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Military Leadership in Combat

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MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN COMBAT

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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Title: Military Leadership in Combat

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The purpose of this study is to examine both effective and non-effective leader behaviors exhibited by leaders in the U.S. Army while in combat and under enemy fire. A secondary goal is to determine whether characteristics of combat leadership are present or evident in all forms of leadership. Specifically, leader behaviors will be identified by using a stratified sample of soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and commissioned officers, all with varying degrees of experience, years of service, among both male and female soldiers. The study proposes a hybrid research design using qualitative and quantitative measures that incorporate 2,000 soldier surveys, 8 focus groups consisting of a total of 80 soldiers, and 24 in-depth interviews (18 male, 6 female) from 8 separate groups. The results of this study will be published in the author's dissertation titled Military Leadership in Combat.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife and children whose faith in me throughout our lives together has given me the confidence to accomplish all that I have. Thank you for not giving up on me many years ago. No amount of thanks could ever be enough for my wife, Theodora. For all of the times you watched me type on the computer while you were taking care of the house and kids. I appreciate your constant support and encouragement. You are still the one that makes my heart jump when you pull into the driveway and I look forward to all of the times we will have together.

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thank you to all of the soldiers who told me their stories during the interviews.

Without you, this research would not have been possible.

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INTRODUCTION

Forward

On February 10, 2008, 30 soldiers and I were 40 miles north of Baghdad in

Yethrib, Ira, conducting security for a reconciliation meeting between local Sunni and

Shia City council members. Suddenly, without warning three shots rang out: I dropped

to one knee while 5 of my soldiers quickly hit the ground and lay prone facing the

sound of the enemy fire. Without a word we fell into an impromptu tactical wedge

formation and began maneuvering toward the shots. Nothing was said and nobody

assumed charge of the formation, yet we all knew who was in charge. We had one

leader of our small squad and, after only a glance from him, we immediately set up

and maneuvered toward the threat. We were all in concert and prepared to eliminate

the threat. We reacted as if it were a training scenario, a scenario we had spent years

preparing for. From a soldier's perspective, these events clearly demonstrated the

critical importance of having a tactically and technically proficient leader before,

during, and after an engagement with the enemy. The critical stakes of our mission as

soldiers and the challenges that such an event posed to our success illustrate why it is

so important to determine in advance what makes a great leader!

Leadership is a behavioral process whereby an individual influences a group to

achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2004). Drawing on scholarly literature from both

military and non-military studies and my combat experience in both Iraq and

Afghanistan, I will investigate what type(s) of processes in leadership behavior are

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most effective for leading soldiers in combat while under enemy fire and subsequently,

what type of training is most effective for preparing soldiers for combat.

Introduction

What makes a great leader? What attitudes, behaviors, characteristics, and personality traits does he or she have? What beliefs does he or she possess, demonstrate, and what characteristics render some people more or less influential over others at times which call for leadership? Is leadership a trait or a behavior? Is leadership simply innate charisma or the ability to communicate effectively? Is effective leadership simply determined by one who manages to coerce his or her subordinates to complete assigned tasks? This dissertation assumes the following conception of leadership: those who successfully guide others in a certain course of action possess distinctive characteristics that give them facility in directing the conduct of others. I developed this understanding of leadership from both a scholarly perspective and from a professional career as a soldier in the United States Army.

The focus of my investigation was to discover whether greater clarity on the nature of leadership could be gleaned from witnessing the behavior exhibited by those in positions of military command while in a firefight in combat. As a member of the U.S. Army officer corps, I have been deployed to a hostile area and served under combat conditions on 2 separate occasions. I spent a year in Iraq and 2 months in Afghanistan. I also know from experience that decisions made in combat carry grave consequences on many different levels thus making them one of the true tests of mettle and mind. From these circumstances certain clearly defined themes and

patterns emerge that support a general understanding of the character of military leadership. I hope that my experience combined with the observations of scholars in leadership studies have produced a rich qualitative and quantitative model for future discoveries in the study of military leadership in combat.

Statement of the Problem

The U.S. Army has not adequately addressed the call for more research regarding how a leader's behavior while in combat and in a firefight with their enemy can produce harmful results. But the study of leadership and some understanding of the pressure that bears on leaders in these situations could be very helpful to those that have witnessed during periods of combat while in contact with their enemy, both positive and negative examples of leaders during a time of war. To this point in history, the U.S. Army has relied primarily on observations and experiences from combat soldiers themselves and leaders to better develop training programs for future combat operations. Although commendable, this reliance has in some ways left military leaders in the dark as to the underlying dynamics of leadership that might make sense of their observations and experiential accounts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to distinguish common themes and behaviors of effective leaders in combat while under enemy fire, and determine whether combat effective traits and behaviors are transferable from combat to non-combat situations. The first step of this study then was to determine whether the element of combat so

heightens and/or amplifies leadership challenges that they obscure the dynamics at work in more routine leadership situations, or if they in fact crystallize our perception of them.

Research Questions

I investigated how individual leadership characteristics and behaviors of U.S. Army leaders differed while in combat and under enemy fire. To accomplish this effort the following questions were addressed:

1. Are there characteristics related to combat that can be taught to create combat effective leaders?

2. Are characteristics reflected in effective combat leadership found in non-combat leadership?

Significance of the Research

By identifying and describing positive and negative, as well as effective and ineffective leadership traits, skills, and abilities prior to deployment, we can better facilitate training for military leadership in combat. This will better prepare leaders to make the most effective decisions while under duress and enemy fire. With the proper training, military personnel would be better prepared to lead in combat as well as be more adequately trained and equipped for deployment to combat zones across the world.

The U.S. Army begins developing leaders at the onset of their military service. But, considering the lack of scholarly research in this discipline, it is important to

understand whether the U.S. Army is really developing soldiers in the most effective way or whether it simply relies upon the perceptions from the instructors and/or anecdotal accounts of combat from other members of the military.

The U.S. Army begins formal leadership training with soldiers at the lowest levels of the military rank structure. For example, when individuals enlist into the Army, individuals are quickly and randomly placed in charge of the other enlistees while they travel to their first assignment, at which point begins they began their formal military basic training. Once they arrive at their basic training location, soldiers are divided into small groups starting at the 2 person team level, the 9 person squad, followed by the 30 person platoon, and the 120 person company. Leaders are assigned at every level, so for every soldier there is another soldier and his supervisor (team leader, squad leader, platoon leader, and company commander). Each member of the team represents another incremental level of leadership.

For decades, perhaps centuries, professional soldiers and military leaders have developed training designed from the knowledge of experience and taught according to the discretionary judgment of those in charge. In the U.S. Army this training begins at the lowest levels and remains consistent across the entire U.S. Army spectrum. This begins with basic combat training where new soldiers learn every critical soldier skill (referred to as Warrior Tasks) in the same manner, using the same training techniques, with the same type of equipment, and with the same standards to ensure a well and consistently trained force worldwide. The problem arises when an individual, responsible for developing soldiers and leaders, is neither consistent in the training provided or simply misguided in their understanding of the most effective leadership

techniques. Without the knowledge of a scholarly, systematic, and structured approach to developing leaders, much of today's efforts to pass on knowledge and leadership skills to new recruits remain a matter of luck.

I believe the U.S. Army needs to enhance its research with respect to leadership studies by focusing on scholarly research. In 28 years of military service, I have not seen a systematic structured approach to the study of leadership in combat while under enemy fire, nor have I found evidence of this kind of research. The U.S. Army's success in creating a highly reputed officer corps, as well as hundreds of thousands of combat proven veterans who are recognized for their effectiveness in military leadership obviously makes this area a rich field for mining information on leadership behavior. It will therefore be useful to our purposes to distinguish the leadership factors that set these men and women apart.

Chapter Summary

In summary, this study distinguished common themes and behaviors of effective leaders in combat while under enemy fire and to attempted to determine whether combat effective traits and behaviors are transferable from combat to non-combat situations. To accomplish this, I examined how individual leadership characteristics and behaviors of U.S. Army leaders differed while in contact with the enemy by investigating the following two questions:

1. Are there characteristics related to combat that can be taught to create combat effective leaders?

2.   Are characteristics reflected in effective combat leadership found in non-combat leadership?

By examining these two questions, I believe the U.S. Army will have a tremendous opportunity to further conduct research on how a leader's behaviors can produce both positive and negative results in a firefight, as well as contribute to the overall knowledge and understanding within the academic discipline of leadership studies. Now that we are coming to the end of 10 years of war, there is no better time in our nation's history to deal with this topic and use a systematic, scholarly approach to the study of military leadership in combat.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Before beginning the proposed study, an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative research literature was conducted. Topics covered included leadership in general, military leadership, the ethics and morality of combat, as well as research from the Strategic Studies Program at Carlisle Barrack's, Pennsylvania. Studies from the Department of Defense Leadership and Management Division, U.S. Army War College Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania as well as additional military references from the Center for Army Lessons Learned, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, were also examined as well as studies from the Army Research Institute Leadership focused research divisions in Fort Benning, Georgia, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. This latter work is directly supervised by the Pentagon in Washington D.C, and constitutes an extensive portion of my secondary research.

It will be useful to the reader to know that my secondary research was not particularly helpful because there is no U.S. Army way of doing research, nor is there doctrinal agreement on what constitutes Leadership Training for Combat. Having conducted an exhaustive review of the literature in this area, it is plainly evident that the proposed study will be an important contribution to military science.

What follows are the sources I examined in the course of my review. In conducting this review, I focused on research that deals with leadership in combat while under enemy fire. Because the proposed study will seek to discover what kinds of traits

prove most useful to soldiers, the primary aim of the literature review is to uncover as much previous research as possible that might shed light on what I should be looking for as I put together my questionnaires.

One of the richer sources of information on combat leadership comes from military focused resources. It is important to understand that although military sources are not usually viewed as traditional scholarly resources, the information derived from those sources are from a multitude of different researchers, personnel, soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who share on common trait: a strong desire to understand leadership theory and more importantly, combat focused leadership.

Complicating the task of finding information relative to the training of combat soldiers is that on September 11, 2001, the nature of combat operations conducted by the United States would forever become more complex. The traditional format of war, that is, where one side faced off against another in an area outside of the local populace became non-existent. The nature of war has not changed since the beginning of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), but it has become asymmetric, as armies no longer face off against opposing armies. The Army experiences this and Hannah, et. al., have documented how the changing nature of warfare has greatly increased the leadership challenges. For example, soldiers must be prepared to rapidly transition from brutal kinetic combat one minute, to complex, non-kinetic interactions with locals the next (and back again) with mental acuity and an exceptional level of emotional self-control (Hannah et al., 2010). The U.S. Army has therefore begun to focus on developing leader competency models that target flexible and adaptive qualities of leadership. This new type of leader will need to have advanced cognitive

skills (Army Concept for the Objective Force White Paper, 2001; Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2009).

The great Prussian student of warfare Carl von Clausewitz summarized the essence of battle as, "a frightening and shocking experience for most; so why therefore do soldiers voluntarily return to combat so easily" (Clausewitz, 1832)? We can certainly ask that question today, when many soldiers in combat experience the unthinkable; such as the not atypical day that begins by handing candy out to children on one street corner and ends with picking up headless bodies on the next. Combat is often a scene of unrivalled destruction and cruelty, scenes of gruesome destruction where bodies are blown up, shot to pieces, cut and mangled, where wounded are screaming in fear and pain, some scream for God, others for their mothers; combat is a compressed and intensified version of most things in life (Henrickson, 2007). Those who have experienced combat frequently describe an experience of extremely heightened sensory perception, an intense feeling of being alive and an extraordinary emotional experience, where emotions like love and hate are taken to unknown extremes (Henrickson, 2007). How do we train soldiers for wars like this?

