers might be able

to ascertain if verbal abuse and/or physical punishment lead to a stronger mental capacity, enabling one to endure the stresses of war and shielding one from the severity of PTSD if not avoiding PTSD altogether. Also, a study should be done to review the benefits process to determine the key factors that prevent or enable veterans to receive benefits.

For a study on the benefits process, it is recommended that a practical action research approach be utilized. Practical action research "focuses on a 'problematic situation' in practice. Hence its purpose is to either solve this practical problem or at least find a way to further enhance what is already positive in a practice situation" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 50). The design of this study would be developed in the cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting using participants as coinvestigators. The participants would need to be newly separated veterans who are attempting to obtain VA benefits, such as compensation pension and healthcare. The participants should be from all branches of the United States military. Neither time in service nor time in grade should be an issue unless the data indicate a difference in receiving benefits, in which case, further study may be needed to find out why.

A researcher conducting practical action research should be familiar with the VA benefits and the process one must complete in order to obtain all appropriate benefits (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Qualitative methods can be used to collect data, such as the methods used in this case study: interviews, focus groups, and artifacts. Observations could be used to validate collected and analyzed data. Quantitative methods should be used, as well. These would include the statistics of the number of new veterans who apply for benefits and those who are approved, demographics, time in service information, time in grade information, and, perhaps, surveys to obtain self-reported perceptions of the process to indicate other areas of success or improvement. Attribute and in vivo coding could be used to analyze the data, as was done in this study, though

values coding may be useful in a future study about the VA benefits because values coding, "reflects a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 131), which may affect one's tenacity in pursuing VA benefits or affecting one's perception of those benefits. The results of this kind of study may provide the insight needed to make beneficial changes to the VA process that have longstanding results in regard to the military to civilian transition and the perception of stability new veterans may have.

Conclusion

It was an honor speaking with my fellow veterans about transitioning from the military to civilian setting. I thought that I would find transition experiences similar throughout all eras, but that was not the case. Instead, I was surprised to learn that WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans had much in common, and those who got out of the service after the events of 9/11/2001 had more difficulties with transition even though the public is more accepting of military personnel. The irony is not lost. WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans faced the draft and were expected to hurry up and get a job after their military service. They were not expected to succumb to shell shock, or what is now considered PTSD. They were expected to deal with their challenges on their own or have a drink. Some veteran participants advised against drinking, but also acknowledged how coping with the stresses of war and what they encountered during war requires additional support. They discussed how participating with local veterans' organizations provided a safe place for those returning from war to go and have a beer without having to explain why they were there, what they were feeling, what challenges they were having, or anything of the sort because the other veterans there already understood, endured it themselves, and simply provided the camaraderie that helped them endure, cope, and move forward in some capacity.

Future research needs to be completed to take the best practices of veterans who had smoother transitions and instill those practices in training programs and personnel prior to their leaving the service. Pre-9/11/2001 veterans expressed concern that newer veterans are not handling the challenges of war well because they were not taught or given the opportunities to endure, cope, and move forward from disappointments in childhood, as they did when they were children, such as not getting to be on the t-ball team or not receiving a trophy for participation. They felt these experiences helped them learn to deal with disappointment. Then, when they went to basic training, they were given further coping skills by having to endure the ridicule and belittlement from their training instructors. These difficult experiences hardened them to some degree so that, in their experience, there was less PTSD, though they endured more of their comrades dying while in battle.

Current exiting service members have endured a constant state of war since 9/11/2001. The experiences are not the same as the experiences of those who left service prior to 9/11/2001. This changes the circumstances of the data. Future studies need to concentrate on Post-9/11/2001 veterans because their experiences are different from entry into the military, to military leadership training, expectations, and the expectations following service. The military guidelines, expectations, and how one handles personnel, training, and supervisory responsibility are different. In order to provide a smoother transition experience, researchers need to be able to differentiate the challenges that result from PTSD, lack of job security and sense of purpose, stresses of change, or all of the above. They need to be able to pinpoint the root causes of PTSD or how to help service members find a sense of purpose before leaving service so that the transition is not as diminishing as it was for those who shared their experiences in this study. There are opportunities to learn more about current military members, their challenges, and how

those challenges shape their transition into the civilian setting. The differences were not anticipated but illuminated an opportunity to research ways to provide targeted support for new veterans.

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Appendix A: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

> As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does "fraudulent" mean?

"Fraudulent" work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one's own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate's final work without full and complete documentation.

What is "unauthorized" assistance?

"Unauthorized assistance" refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another's work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.

2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association.*

Debbie J. Castañeda

Digital Signature

Debbie J. Castañeda

Name (Typed)

December 11, 2019

Date

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Tell me about the leadership training you received while in the military.
2. What are your perceptions of leadership training in the military?
3. How did you apply your leadership training to develop and prepare your subordinates while in the military?
4. Describe how your military training and experience prepared you to transition out of the military.
5. How did you prepare to transition out of the military?
6. How did your leaders/supervisors help ease your transition?
7. What was your experience of transitioning out of the military?
8. What was most useful in your transition out of the military?
9. Were you able to find employment right away? Why? Why not?
10. How would you describe your job search experience?
11. What is your perception of the similarities and differences of leadership within the civilian environment? How did the similarities and differences affect your transition into the civilian environment?
12. Describe how you adapted your military leadership training to the civilian setting.
13. What kind of training, if any, would help exiting service members transition most effectively and smoothly?
14. What would you tell an exiting service member to help him or her transition to the civilian setting? Why?

Appendix C: Focus Group Questions

1. Let's discuss your transition out of the military. Describe your perspective, the good and the bad.
2. Describe how leadership prepared you for your military duties?
3. Describe how that leadership affected your transition into the civilian setting.
4. Describe how leaders eased your transition out of the military.
5. Describe how leaders were motivating and/or helpful in preparing you for transition.
6. Describe your experience of finding employment upon exiting out of the military?
7. Were you able to find employment right away? Why? Why not?
8. What was most useful in your transition out of the military?
9. Describe the similarities and differences of the military and civilian settings you noted upon separation.
10. Describe how you adapted your military leadership training to the civilian setting.
11. What would you tell an exiting service member to help him or her transition to the civilian setting? Why?
12. What kind of training, if any, would help exiting service members transition most effectively and smoothly?