The nature of warfare has not changed since the beginning of time, although with the GWOT, it has become much more complicated. Hannah et. al., have documented how the changing nature of warfare has greatly increased the leadership challenges and the need for soldiers to rapidly transition from combat one minute, to complex, non-kinetic interactions with locals the next (2010). The U.S. Army has therefore begun to focus on developing leader competency models that target flexible and adaptive qualities of leadership.

Van Velsor et al. (2008) define leader development as "the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes" What does this mean? It means a leader must be ready to meet many threats such as leading soldiers into an enemy's fortified position while avoiding drawing casualties among the innocent bystanders that inevitably occupy the same space. This requires an amazing amount of mental agility on behalf of both our soldiers and leaders (Van Velsor, et al., 2008).

McCormack (2002) points out the strong incentives the U.S. Army has to develop effective leaders who possess the characteristics needed to achieve goals and objectives in both combat and non-combat situations. In conducting this research, I have discovered many different repositories of U.S. Army related research on traits, behaviors, and leadership: however to date, no single comprehensive theory on leadership is or has been articulated. In fact, the U.S. Army currently spends an incredible amount of time, energy, and resources to select, develop, and train leaders without any body of systematic literature to guide them (McCormack, 2002).

As noted above, the literature in this area is not very systematic. The writer will attempt to organize it into three general categories: types of leadership, approaches to behavior traits, and studies which shed light on the important issue of ethics in military combat. The purpose is to impose some organization and structure to the review.

Military Leadership

Bartone, Snook, & Tremble (2002) conducted a four year study at the U.S. Military Academy (West Point) in an effort to determine if cognitive and personality predictors could be validated in assessing an individual's potential for leadership in the military.

In their work, they argue that cognitive factors such as college entrance exams, social skills, and logical reasoning coupled with the personality factors of ability to get along with others and level of maturity can accurately predict success at West Point and subsequent success in military service. Their model is significant for identifying those traits in an individual's cognitive and behavioral disposition because the elements they identify ultimately serve as predictors for successful leadership.

Bartone et al. used cognitive and personality predictors in an attempt to validate and assess individual potential for leadership in the military (2002). Based on their research, they argue that cognitive factors coupled with the personality factors and level of maturity can accurately predict success in the military and show a positive correlation between cognitive and personality predictors in leader performance. Most important, they provide an important insight for what is needed behaviorally in a combat focused leader. The trait approach focuses on a leader's traits and characteristics and closely parallels the major leadership traits from Northouse (2004).

Bartone, et al., measured leader performance by using West Point's cumulative grade point average over the junior and senior years (2002). The military development program scored performance at the end of each academic semester and summer training period and included ratings by at least two supervisors, including one senior cadet in a direct supervisory role, and one an Army tactical officer.

In assigning military development grades, supervisors considered the following twelve basic leadership dimensions related to a cadet's duty performance as a leader.

1) military bearing,

2) teamwork,

3) influencing others,

4) consideration for others,

5) professional ethics,

6) planning,

7) organizing,

8) delegating,

9) supervising,

10) developing subordinates,

11) decision making,

12) oral and written communication (Bartone et al., 2002).

Besides these twelve basic leader dimensions, additional cognitive predictors of leader performance were also examined. Five cognitive indicators were included in the study:

1. Spatial judgment: A 20-item mental figure-rotation task was used to assess spatial judgment ability (Bartone et al., 2002).

2. Logical reasoning: To measure this ability, the study used six verbal logical reasoning problems drawn from the Employee Aptitude Survey which described verbal–logical reasoning as a basic cognitive ability that underlies a leader's ability to solve problems effectively (Bartone et al., 2002).

3. Social judgment: This measure derives directly from the problem-solving model of leadership (Mumford & Connelly, 1991).

4. Problem solving: This study also used a measure of general organizational problem solving described by Bartone et al. (2002).

5. College entrance exam scores, SAT and ACT scores.

This study clearly revealed a positive correlation between cognitive and personality predictors in leader performance at West Point. This offers a potential model for combat focused leadership training that could eventually permit us to understand better what makes for a more effective leader mentally, emotionally, and behaviorally. Behaviors are much easier to define and scientifically examine than anecdotal evidence. Behaviors are readily discernible and quantifiable in human beings. Researchers who observe soldiers in the U.S. Army have a unique opportunity to observe and document effective and non-effective leader behaviors. In my study of military behavior, I pay special attention to those behavioral traits associated with the core military values each soldier is required to master in their military occupational specialty, which include but are not limited to, the Ten Leader Traits listed below.

The Ten Leader Traits

1. Composure: A leader must display composure especially in dangerous and life threatening situations. Composure is a key component of leader presence; a leader who shows hesitation in dire circumstances can trigger a negative chain reaction among others (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003).

2. Confidence: Confidence is the faith that leaders place in their own abilities to perform in any situation, especially when under stress and with little or no available information. Leaders who know their own capabilities and believe in themselves are

confident and this confidence grows from professional competence. Adversely, too much confidence can be detrimental, truly confident leaders do not need to advertise their gift, their actions prove their abilities (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003).

3. Communication: Competent and confident leaders that get results depend on effective communication. Although communication is usually viewed as a process of providing information, communication as a competency must ensure that there is more than the simple transmission of information (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). Communication needs to achieve a new understanding and must create new or better awareness; communicating critical information in a clear fashion is an important skill to reach a shared understanding (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

4. Lead by example: This is essential to leading effectively over the course of time. Leaders provide an example for others to follow and this competency reminds us that every leader in the U.S. Army is a role model (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003).

5. Physical fitness: Physical fitness is absolutely critical for leaders in the U.S. Army and is defined as having sound health, strength, and endurance, which sustain emotional health and conceptual abilities under prolonged stress (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003). Physical fitness is one of the few traits or behaviors that may not transcend from the military to civilian leadership model.

6. Mental agility: Mental agility is a flexibility of mind, a tendency to anticipate or adapt to uncertain or changing situations. Agility assists thinking through second- and third-order effects when current decisions or actions are not producing the desired effects. It helps break from habitual thought patterns, to improvise when faced with

conceptual impasses, and quickly apply multiple perspectives to consider new approaches or solutions (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

7. Achieves success: Ultimately leaders exist to accomplish goals and objectives set forth by the U.S. Army. Getting results, accomplishing the mission, and fulfilling goals and objectives are why leaders exist; leaders get results through communication and influence (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

8. Courage: Personal courage encompasses courage at all levels: emotional, mental, and physical courage are key to effective leadership in all organizations (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003). Courage can be displayed in a multitude of different ways and not easily identifiable to the researcher. This will be a challenge to articulate in subsequent research.

9. Technical and Tactical Proficiency: This can be described as the ability to understand every technical aspect of you and your subordinate's weapons systems (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). Tactical proficiency is the ability to maneuver you and your unit in a tactical manner given any situation in any part of the world. This would include operations in urban terrain, built up areas such as Baghdad, and desolate areas in Africa. A leader must have both technical and tactical competence to lead effectively.

10. Adaptive Leadership: Adaptive leadership includes but is not limited to being an agent of change, helping other members of the organization, especially key leaders, to recognize that an environment is changing and building consensus as change is occurring (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). As this consensus is built, adaptive leaders can work to influence the course of the organization. Depending on the

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immediacy of the problem, adaptive leaders may use several different methods for influencing their organization. These can range from "crisis action meetings" (when time is very short) to publishing white papers or other "thought pieces" that convey the need for change. (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

Adaptive Leadership Theory

The U.S. Army is moving toward a new type of leader, leaders who are cognitive thinkers, are willing to take risks, and resilient in their emotional self-control. These types of leaders must also adapt to new cultural contexts, and use their cognitive skills to evaluate and determine the best course of action within these new settings.

The phrase "adaptive leadership" continues to surface in discussions and literature from U.S. Army senior officers and their publications and messages to soldiers. The U.S. Army's current doctrine defines adaptive leadership as the practice of creative thinking that uses adaptive approaches drawn from previous circumstances or lessons learned, along with creating innovative approaches to new problems (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). It states when tasks are difficult, adaptive leaders identify and account for the capabilities of the team, noting that while some tasks are routine, others require leader clarification, and still others present new challenges (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). Speaking from adaptability in combat, this is the ability to identify changes in the current operating environment, identify critical elements of the new environment, and adjust to meet new challenges (Cojocar, 2011).

Field Manual 6-22 describes adaptable leaders as leaders who are comfortable with ambiguity, who are flexible and innovative, and are prepared to meet challenges at

hand with available resources; they are passionate learners who have the ability to handle competing demands, shifting priorities, and operate in this environment flexibly (Cojocar, 2011). FM 6-22 posits that adaptability has two key components:

1. The ability of a leader to identify the essential elements critical for performance in each new situation.

2. The ability of a leader to change his practices or his unit by quickly capitalizing on strengths and minimizing weaknesses (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow have done a great deal to advance the understanding of this notion called "adaptive leadership" through their research and publications. Heifetz, authored a book "*Leadership without Easy Answers*" and along with Linsky, and Grashow, co-authored a book "*The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*" define adaptive leadership from an individual, organizational, and non-military view. Heifetz et al. define an adaptive leader as an individual who influences others in an organization to facilitate and enable individuals to change to better an organization, more specifically, adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing groups of people to tackle tough challenges and thrive (2009). They continue by advancing the idea that adaptive leaders understand the importance of adaptation and are able to employ the relevant processes and tools to build the adaptive capacity of organizations (2009). A related question then is: do soldiers tend to favor one leadership style over another, and would this change when circumstances become life threatening, for instance when in combat? Scholars differ widely over this issue: they ask, "What type of leadership and

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leadership behaviors are best suited for soldiers facing combat, and do soldiers tend to favor one style of leadership over another?"

McCormack (2002) conducted research using 99 military officers in the Australian Army, where he discovered a significant correlation between positive leadership characteristics to promotion and advancement. The study used the Five-Factor Model from Beng-Chong. This model assesses a soldier's potential for advancement and promotion based on a correlation of positive leadership traits. For the purpose of this study, we can assume that promotion in the Australian Army has a direct positive correlation to positive leadership skills. The Five-Factor Model uses the same characteristics from Beng-Chong: conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness, extraversion, and neuroticism. Each is measured individually and against each of the other traits to illustrate how each leader trait relate between different groups. Therefore, leadership traits and skills, and lack of the same when identified early in soldiers, can subsequently be developed for the purpose of future leadership development within military officers.

From experience, the author knows Australian military officers have similar evaluation and training systems as the U.S Army. The Australian military is also interested in quantifiable, measurable behaviors when evaluating an officer for promotion. As with Northouse's (2004) trait approach, both the U.S. and Australian military leaders seek to identify a leader's behavior to justify advancement and promotion. Interesting is that behaviors are identifiable only to the degree that the individual's supervisor subjectively notes and evaluates a leader's performance. Herein lies a potential weakness in McCormack's position (2002), I would argue when

evaluating a military officer's potential for advancement (with the idea this can transcend to what better prepares a leader for combat), the entire evaluation cannot be based on a reviewer's subjective analysis of an individual's performance when not grounded in identifiable and observable behaviors.

Authentic Leadership Theory

Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT) may provide the U.S. Army with an opportunity to move beyond its current understanding of leadership while under enemy fire. Officers from West Point have introduced this new leadership approach that represents the formal development of the idea that followers are attentive to and are able to recognize a lack of sincerity or clumsy impression displayed by someone in a leadership position (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Authentic leaders are confident, optimistic leaders of high moral character who are keenly aware of their own thoughts, behaviors, abilities and values. Authentic leaders are also attentive to these characteristics in others and the situational context in which they operate (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004). In elaborating the ALT, the states of optimism, hopefulness, and resiliency reflecting positive psychology provide a key to understanding why leaders who are authentic are also effective at commanding follower loyalty, obedience, admiration, and respect.

In situations of war and combat, leadership provides the hope of saving lives and soldiers of all ranks desperately seek capable leaders. For the past few years, military officers have studied many different leadership theories with different approaches to the study of leadership in combat, including traditional leadership theories as well as

newer approaches and models to better understand leadership. One of the approaches

worthy of recognition is termed "*in extremis leadership*" (Kolditz, 2005). Initial

findings indicate that men and women who lead in combat will often behave in ways

that may provide insights into our own leadership. Such insight into leadership is

referred to as "in extremis," or, "at the point of death." (Kolditz, 2005). Still in its

infancy, the study of in extremis leadership needs to be further studied and evaluated

due to its obvious relevance to the study of leadership in combat.

The Core of U.S. Army Leadership

In the 21st Century, "Army leaders need to be pentathletes, multi-skilled individuals

who can thrive in uncertain and complex operating environments ... innovative and

adaptive leaders who are expert in the art and science of the profession of arms" (Dr.

Francis J. Harvey, Secretary of the Army, *Speech for U.S. Army Command and*

General Staff College graduation, 2005).

U.S. Army leaders provide purpose, direction, and motivation across all levels of

the Army. They continuously strive for personal excellence in their profession and

professional excellence in developing their subordinates. This personal and

professional development begins on the first day of enlistment and continues to the

last day of a soldier's career. U.S. Army leaders display a multitude of leader traits

both earned and learned throughout their careers; these are learned attributes I will

focus on in the following sections of The U.S. Army Core Leader Competencies.

The Seven Army Values

Early training for all soldiers begins with the basics called The 7 Army values which are: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage (U.S. Department of Army, 2006).

1. Loyalty: Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers.
2. Duty: Fulfill your obligations.
3. Respect: Treat people as they should be treated.
4. Selfless Service: Put the welfare of the Nation, the Army, and subordinates above your own.
5. Honor: Live up to the Army values.
6. Integrity: Do what's right-legally and morally.
7. Personal Courage: Face fear and danger (U.S. Department of Army, 2006).

Once a soldier is introduced to the U.S. Army Values and lives, breathes, and internalizes these values over a period of 2-3 months, formal leadership is then introduced at the elementary levels. The U.S. Army defines both leadership and Army leadership as a process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization. "An Army leader is anyone who by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals" (U.S. Department of the Army, 2003).

U.S. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the unit to ensure a mission gets accomplished. The foundations of U.S. Army leadership firmly rest in

our history as a nation grounded in the rule of law, traditions, and the ever evolving

quest to be the best military fighting force in the world. As a soldier's career evolves,

this becomes a part of his or her daily environment, the environment which bestows

leadership to its personnel on a daily basis. As the U.S. Army explains in its Field

Manual 6-22, this is known as "core leader competencies" (U.S. Department of the

Army, 2006). Core leader competencies are threefold: leads, develops, and achieves

along a continuum across many other different levels of influence.

The Core Leader Competencies

1. Leads: This competency is grounded in the root element of leadership; to lead is

to provide purpose, motivation, and inspiration to others. This is basic to a soldier who

will be challenged to balance mission accomplishment against the welfare of his or her

subordinates while all the time maintaining and enforcing standards. To lead is to

build trust, understanding, teamwork, and tenacity. To lead is to display outstanding

character among peers and not succumb to adverse situations. To lead is to

communicate, to provide different forms of communication so each subordinate

understands your intentions and facilitate a common understanding in your

subordinates (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

2. Develops: To develop a subordinate is a leadership competency which is basic

to any soldier. To develop is to understand there is more to an individual than himself.

A leader needs to understand there is a greater calling when leading soldiers and the

calling is to develop others (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). The soldier is at the

core of any Army but is nothing if the soldier fails to develop others. To develop

others one must establish a positive command climate. An Army leader must set the standard for others to follow, build teamwork, and push his or her unit to become one cohesive unit. When developing others, the leader must always ensure he is self-aware and completely understands himself so that when he demands many things of others he is comfortable with those demands (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). He must also learn to teach, coach, and mentor subordinates with the heart of a teacher, all the while maintaining focus on the end result of an effective combat leader, a leader who leads men in combat to accomplish any mission however big or small.

    3. Achieves: the final stop of the leadership competencies; a leader achieves results; He plans, coordinates, and executes a plan to achieve success, there is no room for failure in the U.S. Army and achievements are crucial to developing leaders at any stage (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006).

The U.S. Army Officer Core Competencies

    The core competencies required of a commissioned or noncommissioned officer have been established as the following: 212 leader tasks which are broken down into 8 (50 hour) blocks of instruction. The 8 blocks in succession are identified in the U.S. Army Cadet Command Military Science Leadership Pamphlet (2002).

    1. Leadership and Personal Development: studies leadership with a focus on personal development; strives to achieve a solid understanding of personal and professional leadership characteristics required for success as a leader in the U.S. Army.

    2. Introduction to Tactical Leadership: formalized training focused on the basis

of basic military leadership to establish a baseline leadership to build upon throughout one's career.

3. Innovative Team Leadership: explores innovative tactical leadership strategies necessary for team building by examining team dynamics and historical leadership theories that form the basis of the U.S. Army leadership framework.

4. Foundations of Tactical Leadership: examines challenges of leading tactical teams in the current complex operating environments of the Global War on Terror; focus on different dimensions of terrain analysis, tactical patrolling, basic operations orders, also seeks to develop greater self-awareness, communication, and team building skills.

5. Adaptive Tactical Leadership: leadership that requires mental, physical, and emotional flexibility and agility based on environmental, situational, mission requirements, combat capabilities, terrain, weapons, and a multitude of unforeseen and unpredictable circumstances.

6. Leadership in Changing Environments: leaders are challenged to study, practice, and evaluate adaptive leadership skills based on very complex military and civilian scenarios related to small unit tactical operations, this is critical for a future leader to develop self-awareness and critical thinking skills required in the current complex environment of asymmetrical warfare.

7. Developing Adaptive Leaders: learning to be an adaptive leader, training and education are key, developing technical expertise and critical thinking skills which allows a leader to recognize situations, react on what is known at the time, adapt to the current situation, and then complete the task at hand.

8. Leadership in a Complex World: explores the dynamics of leading soldiers in complex military operations as well as identifies the differences in host nation customs and courtesies, military law, principles of war, and host nation support (U.S. Army Cadet Command Military Science Leadership Pamphlet, 2002).

Studies of Military Leadership in Non-Combat Situations

Beng-Chong & Ployhart (2004) chose to use transformational leadership factors as well as the Five-Factor Model to compile results in rating team performance through theory and model. Northouse & Chemers (2004, 1997) theorized that charismatic leaders are able to accomplish effects by engaging follower's self-concepts and linking valued aspects of those self-concepts to the leader's vision and mission. Such leaders transform the needs, values, preferences and aspirations of followers from self-interests to collective interests. They cause followers to become highly committed to the leader's mission, thereby motivating among their subordinates a deep sense of investment in the mission. Therefore, followers perform above and beyond the call of duty (Chemers, 1997).

Many other researchers theorize that a model of facilitative leadership, leadership learning, and team reflexivity in relation to team performance would enhance a leader's ability to learn new tasks and leadership skills, which have a direct correlation in positive team performance. Hirst (2004) identifies five learning areas pertinent to leadership: learning to manage individuals, team management, understanding how the organization works, dealing with people outside the team, and learning technical knowledge. This model draws from an action learning perspective and from social

learning theory. Researchers in this field have observed that people learn from work and real-life experiences of the workplace. Skills learned through solving work problems are likely to be practical and readily applied to leadership behavior (Hirst, 2004). Action learning theory states that leaders learn from challenging work, from solving complex problems, and from leading a team, and that they use this knowledge to foster team communication and enhance team performance (Hirst, 2004).

Some of these newer approaches to the study of leadership select different aspects of leadership through physical, mental, cognitive, emotional, and personality characteristics of a leader. The past decade, the U.S. Army has taken a keen interest in charismatic and transformational leadership that place emphasis on inspiring and transforming the organization, this process is still typically explored from the perspective of a single leader impacting his or her followers in the professional workplace from a perspective of professional leadership (Yukl, 1998). Professional leadership encompasses the "formal" part of leadership by setting the vision and mission for the organization, creating a process for organizational goals, and aligning processes, procedures, people and infrastructure, all to achieve organizational goals (Mastrangelo, Eddy, & Lorenzet, 2004). Personal leadership (the focus of my study) can be thought of as the personal behavior of leaders in performing the responsibilities of professional leadership, including expertise, trust, caring, sharing and morals. Colloquially, it is called the "people" side of leadership. It is through these personal behaviors that leaders ensure the success of the professional leadership. In essence, personal leadership "carries" the professional message to the organization (Mastrangelo et al., 2004). With all of these fragmented and somewhat unstructured

approaches to the study of leadership, one should clearly see the need for the U.S. Army to find and focus resources on what would produce the most effective combat leader. As I have discovered, and will present later in this study, leadership characteristics are somewhat altered from one's norm when one faces an enemy that has the means, willpower, and ability to kill you.

Mastrangelo et al. (2004) provide a study that allows us to examine leadership from different leadership approaches such as the trait approach, the skills approach, the style approach, and the situational approach by Northouse. Mastrangelo et al. focus on individual leader characteristics in cognitive functions to support their position. They seem to believe personal leadership can be identified using behavioral characteristics, which can further be broken down in to a laundry list of identifiable behaviors.

In considering my research I looked at basic leadership theory from Northouse to explore the correlation between the study by Bartone and leadership theory as viewed through the Trait Approach, the Skills Approach, and the Style Approach, with the greatest emphasis on traits.

The Trait Approach

The Trait Approach focuses on a leader's traits and characteristics of intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. In comparison to the twelve leader dimensions above, they closely parallel the major leadership traits from Northouse. Each cadet at West Point was evaluated and assessed in each leader dimension. The strength of the Trait Approach is that it has over a hundred years of

data collection to support its findings (Northouse, 2004). It is also appealing in that within the study traits are easily discernible (with the exception of intelligence) and can be empirically measured.

The Skills Approach

The skills approach focuses on the particular capacities possessed by an individual leader. In essence, this methodology focuses on three basic personal skill sets: technical, human and conceptual (Northouse, 2004). The technical skill is simply having knowledge of a specific type of work or activity required to successfully execute a task, a skill set that the military dubs "technical proficiency." The human skill, by contrast, is defined according to the degree of knowledge an individual leader possesses in regards to human nature and the ease with which he or she can engage in the kind of interpersonal relations necessary for successfully motivating others. Under this category, leaders are assessed according to their sensitivity to the needs of others; what we sometimes refer to as "people skills."

Finally, research by Beng-Chong & Ployhart (2004) identify and discuss critical attributes of transformational leadership and the need to develop traits for effective leadership in today's changing world. Beng-Chong & Ployhart (2004) use the Five-Factor Model to address each attribute which they call transformational antecedents. This study identified critical attributes and illustrates how a leader at any level can positively introduce these attributes and make them a part of his or her daily repertoire.

The Five-Factor Model

1. Neuroticism: Due to their essentially negative nature, neurotic individuals experience more negative life events than other individuals (Beng-Chong & Ployhart, 2004).

2. Extraversion: Whereas neuroticism is related to the experience of negative life events, extraverts are predisposed to experience positive emotions which likely generalize to job satisfaction, as demonstrated by extraverts having more friends and spending more time in social situations than do introverts (Beng-Chong & Ployhart, 2004).

3. Openness to Experience: Openness to experience is related to scientific and artistic creativity (Beng-Chong & Ployhart, 2004).

4. Agreeableness: Agreeableness should be related to happiness because agreeable individuals have greater motivation to achieve interpersonal intimacy, which should lead to greater levels of well-being. Agreeableness was positively related to life satisfaction, which involves getting along with others in pleasant, satisfying relationships (Beng-Chong & Ployhart, 2004).

5. Conscientiousness: Conscientiousness is related to job satisfaction because it represents a general work-involvement tendency and thus leads to a greater likelihood of obtaining satisfying work rewards, both formal and informal (Beng-Chong & Ployhart, 2004).

Similar to my choice of methodology, Moshavi, Brown & Dodd (2004) conducted a study of self-awareness, leadership skills, and a leader's performance based in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Their focus was on how certain measures

related to self-awareness and subordinate performance. They state that a leader's ability for self-awareness has a positive correlation to employee outcomes. Measures were identified and calculated in transformational leadership, subordinate ratings, supervisory ratings, and quantitative measures of age, sex, educational level and job tenure. The study highlighted areas of self-awareness in relation to a leader's performance. While basic self-awareness on the part of a leader has important implications for employee outcomes, the degree and direction of self-awareness is more important in terms of the impact on subordinate attitudes and performance (Moshavi et al., 2004).

Mumford & Connelly's contribution in this area of study has been a study of individuals entering the U.S. Army where they identify certain abilities, personality traits, and motivational characteristics to identify which types generally ascended to upper level positions (1991). Mumford & Connelly (1991) identified seven different personality types, each type with a host of different personality characteristics. The seven types and summary of characteristics are as follows:

1. Concrete achievers: characteristics include ability for achievement, planning, intuition, perception, openness and verbal reasoning (Mumford, Zaccaro, Johnson, Diana, Gilbert, & Threlfall, 2000).

2. Motivated communicators: characteristics include extraversion, responsibility, achievement orientation, dominance, verbal reasoning, intuition, feeling and perception (Mumford, et al., 2000).

3. Limited defensiveness: characteristics include introversion, sensing, thinking, judging, intuition, verbal reasoning, planning and revision (Mumford et al., 2000).

4. Disengaged introverts: characteristics include introversion, intuition, perception, planning responsibility, achievement, dominance, extroversion (Mumford et al., 2000).

5. Social adaptors: characteristics include extroversion, feeling, perception, openness, verbal reasoning, thinking, judging, and sensing (Mumford et al., 2000).

6. Struggling misfits: characteristics include introversion, intuition, thinking, judging, openness, verbal reasoning, planning, and revision (Mumford et al., 2000).

7. Thoughtful innovators: characteristics include introversion, intuition, thinking, achievement, dominance, openness, verbal reasoning, planning, revision, sensing and feeling (Mumford et al., 2000).

Mumford et al. concluded that each type was inherently different and as such, the U.S. Army should identify and place each individual into different types of job specialties to provide necessary diversity within the Army. However, it was quickly learned that the struggle was to correctly identify and match an individual's characteristics with an individual's job. Though once identified, there were positive benefits to linking certain leaders (with certain characteristics) to certain individuals of soldiers of who will be led.

Summary

The asymmetric nature of current operations in the Global War on Terror intensifies the leadership challenges as the modern battlefield evolves (Hannah et al., 2010). It is therefore critical for future generations of leaders in the U.S Army to

understand how leadership manifests in an individual when confronted with possibility or likelihood of death.

A review of the literature clearly indicates a deficiency in leadership theory focused on the most important traits and abilities required when leading soldiers in combat; the ability to be a flexible and adaptive leader. There are many different types of well-developed theories of leadership; these include the trait approach, skills approach, cognitive abilities approach, and the transformational approach, and they are all discussed in this section. The challenge is to come up with an appropriate scholarly approach to the study of leadership particularly applicable to leaders in combat.

The U.S. Army has many different repositories of related research on traits, behaviors, and leadership: however, to date, no single comprehensive theory on leadership is or has been accepted. In fact, the U.S. Army spends an incredible amount of time, energy, and resources to select, develop, and train leaders using a multitude of unproven methods (McCormack, 2002). As with only a handful of scholars before me in this discipline, I will certainly do my part to advance our understanding of leadership theory when confronted with military leadership in combat.

Ethics and Morality of Combat

Martin L. Cook, professor of philosophy at the Air Force Academy, is the author of a comparison between the conflict between the United States and Soviet Union prior to the collapse of the latter and Thucydides account of Athen's demise following the Peloponnesian War. However, today's world is very different from either of these

periods; America now finds itself in a "world-historical moment" with an opportunity to change the world. New challenges now point us toward revisions in our thinking about the nature and role of the profession of arms and the challenges this will entail for the United States and its military" (2004).

Cook posits two distinct ideas: first, the "Moral Facets of Military Service," which addresses aspects of military service such as the principles of Just-War Theory that law, treaty, and American constitutional principles commit the U.S. military. Second, what he believes can be viewed as our justification for military service given the present state of affairs and the absolute disregard by our enemies for adhering to the rules of warfare and rules of engagement. Most interesting are his explanations for the dimensions of military professionalism and the responsibility of the military to maintain a cohesive fighting force. Describing the recent evolution of radical Islamic terrorism and its obvious disregard for human life, Cook creates an atmosphere of thought, reflection, and question for readers of all backgrounds, whether military or civilian.

What then is our ethical responsibility as a nation to our soldiers and their families? How do we train soldiers in a form of battle that has very few ethical borders? To do so may appear to approximate the behavior of a primal savage world. Can we train them in an ethical manner and still prepare them to effectively fight terrorism?

Cook concludes his study by attempting to apply Just War principles to the new post-Cold War era and aspects of the application of military power. Imagine for a moment the following scenario: a young thirteen year old boy is carrying an AK-47 and is 200 yards from your position. He is positioning himself to fire on a convoy of

U.S. Army vehicles. What are the ethical challenges in deciding whether or not to kill this boy? Now change the scenario to a convoy of tanks that cannot be penetrated by an AK-47. Do the ethical challenges change? What Cook helps to foster is a theoretical environment where one can think through ethical and moral situations while looking at different points of view.

As a soldier grows through his or her career it is critically important to understand the ethics and morality of combat. United States soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsman are sworn into military service after solemnly repeating the following statement; "I, (state your full name), do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God." (Title 10, US Code; Act of 5 May 1960).

With this oath comes a tremendous sense of duty, responsibility, and of course the potential that one must risk their life in a combat engagement. By stating the oath and swearing allegiance to the United States of America, one is bound by personal and professional ethics to defend the United States against all enemies. Recruiters in all branches of the military have been instructed to fully disclose the potential for deployment and, in particular to remind potential recruits that military service may require that they take life of another human being. The ethical questions that challenge military leaders are: Who makes the decision to take a life? The commander or the soldier? The person orchestrating an attack or the soldiers

executing the attack? Who decides what ethical boundaries to follow in a combat situation?

With Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and Emerich de Vattel (1714-1767), Immanuel Kant ranks among the most influential philosophers to have addressed the ethical norms raised when human beings intend to kill one another. The theory I am most interested in with respect to Kant's is his work with Just War Theory. Particularly helpful has been the use to which Brian Orend, director of International Studies at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada. Orend argues for three basic perspectives on the ethics and legality of war and peace, with realism and pacifism at the extremes and Just War Theory in the middle (2004). According to Orend, realism holds that a country has a duty to maximize its self-interest and remain prepared for the inevitable fact of conflict that occurs between state actors. On the other hand, pacifists reject any form of engagement. Kant's Just War Theory lies somewhere in the middle; Kant holds that a state has the right to resort to war when its international rights have been violated. Among his criteria, the invasion of state sovereignty or territorial integrity constitutes one instance of a just ground for retaliation. In this case, government has an ethical and moral obligation to defend its citizens against other countries who choose to violate its rights. Kant's middle ground does not justify all forms of conflict but neither does it abandon every form of resistance. In fact, Orend contends that defense against invasion may require more than simply counter resistance to a direct invasion. Pre-emptive attack may in some cases, be a just and even moral or ethical duty in the face of a perceived threat against the homeland (2004).

Was the United States acting under such ethical and moral obligations when it

invaded Iraq and removed Sadaam Hussein from power? Some would argue that we were never directly threatened and therefore we were unjustified by such criteria in conducting military operations against the Iraqi regime. But, under Just War Theory, the argument is not so easily decided. Rather, one has to consider the complicated interplay between the aggressive threat that the Iraqi regime posed to the stability of the international order and America's duty to protect its citizens from the potential fallout even in a distant land.

These ethical considerations lie at a far distance from the narrow duties of a soldier on the battlefield, and yet they bear upon their decisions in combat in an important way. Soldiers act under orders, but the confidence in their leaders in issuing such orders will be determined by their own assumptions about the underlying moral dimensions of their mission. As one of Shakespeare's soldiers in *Henry V* explains regarding his duty in battle: "But if the cause be not good, the king himself hath a heavy reckoning to make, when all those legs and arms and heads, chopped off in battle, shall join together at the latter day and cry all 'We died at such a place' (*Henry V,* Act IV, Scene 1). So what of the soldiers on the front lines having to make snap judgments with life altering or ending implications? While Kant's Just War Theory does not provide an easy answer, it does suggest an ethical framework by which we can help soldiers reflect upon their general mission and the underlying rationale behind their own lethal commands.

Military Leaders Obligation to Justify Killing in War

Written by Major Pete Kilner of the United States Army for the *Military Review*

Journal, Kilner argues that the rules of *jus in bello* (or justice in war) serve as guidelines for fighting a war (2002). Although many will argue that morality does not exist in war, and therefore a soldier can and should do everything possible to ensure success regardless of ethics or morality, Just War Theory provides a moral framework for war and opposes the idea that anything goes in combat. Kilner argues that it is a leaders responsibility to prepare soldiers to kill the enemy, while at the same time providing moral framework for the soldier which justifies the killing prior to combat.

Kilner elaborates with the following points, it is a leader's responsibility to explain the morality of killing so soldiers can live with themselves after combat, and that it is also a leader's responsibility to educate soldiers on the ethical dimensions of combat so that soldiers can make an informed decision of whether to kill during combat. Kilner attempts to explain his point by using the argument that soldiers are conditioned to act without regard to what is right or wrong, they are conditioned to kill. And that is not what the military leaders should be teaching its recruits. Kilner believes we should be teaching our soldiers the difference between the enemy we are killing and why, providing them with information to shape their ethical and moral framework prior to battle to alleviate post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms following the war.

The Darker Side of the Force: The Negative Influence of Combat

In the absence of serious ethical considerations as part of military training, soldiers are in danger of acting in barbaric ways during combat. Lieutenant Colonel Robert Reilly explored this subject in an article where he attempts to understand how

individual morals, values, ethics, and leadership influence a small unit in combat.

LTC Reilly explains that unit cohesion becomes nearly savage if the unit's leader

allows the group to stray off course from acceptable ethical boundaries in a wartime

environment. In the absence of serious ethical concerns, a "group think" mentality

takes over the attitude and behavior of those serving in combat (2001). LTC Reilly

offers the My Lai Massacre as an example:

> A small village in Southern Vietnam known as My Lai was engaged by a
>
> platoon of U.S. Army infantry soldiers on March 16, 1968, the result of the
>
> mission was a massacre of South Vietnamese men, women and children. Even
>
> babies were killed; children sat praying while they were shot in the back of the
>
> head, elderly men were hacked to death with bayonets. People were shot on
>
> their knees, in the back, with their hands in the air. To date, no known North
>
> Vietnamese enemy combatants were in the village at the time of the
>
> engagement.

The massacre resulted in over 470 civilian known casualties, although the real

number may never be known. Lieutenant Colonel Reilly proposes that "group think"

permeated throughout the platoon because the absence of any ethical consideration

gave the platoon a primal and savage cohesion that could never occur if individuals

were acting reasonably. Ironically, unit cohesion in a time of combat is generally

regarded as something desirable. But here the cohesion was simply the product of the

fact that there was no other moral bond but that of using force against the enemy.

Consequently, leadership must take account of the need for ethical boundaries

even if the presence of such boundaries weakens the capacity of leaders to influence

their subordinates. Hence, I believe leadership must be supplemented by ethical

training.

Chapter Summary

   Research into combat literature is extremely important and will need to continue to

grow and develop. The many different repositories of U.S. Army-related research on

traits, behaviors, and leadership are extremely helpful to the project, however to date;

no single comprehensive theory on combat leadership is or has been articulated. It is

my goal to use and facilitate a systematic, scholarly-based approach that will help us

to better understand military leadership in combat. It is hoped that the resulting

research will fill an important gap in the literature, which, as was noted by

McCormack (2002), lacks any body of systematic literature.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

I used a mixed methods research design comprised of surveys, focus groups, interviews, participant observations, and document review to gather data. The qualitative method focused on understanding the "how" and "why" of certain very critical decisions, not simply the "what" of a leader's action, or "where" he or she did it, or "when".

A survey was used to screen the participants in terms of the leader's physical make up, age, gender, rank, number of deployments where and when; therefore creating an avenue to introduce certain aspects of a quantitative design. In the U.S. Military, so much can be inferred or assumed about individual soldiers based on this type of demographic data. The survey provided data on different aspects of a soldier, different levels of military education, where they might have been stationed, what types of firefights and ferocity of combat he or she has experienced, and the overall ability for a soldier to add to the discussion regarding leadership in combat.

By using both qualitative and quantitative designs, I believe this study demonstrates how the context of military engagement can illuminate qualities of military leadership. As a result, I had the opportunity to gain a deep insight into the mindset of combat leaders, within a combat setting, while under enemy fire.

Selected Framework

Qualitative research provides tremendous advantages when studying human behavior and social interaction. Over the past few decades qualitative research has become increasingly accepted as a methodology for research design.

Qualitative research provides the opportunity to use flexible methods to grasp the complex concepts that exist among societal behaviors, needs, systems, and cultures. Statistics, by contrast, tend to be useful in understanding more modal subject matters (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). Researchers have increasingly used the qualitative methodology as a means of understanding human actions that operate on a complex level. One benefit of using qualitative methodology is that it will provide a thick, rich description of a phenomenon, which will help to better understand human behavior through inductive, naturalistic, and personal interactions, with prolonged engagement.

If done correctly, a qualitative study will result in a richer understanding of a situation or phenomenon particularly when correlating human behavior and social interaction. Instead of the abstraction that results from quantitative assessment, the qualitative researcher can more easily explain the ground view of the subject and the complex web of interactions that take place.

Due to the complex nature of the interactions between soldiers and leaders in combat, it is important to note that the merit of qualitative research is that it does not attempt to redefine or control the data inherent in its findings. Rather, qualitative research employs a more subjectivist epistemological approach to capture the unique phenomena from the perspective of the participants it studies and it seeks to discover a

means of maintaining those experiences and perceptions in their original form (Moustakas, 1994).

Each participant (soldier) in this study has a unique perception of the events that took place and it would only distort our empirical research if their responses were defined by some rigid, structured format for collecting data. My approach to the subject respected the fact that ever subject has his or her own thoughts, emotions, and experiences; stories that can better be correlated under qualitative measurements (Cresswell & Clark, 2007). The limitations of quantitative research when studying human interactions therefore become the strength of the qualitative epistemology in that it truly preserves the useful elements of the subject and does not distort the phenomena.

As strong as qualitative research can be, it must be conceded that there are of course limitations, in particular; the difficulty of determining causes and effect. When using a quantitative study, researchers sometimes appear to provide greater clarity about a cause and effect relationship, though one is never sure if their account is really true to the phenomenon or a numerical illusion. When using qualitative research we as researchers understand the process is extremely important to get the best results possible. The "best results" being when a qualitative researcher ultimately provides a thick, rich, description while providing an accurate portrayal of the subjects reality, and not the reality a researcher imposes on a subject of study. To best understand what I attempted to articulate, an understanding of assumptions when conducting qualitative research will be helpful:

1. A researcher's position, beliefs, morals, values, and ethics might influence research outcomes and participant responses, and therefore must be identified and limited.

2. Both researcher and participant agree on common perceptions and interpretations of words as an accurate reflection of the truth following an interview (Moustakas, 1994).

3. A subjects own bias will always be present whether identified or not, known or not, and therefore create a reality known only to a subject and thus may make qualitative research appear not from an empirical methodology.

4. Participants may attempt to say what a he or she thinks a researcher wants to hear, for the purpose of this study-might make themselves look more favorable considering the incredible range an intensity of thoughts, emotions, and feelings while facing enemy fire in combat. As such, he or she might gravitate towards certain prejudicial statements that narrate a recollection at odds with the actual reality that had taken place.

5. Participants might also limit their responses based on perceived threats and therefore may be unwilling or unable to participate in the study. Misunderstandings and/or misperceptions might occur and the researcher and participant may perceive words and body language differently (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, a researcher must capture the true meaning as conveyed by participant using a technique of conducting frequent member checks to determine if one's true meaning is actually being captured.

Ethnography

Ethnography involves an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context (Tedlock, 2000). Ethnography is the primary method of anthropology and is the earliest distinct tradition of qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2005). It is the study of people in their natural or native environments; research is performed where the subject or subjects are in their normal environment whether that be home, work, or school. The ethnographic approach requires a researcher to immerse him or herself in diverse environments, cultures, and populations. It requires establishing rapport with people in their normal environments to gain a deeper understanding of their beliefs, motivations, and behaviors (Tedlock, 2000). Methods such as interacting with the subjects through participation, observation, and dialogue will ideally disclose their attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values, as well as the unspoken cultural patterns that shape behavior. Wherever it has been used, a key assumption of this approach is that by entering into close and relatively prolonged interaction with people in their everyday lives, ethnographers can better understand the belief's, motivations, and behaviors of their subjects than they can by using any other approach (Tedlock, 2000).

One advantage of ethnography that makes it a method of choice for this study is that the observer can approach the subject on the ground level; the researcher in a sense becomes part of the study. I was careful not to indicate my rank of lieutenant colonel to any of the participants and consciously conducted my study in civilian attire. I asked each of the participants when I first met them, if they knew who I was or my current duty status. Each stated they believed I was a soldier but were not

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certain of my rank or whether on active duty or retired status. I was careful not to impose my values as a soldier onto the subjects, rather relied upon much of my own experience in this study to better understand and help participants talk thorough their understandings and confusion when recollecting their individual combat related firefights. This approach facilitated both my, and the participants understanding of the meeting of the minds before attempting to draw upon credible data and observations from each participant.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is both a method and a description of a result in which the goal of any particular study is to produce data which is then grounded in a particular theory. The advantage to grounded theory is that one's results are thematically focused while the method of acquiring data remains flexible. The theories serve as analytical guidelines that enable researchers to focus and re-focus data collection to build inductive, mid-range theories through successive levels of data analysis and conceptual development (Charmaz, 2000).

For the purpose of my research, it follows a systematic approach to data collection and analysis which is essential when dealing with my subject. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory provides the framework to assess participant responses taken from interviews, observations, and field notes in order to uncover behavioral patterns and to develop and refine a particular theory. The current scholarly field of study in combat leadership is still in its infancy, however, lacks empirical research. By utilizing methods from grounded theory combined with empirical research, I

believe this work provides a substantial contribution to the current state of scholarship in this area. Data sets are recorded, coded, and then analyzed through constant comparison methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant data comparison permits a researcher to identify themes, patterns, and relationships within the data that may not otherwise be revealed.

Another advantage of using grounded theory for this study was that a researcher has the flexibility to use both quantitative and qualitative methods. Although grounded theory methods do not detail data collection techniques, the strategies include but not limited to: simultaneous collection and analysis of data, a two-step data collection process, comparative methods, memo writing for the purpose of conceptual analysis, sampling to help refine a researchers focus, and integration of the theoretical framework (Charmaz, 2000).

Authority to Conduct Research using U.S. Army Soldiers

Research is critical for the advancement of the U.S. Army and is conducted on many different levels through each year in order to streamline research opportunities the Department of Defense has delegated authority to the U.S. Army and its commander's to authorize research and the collection of data from U.S. Army personnel by Army Regulation (AR) 600-46. U.S. Army Regulation 600-46 (November, 1979) provides the authority to conduct survey research throughout the U.S. Army Active Duty, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. Army National Guard Forces. I operated under the authority granted by Section I, paragraph 2, subsection b, which states survey research is authorized among Army personnel when approved by the unit

commander at the Division level or below: For my study I used individual battalions

which are 2 command levels below Division. This regulation also notes in subsection

4 to submit the survey to the appropriate human use committee, in this case considered

this the authority for Indiana University of Pennsylvania's (IUP) Institutional Review

Board to approve my selected methodology.

Excerpt from Army Regulation 600-46

Attitude and Opinion Survey: A survey is a systematic data collection, using face-

to-face or telephone interviews, or self-administered questionnaires (including Web

surveys), from a scientific, probability sample of 10 or more persons as individuals or

representatives of agencies (44 USC § 3502). The questionnaires or interview

protocols contain identical questions about attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and related

demographic information. The results of the survey were used to assess and guide

current and planned Army policies, programs, and services. The findings can be

generalized to all members of the target population.

Applicability:

1. All attitude and opinion surveys of Active Army personnel conducted in two or

more major commands (Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, or

Direct Reporting Units, see Figure 1) must be approved by ARI prior to

administration. (For this guidance, "Major Subordinate Commands" are not

considered as major commands.) Requests for survey approval from ARI were

forwarded to ARI (DAPE-ARI-PS) and must provide the information outlined in

Figure 2 (see AR 600-46, Attitude and Opinion Survey Program).

2. Attitude and opinion surveys conducted solely within a single command (e.g., ACOM, division, brigade, battalion, company/detachment) must be approved by the unit commander.

3. Attitude and opinion surveys of military members were conducted in two or more DoD Components (Services) approved by the Defense Manpower Data Center, IAW DODI 1100.13 (Surveys of DoD Personnel).

4. Surveys also must be submitted to the appropriate Human Use Committee.

Having served in the U.S. Army for more than 2 decades, there are a number of issues associated with conducting a survey research that may not be readily apparent to those outside of the military. The U.S. Army is comprised of 1.3 million Active Duty soldiers, Reserve soldiers, and National Guard soldiers. Thus, it is therefore extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to attempt a study that will generate findings that could be generalized across the entire U.S. Army spectrum. I therefore limited my study to U.S. Army soldiers, currently serving on active duty, from a worldwide deployable unit, limiting my sample population to soldiers from U.S. Army battalions from Fort Bragg, NC. This streamlined the survey approval process by remaining at 1 U.S. Army Post and using units from lower than a division. This was designed to limit the potential bureaucratic constraints associated with attempting to conduct research with a study using U.S. Army personnel as subjects. In this manner, I was able to completely focus my resources and therefore able to generalize my findings from interviews across deployable active duty combat soldiers at Fort Bragg, NC.

Data Collection Methods

Patton argues the advantage of qualitative research is the ability to study issues in depth and greater detail, additionally to uncover the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people (2002). To best understand the phenomenon of leadership in the U.S. Army while in combat and under enemy fire, I used several data gathering techniques including surveys, focus groups, observation, and in-depth interviews with soldiers identified through surveys targeted at combat veterans specifically chosen from 1 of 8 focus groups.

I collected primary data through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. To better understand the data, I recorded and transcribed each individual interview as well as taking detailed field notes during the entire process. Interviews provided my data, which allowed me to begin to undertake my own analysis. I used an interview guide for both the focus group agenda and for the semi-structured interviews. I asked open-ended questions and permitted the subjects to speak freely and without interruption. While listening to each person speak, I also used a technique of follow-up questions to better understand what the individual was attempting to convey. Responses from both the focus groups and interviews became the raw data for subsequent analysis.

I used a technique from Patton (2002) where response quotes become the narratives that reflect the participants' voices. Patton (2002) reflects on the role of quotations within interviewing: "Quotations reveal the respondents' levels of emotion, the way in which they have organized the world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions". I designed the focus group and interview questions to address the following research questions:

1. Are there unique characteristics related to combat that can be taught to create combat effective leaders?

2. Are characteristics reflected in effective combat leadership found in non-combat leadership?

I also conducted a field test of focus groups and prepared interview guide questions. The interview guide is effectively used when important issues or questions are to be explored. The methodology is grounded in written questions or issues important enough to highlight and be explored by the interviewer (Patton, 2002). The guide is also very useful to establish and maintain a consistent manner and tone for the interview. The guide permits the interviewer to remain focused on certain concepts and themes with built in flexibility to explore more deeply depending on the respondent's answers.

I chose to use the interview guide not as an all-inclusive method for a list of questions, but as a tool to assist in exploring questions I deemed most important for my study. I thought it was important to use this guide to help maintain the focus of the study, remain consistent in what and how I asked the questions, and establish continuity in manner in which I posed the questions. By using an interview guide, I was able to remain consistent throughout each interview and therefore gather credible, honest feedback from my subjects. Additionally, I used the interview guide as a tool to assist in probing of certain issues of interest as well as confirm or deny my perceptions of certain leadership issues.

I solicited the assistance of Colonel Thomas A. Kolditz, Ph.D, Department Chair of Leadership studies and the United States Military Academy (commonly referred to as

West Point) who is a highly regarded scholar and expert in the study of leadership, with a specific focus on military leadership. Colonel Kolditz' reviewed my focus group agenda and questions, as well as my interview guide. He discussed my findings with his two of his colleagues (fellow U.S. Army Officers both with a PhD and both considered experts in military leadership) from West Point, and he provided some of the guidelines for my study. Based on the Colonel's recommendation, I will use the following as a definition of combat leadership: "leadership under the conditions of risk to bodily injury or loss of life."

The interview guide is an essential tool of scholars engaged in fieldwork and is necessary to maintain control over the interview process, thereby ensuring data collected supports the research. By using this technique, my data analysis will better control not what or how something is said by the subject, but how the data is efficiently organized during the period of analysis.

Additionally, the use of an interview guide will better structure the interviews and account for different variables to best focus your subject. This builds structure and provides a conceptual framework from which to work while the alternative, an unstructured approach and unstructured interview, would likely lead to an enormous amount of less than useful data and might indeed stray from the very phenomenon one is attempting to understand and study (Maxwell, 2005). Prior to conducting the interviews it was important to identify potential bias within myself so as to not sway a participant in any one direction.

Sensitizing Concepts

Sensitizing concepts gives a researcher direction, sheds light on potential bias, and alerts the researcher to many different possibilities within a single research question (Patton, 2002). I compiled a list of sensitizing concepts regarding my research to mitigate any potential biases that may undermine the objectivity attempted in this study.

Colonel Kolditz studied leadership extensively in the early years of Operation Iraqi Freedom and in his article, "We went to war," he explained his own potential biases using an example from one of his publications: Colonel Kolditz interviewed with the help of a translator, a sample population of 36 Iraqi prisoners of war, and more than 50 U.S. soldiers and marines between breaks from the fighting on the outskirts of Al Hillah and Baghdad. Colonel Kolditz related he would not wear his uniform while interviewing these soldiers from either side to avoid showing his rank, nor would he tell the participants he was an officer in the U.S. Army. His contention was that the soldiers might change their answers if they knew he was a senior officer (one promotion from Brigadier General). He further stated the importance of being sensitive to each soldier's perception of what he was attempting to explain and in fact used a list of sensitizing concepts and an interview guide to maintain consistency. I believe when conducting research, especially qualitative research with U.S. Army subjects it is possible they may be predisposed to answering interview questions differently depending on the rank of the interviewer; I therefore produced my own list of sensitizing concepts and an interview guide based on my own knowledge and experience of combat. My research participants (soldiers) in this study have their own

perception of the events. I am very familiar with the U.S. Army's leadership training and have attempted to utilize that knowledge where appropriate but also tried to avoid the pitfalls of a researcher that becomes personally invested in the results of his or her own study. Below are the sensitizing concepts I used in this study.

1.   As a military officer with over 20 years of service; I carefully avoided imposing my beliefs, perceptions, or interpretations of what I know to be true while listening and evaluating the subjects or their responses.

2.   I also wanted the interview guide to be sufficiently flexible to permit further discoveries of fact as I pursued the subject.

3.   My subjects were either equal or junior in rank to myself. To maintain my objective position as a scholar rather than a commanding officer, I wore civilian attire while conducting the interview and introduced myself as Buck Bollinger leaving my rank at the door.

4.   I was careful not to generalize my thoughts, actions, and perceptions from my one kinetic engagement. Although having experienced combat at the most basic level of human against human; I had to remain open to others thoughts, ideas, perceptions, and actions.

Following a review of my sensitizing concepts, I conducted interviews over the telephone given the geographical distance from my subject. I first gained positive contact with a subject and scheduled a telephone interview at a time and day of his or her choosing. I attempted to establish a friendly, professional tone and manner with a focus on helping the subject to feel comfortable to freely speak whatever it was they had to say. With the permission of the subject, I used a private service organization

called "No Notes" to record and transcribe each interview for subsequent coding and analysis. A transcribed narrative was provided to me via email using Microsoft Word 2007 and then sent to the participants for feedback, corrections and/or clarifications, validation, and member checks. Member checks were used when I talked with each respondent and permitted each to review his or her recorded interview transcripts. Then, prior to completing, I discussed the nature of the original inquiry and their responses before adding to my findings.

Sampling

As an introduction, it will be useful to begin by providing an account of my sampling technique. I conducted my research with several different sample populations of U.S. Army soldiers from Fort Bragg, NC. Each soldier was administered a combat leader survey from a randomly selected battalion from 2 different brigades from Fort Bragg. I later tabulated and scored each survey and used the results to select soldiers for inclusion in 1 of the 8 focus groups. Once I conducted the focus groups, I used the purposeful sampling technique of typical case sampling to select 3 of 10 soldiers from each focus group for in-depth interviews.

My sample population was comprised of 2,000 soldiers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina targeted at units that have redeployed from either Iraq or Afghanistan after January 1, 2011. I first contacted two brigade commander's from Fort Bragg, advised them of my study, and asked if I could coordinate with one of their 8 battalion commander's to come in and issue the Combat Leader Survey. For reference: a U.S. Army brigade typically has about 5,000 soldiers, a battalion approximately 750

soldiers. The survey was administered to soldiers from the volunteer battalions and each soldier was readily identifiable through the U.S. Army personnel section, which contained the soldiers name, rank, age, gender, duty assignment, and active duty or reserve status.

The best way to understand how leadership is manifested in soldiers while in combat and under enemy fire is to seek the normal case through purposeful sampling technique described by Patton (2002) and not look into the extreme case or maximum variation sampling methods. I used a purposeful sampling technique that affords the opportunity to obtain a stratified sample to compare against what may or may not become the norm in respect to combat leadership.

Patton describes purposeful sampling as an opportunity for in-depth understanding and focuses on information-rich cases that highlight the questions under examination. Sometimes called purposive or judgment sampling, the researcher decides on the purpose of the study and strategically selects research subjects that best fit the mode of analysis (2002). Typical case sampling focuses on what is representative, normal, or average. I chose to use typical case sampling to understand what soldiers believe the phenomenon of leadership is and what type of combat focused leadership they believe is most effective on the battlefield.

Before actually gathering data from my sample population, I discussed my overall sampling concept with Colonel Kolditz from West Point Academy. His guidance and advice were simple; feel free to use his strategy for sampling but be careful not to permit senior officers to influence my perception of what makes a combat ready leader; after all, most leaders in this current combat environment are the younger

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noncommissioned officers with five or less years of service in the military. His advice

has proved extremely helpful for my study. As a result, I was able to identify early in

the research process the need to limit senior officer and noncommissioned officers

from influencing or skewing the process. It was clear after just a few short

conversations with the senior leaders of the U.S. Army; they had a wealth of

information about combat operations and combat, even though most had not

experienced close combat with the enemy. As a senior leader myself, I knew the

common phrases and verbiage associated with U.S. Army leadership. It was evident

the U.S. Army was very successful in its institutionalized training of its leaders,

meaning that each of the senior leaders seem to say the same types of things about

combat leadership. Common sayings we grew up with, for instance: leadership is

providing purpose, direction, and motivation to subordinates in an effort to get them to

do what you want them to do. Then adding the phrase "combat leadership" and once

again hearing the senior leaders say combat leadership is providing purpose, direction,

and motivation to get subordinates to perform in combat. This is what Colonel

Kolditz warned against; if one wants to truly get to the essence of combat leadership,

then one needs to go to the true combat leaders-which are for the most part, not the

senior leaders of the U. S. Army.

Survey Sampling

Initially, the Combat Leader Survey was helpful for identifying soldiers who have

been in standard combat situations and most likely reflect the unique characteristics

related to combat. The survey also helped identify individuals who would be desirable

subjects for further participation and could be invited to attend a focus group or an individual in-depth interview. The survey asked the following questions (refer to appendix D for actual survey):

Name: Required to identify the participant.

Email address: Required for subsequent contact if invited to further participate in the study.

Rank: Needed to stratify the soldier into 1 of 8 sample populations.

Military Occupational Specialty: Required to obtain a sample representative of soldiers at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. For instance, an 11-B is an infantryman; a 12-B is a combat engineer. It is important for the purpose of this study to sample different soldiers from different U.S. Army units and not all from a single battalion from within a single career field.

Gender: Required for stratification of the 8 groups as 3 of those groups will require females of a certain rank for proper placement into 1 of the 3 the stratified groups.

Number of deployments and to which country: Important to identify how many deployments a soldier has for proper placement into a stratified group.

Awards with and without valor: An award received in a combat zone is indicative of how much or how little combat a soldier has been involved with. For instance, a Silver Star signifies a soldier has been involved in one or many horrific firefights and has performed admirably. A soldier who has received a Bronze Star has been deployed to a combat zone and perhaps involved in direct fire engagements, but a soldier whom has earned a Bronze Star with Valor is immediately indicative of a soldier who has been in direct fire engagements and performed in an exceptional manor.

Combat Infantryman's Badge: Indicates a male soldier, who holds the MOS of 11-B (Infantry) whom has been involved in direct and close combat with our enemy.

Combat Action Badge: Indicates a male or female soldier whom has been involved in direct and close combat with our enemy.

Combat Medic Badge: Indicates a male or female soldier, who holds the MOS of 91-B (Medic) whom has been involved in direct and close combat with our enemy.

Number of direct fire engagements: Important to identify how many firefights a soldier has been involved in for proper placement into 1 of the 8 stratified groups.

Number of personnel supervised during combat operations(s): Important to determine how many personnel a soldier supervised during combat operations for proper placement into 1 of the 8 stratified groups.

Duty position during deployments: This will immediately indicate if a soldier was more likely in a position to observe leaders while in direct fire engagements or if the soldier him or herself was in a leadership position and less likely to be observing and more likely directing the actions of subordinates.

Focus Group Sampling

The Combat Leader Survey was critical to selecting soldiers for placement into a particular stratified focus group. The stratification was required to ensure a representative sample from the U.S. Army that is truly representative of the soldiers whom actually conduct the vast majority of combat operations. I used key information gleaned from the survey to place individual soldiers into 1 of the following 8 groups:

1. Focus Group 1: consisted of 10 male soldiers with the rank below E-4 and

under the age of 25 with combat experience.

    2. <u>Focus Group 2</u>: consisted of 10 male noncommissioned officers with the rank of

E-5 to E-6 with less than 10 years of service, and with combat experience.

    3. <u>Focus Group 3</u>: consisted of 10 male noncommissioned officers with the rank

Of E-7 with more than 10 years of service with combat experience.

    4. <u>Focus Group 4</u>: consisted of 10 mid-grade, male commissioned officers

with the rank of 0-1 to 0-3 with less than 10 years of service and combat experience.

    5. <u>Focus Group 5</u>: consisted of 10 senior, male, commissioned officers with

more than14 years of experience and combat experience.

    6. <u>Focus Group 6</u>: consisted of 10 female noncommissioned officers with the

rank of E-5 or E-6 and combat experience.

    7. <u>Focus Group 7</u>: consisted of 10 mid-grade, female commissioned officers

with the rank of 0-1 to 0-3 with less than 10 years of service and combat experience.

    8. <u>Focus Group 8</u>: consisted of 10 male, noncommissioned officers with the rank

of E-5 to E-6 with less than 10 years of service, and ***no*** combat experience (refer to

Appendix D for Focus Group Agenda and Questions).

    To better provide for the confidentiality of each soldier and prior to assigning

soldiers to 1 of the 8 groups I numbered each survey to better provide for the

anonymity of the soldier and I will be the only person who is able to identify a

soldier's number with his or her name. In this manner I ensured the confidentiality of

the individual while retaining the ability to target certain soldiers germane to the

study. By using this strategy, I also utilized my own knowledge of the U.S. Army, the

different nuances of a soldier's MOS, and the nature and ferocity of combat operations

of an identified point in time from both Iraq and Afghanistan for the best possible

sample to be representative of soldiers at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Below is a

graphic portrayal of my sampling strategy.
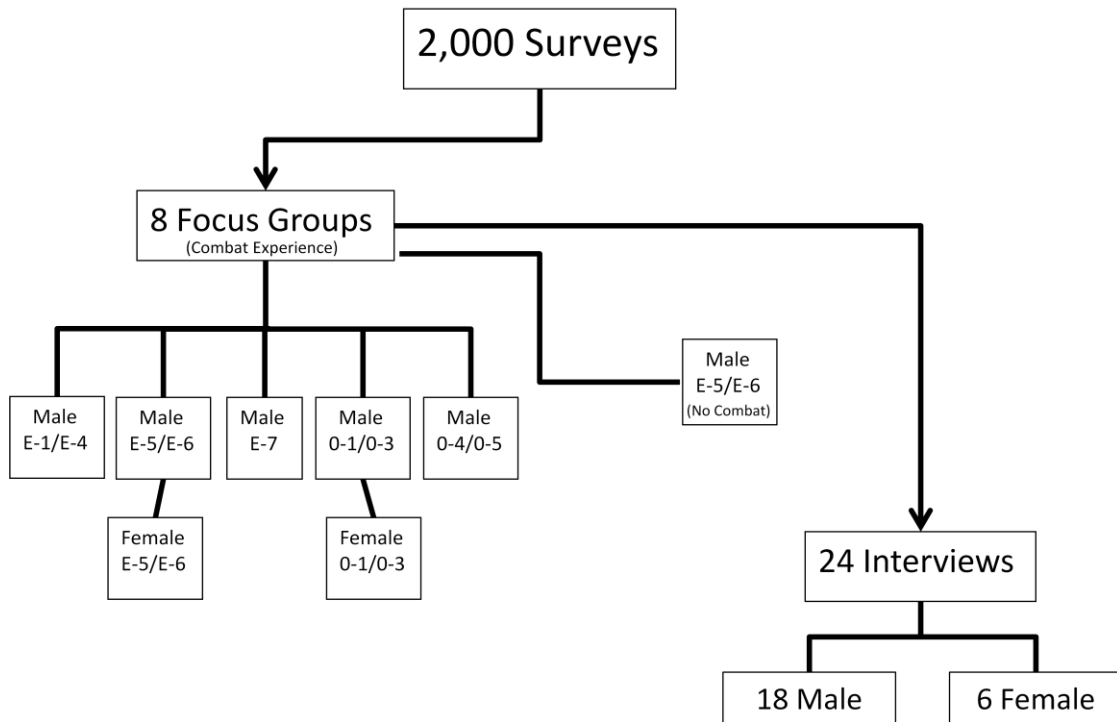
Figure 1. Sampling strategy model.

I stratified the 8 focus groups in this manner to maximize the opportunity for

soldiers to talk freely of their combat experience without having to concern

themselves with senior officers or noncommissioned officers in their group. I also

organized the focus groups with men and women according to rank so that they felt

free to exchange comments and stories among their peers without being concerned

about the presence of junior soldiers in their group.

Interview Sampling

Once I completed the focus groups (again, maintaining confidentiality), I selected 18 males and 6 females for in-depth interviews based on their responses during the focus groups to participate in a 1-2 hour semi-structured interview. I used the focus groups to identify whom to select for an in-depth interview and numbered each soldier prior to the focus group to ensure anonymity outside of the study. I selected 24 soldiers for this study, 18 male soldiers and 6 female soldiers, 3 from each of the 8 focus groups listed above. I then selected the soldier's for in-depth interviews based on claims to have exhibited leadership while under enemy fire.

This strategy facilitated selecting the participants with relevant combat experience for the in-depth interviews. I recorded and transcribed each focus group for additional reference material for selecting of future participants. I selected 3 male soldiers from each focus group and 3 female soldiers from both groups with female soldiers. The reason I selected 6 female subjects was to approximate the current percentages present within the U.S. Army.

Each interview was designed to take between 1-2 hours although that was simply a guide and not a fastidious rule. This technique was used to assist in maintaining consistency throughout each interview and to ensure my most important questions were addressed with each subject; I used an interview guide (Appendix B).

Social Desirability Bias

The obvious question for the researcher when conducting interviews with participants is the following: how does an interviewer ensure the interviewee is

answering questions honestly and not embellishing their answers? There is no single instrument to ensure subjects answer questions honestly, although there is one instrument with more than a half century of empirical data commonly used to identify potential subjects who may be more inclined to answer in a way to make themselves appear more presentable to the interviewer, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale is a 33 question test that provides data on a particular subject of the likelihood of a subject saying what he or she thinks a researcher wants to hear. The measure indicates a propensity of a subject to present him or herself to respond in culturally sanctioned ways (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The MCSDS boasts an internal consistency of .88, a test-retest correlation of .89, a split-half internal consistency of .73, and validity scales of: K=.40, L=.54, and F=.36 indicating the measure to be both reliable and valid (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

The MCSDS test questions were developed and measured against and correlated with 17 Minnesota Multiphase Personality Inventory (MMPI) validity, clinical, and derived scales; the results were compared with the correlations as a measure of the influence of social desirability on test responses (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The test is graded true or false with the total number of wrong answers being the important measure. Of the 33 items, 18 were keyed true and 15 false, making a response set interpretation of scores highly improbable (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Therefore, the likelihood of a respondent trying to say what he or she thinks the researcher wants to hear is indicated by number of incorrect answers, the more wrong answers indicates an increased likelihood of the participant not providing accurate and honest feedback.

Table 1

Correlation between the SDS and the MMPI

MMPI Scales	M-C SDS	Edwards SDS
K	.40*	.65**
L	.54**	.22
F	-.36*	-.61**
Hs	-.30	-.62**
D	-.27	-.72**
Hy	.15	.09
Pd	-.41**	-.73**
Pa	.21	-.02
Pt	-.30	-.80**
Sc	-.40*	-.77**
M[a]	-.24	-.42*
Pr[a]	-.27	-.58**
St[a]	.16	.14
Es	.17	.46**
MAS[b]	-.25	-.75**
A[b]	-.23	-.61**
R[b]	.28	.07

*Significant at the .05 level.
** Significant at the .01 level.

[a] $N = 36$.   [b] $N = 34$.

Social desirability in empirical studies is a term that is used to denote the fact that people tend to portray themselves in a good light (in socially desirable ways) whenever possible and is stronger among some people than others (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). As with acquiescence, if it is not counteracted, people with strong concerns about their social standing during an interview will produce scores that reflect the response set, rather than their actual personalities (Crowne & Marlowe,

1960).

For some personality dimensions this is not much of a problem when there is no benefit to acquiring social approval or disapproval in the given circumstance. In other cases, though, there is a consensus that it is better to be one way (for example, honest or likable) than the other (dishonest or unlikable). In these cases, assessment becomes a challenge.

In general, researchers deal with this problem by trying to phrase items so that the issue of social desirability is not salient. As much as anything else, this is a process of trying to avoid even bringing up the idea that one kind of person is approved of more than the other. Sometimes this means phrasing undesirable responses in ways that makes them more acceptable. At other times, it means looking for ways to let people admit the undesirable quality indirectly. A different way to deal with the problem is to include items that assess the person's degree of concern about social desirability and use this information as a correction factor in evaluating the person's responses to other items. In any event, this is a problem that researchers must constantly be aware of and constantly guarding against when conducting an in-depth interview.

I administered the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale along with the combat leader survey which required approximately 5 minutes for each participant to complete. Once completed, I collected each and placed it in my briefcase to score at a later time. Once scored, I counted each number of incorrect responses and scored each survey accordingly. Then following the focus groups, I invited the individuals with the scores between 9-13 (this eliminated outliers) focus group to participate in the 60-90 minute in-depth interviews. In the event of one or more soldiers with the same score or

a situation requiring some sort of "*tie-breaker*", I used my best judgment in selecting a soldier to invite for a more in-depth interview. In short, a higher score of incorrect answers indicates the likelihood of trying to be socially desirable, or simply conform to what the participant believes was sought by the researcher.

Data Coding

I transcribed each interview using Microsoft Word into a computer-based document, by using this technique; I created a coding system where one color is assigned to a major theme and then different colors to the subsidiary topics. As new themes emerge, colors were assigned to the major categories of emergent themes and so on. Additionally, I used a computer assisted software package (NVivo) which provides an opportunity to utilize this qualitative data for broader analysis possibilities (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). By using this technique, one can efficiently identify emergent themes and trends based on the responses from the interviewees. (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

By using computer-assisted software, the respondents' perceptions on leadership emerged unhindered by my own views as a military officer. In order to help focus my efforts I used the following categories (at least initially for initial data analysis).

1. Tactical Proficiency: Is the leader tactically sound with the ability to integrate current intelligence with sound judgment?
2. Judgment: Does the leader use sound judgment based on tactical requirements and make quality decisions while under stress?

3. <u>Technical Proficiency</u>: Does the leader know how to use and employ his or her weapons systems?

4. <u>Decision making ability</u>: Does the leader make decisions quickly, without hesitation when appropriate, and based on the current battlefield environment?

5. <u>Exposure to hostile fire</u>: Does the leader assume the same risks demanded of his or her subordinates while under fire?

6. <u>Communication Skills</u>: Does the leader communicate effectively by way of voice or hand and arm signals while in contact with the enemy?

7. <u>Courage</u>: Does the leader demonstrate courage under fire and if so by what means?

8. <u>Other</u>: Additional themes that may emerge.

Data Analysis

Patton (2002) believes inductive analysis involves the process of identifying patterns, themes, and categories in one's dataset. Once initial categories of data analysis have been completed, there should be some type of emergent themes. This provided an excellent opportunity to further refine my thoughts, concepts, ideas, and interview questions for additional data gathering. I used a questionnaire (Appendix D) to reach out to an increased number of subjects to refine data gathering and analysis. The technique I used initially from the survey for data analysis was to stratify each survey into a group of 8 that would then be used to identify each of the 8 focus groups.

Constant Comparative Analysis

Grounded research theory is a systematic, purposeful, systematic generation from the data collected (Glaser, & Strauss, 2009). Constant comparative analysis provides the framework and serves as the foundation of qualitative data analysis. It also relies on effective coding of data. Though data coding does introduce an element of subjectivity, coding does allow the researcher to formulate a framework that defines and refines the acquired information and sets it within a more objective mode of analysis. Once coded, constant comparison method can be used to systematically describe, define, and redefine emergent themes and patterns. The advantage of this method is that through the use of a systematic, thoughtful, and brisk analysis; scholars can objectively assess these seemingly subjective accounts of past experience and formulate commonly recognized categories of understanding.

Data Management

I conducted 8 focus groups with 10 subjects in each group for a total of 80 participants. Once complete with the focus groups I selected 3 soldiers per group for an individual interview lasting approximately one hour in length for each of the 24 participants. The challenge of data management from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective is to manage the samples. But, with advances in technology and computer assisted software programs, I was able to abstract useful information that could then serve as data points for the broader study. As previously discussed, NVivo was used extensively for coding, storage, and as a tool to best discover emergent themes and patterns in my study. Each interview was then recorded and

transcribed into a Microsoft Word document and subsequently analyzed by the NVivo software. Once an interview transcript was uploaded and analyzed by NVivo, the constant comparison method for data analysis was essential for identification of themes and patterns which provided a basis for the next transcribed interview.

Triangulation

Triangulation in qualitative research is the mixing of data types, known as data triangulation and is generally best suited for pilot studies while the use of mixing methodologies (survey research with follow up interviews) and is a more profound form of triangulation (Olsen, 2004); consequently I chose to employ this method to help enhance the accuracy and validity of my own study. I used a Combat Leader Survey, along with field notes from direct observation, focus groups, and individual interviews, to better triangulate my findings and better assure in the results of the phenomenon I have studied.

In addition to the techniques listed above I also employed member checks. Member checks were used when I interviewed each respondent to permit each to review his or her recorded interview transcripts prior to writing my findings section and discuss the nature of the original inquiry and their responses. Member checks are the single most important thing to do to gain credibility in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

In addition to member checks, I will also discuss my findings with U.S. Army combat veterans as a method of peer debriefing to further examine my findings. This

permitted and encouraged them to identify emerging themes and concepts as they explored the study and findings.

Validity

Another feature involved in triangulating my findings and increasing the validity of the study is through the use of document analysis. Every soldier having engaged during deployment in a firefight was required to write out a sworn statement detailing the events or series of events. In order to acquire data that was not distorted by the soldier's tendency towards editorializing their own account of the events, this practice was necessary in the interview setting. Skepticism in this area is warranted by the fact that warfare itself constitutes a terrifying and confusing environment where memory can be distorted by heightened perceptions. To best mitigate the possibility of corrupt or false data being used in my study, I employed Patton's 4 validity measures common to qualitative research as outlined (Patton 2002):

1. Credibility: illustrates realistic or believable results as determined through statements verbalized by the participant. Also ensures researchers and participants have a shared understanding of what a participant said, and the true meaning.

2. Transferability: provides context for identifying the appropriateness of the research and primary assumptions of the research questions.

3. Dependability: analysis of the data identifies emergent themes and patterns making the findings dependable.

4. Confirmability: established by the use of member checks as data emerges, substantiating the true meaning and accuracy from the subject (Patton, 2002).

Lastly, another concern regarding the credibility of the source data is that every interview poses the possibility that soldiers might feel inadequate compared to their peers in a group setting and thus inclined to exaggerate their merits or reticent in sharing their experiences. This occurs in particular when they are relating actions involving contact with the enemy. As Meehl and Hathaway explain this tendency, those in a group tend to be particularly conscious of their reporting and this have a tendency to "fake being good" and "fake being bad" (1946). To mitigate this tendency, I asked each soldier to voluntarily complete the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale Personal Reaction Inventory. This measure was used to gauge each individual's attempts to present him or herself in a positive light and thus it measures how likely they are to embellish any part of a story. I used this measure to eliminate soldiers from interviews who have an indicated that they are predisposed to present themselves in an artificial manner to the interviewer. I made the results of each inventory available to each respondent upon request.

Ethical Considerations

Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects will receive a copy of my IRB Protocol requesting approval to ensure the safety, privacy, and ethical treatment of human subjects. Soldiers (research subjects) will not be compensated in any way for participating in this research study. Safeguards have been carefully placed into the study design to protect the rights of the all participants.

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I provided full disclosure of information including the purpose of the study, associated risks, and availability of support personnel if a participant begins to feel symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of discussions of combat and combat related scenarios.

Participation in this study was voluntary and any participant may withdraw at any time. If a participant wanted to withdraw from the study, his or her information would be immediately destroyed and none of their information or responses will be included in the study. The informed consent form served as the primary means to communicate the purpose and risks of the research.

The risks associated with this research study were minimal, though participants undeniably might experience uncomfortable recollections, feelings, and emotions as a result of questioning and/or discussion. In the event that I encountered any sign that a subject was feeling uncomfortable or exhibiting symptoms of PTSD, I temporarily stopped the focus group, or in the case of an interview, immediately ceased the interview and consulted a U.S. Army Chaplain who was on site and available for the subject.

I maintained completed consent forms, focus group notes, transcribed transcripts of each focus group and individual interview, and all audio files and as dictated by federal law will be retained in a secure manner for 3 years and then destroyed in a secure manner after 3 years' time has elapsed.

All research subjects were afforded anonymity and confidentiality. Identifying information has been changed to protect the identity of participants when the research results are written. Any persons asked to help to score and/or interpret the results will

be disinterested third parties and upon request, a copy of the research results will be

provided to any participant.

Strengths and Limitations

The strength of this study is in the hybrid design; using the strengths of both

qualitative and quantitative methods enhanced my presentation of the data gathered

from the focus groups. Additionally, qualitative methods will facilitate my efforts to

gain a better understanding of the nature of the original inquiry and responses of the

leaders. Quantitative measures will identify key information of each soldier such as

age, gender, rank, number of deployments where and when, and military awards; this

will clearly establish a leader's position in a unit and assist with various assumptions

as to the leader's actual role in a firefight. Ritchie & Spencer posit that flexible

methods can more fully appreciate the complex, social concepts that exist in social

policy fields to understand complex behaviors, needs, systems, and cultures which

cannot simply be explained by statistics (2002). Although the statistics in my study

are key to understanding the overall make-up of each individual participant.

The limitation of this study is in using quantitative methods which make it difficult

to capture the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of research subjects adequately

(Cresswell & Clark, 2007). This failure of quantitative research methods for the

purpose of this study turns into the strength of the design, by limiting quantitative

methods to actual data from participants, coupled with the qualitative methodology;

this permits the researcher to gain a better understanding of the phenomena. Because

unlike quantitative methods, qualitative methods provide the framework uncover the hidden meaning of participants. Hence, the need for a hybrid designs.

Chapter Summary

I used the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to capture important information about each individual in this study. This research was conducted in compliance with U.S. Army Regulation 600-46 (November, 1979) Section I, paragraph 2, subsection b, which states survey research is authorized among Army personnel when approved by the unit commander. Using this authority, I conducted my study with U.S. Army soldiers, currently serving on active duty, from Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

I used a mixed methods design consisting of surveys, focus groups, interviews, detailed field notes of participant observations, and document review. Using the framework provided by Tedlock under the umbrella of ethnography, I conducted the study with subjects in their normal environment in an attempt to help the participant's place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context (2000).

Grounded theory was also helpful and provided a theoretical framework from which to launch my study. As previously discussed, grounded theory is both a method and a description of a result with the advantage being that one's results are thematically focused while data collection remains flexible. This served as a guide that facilitated a focus on data collection for inductive, successive levels of data analysis and conceptual development (Charmaz, 2000).

Constant comparative analysis is the foundation of qualitative data analysis and relies on effective data coding. In qualitative analysis, data coding is subjective in nature and permits the researcher to define and refine primary data. Once data is coded, the constant comparison method was helpful to systematically describe, define, and redefine emergent themes and patterns. This provided the framework for a systematic, thoughtful, and rigorous analysis of each participant's experiences.

Along with qualitative methods, I also used a quantitative method and developed a Combat Leader Survey to capture key information quickly and easily. I then selected participants for 1 of the 8 focus groups (typically used in qualitative methodology). By using this method I provided the framework for each group that encouraged a meaningful exchange of experiences that corresponded with the general thematic interest for this dissertation on military leadership in combat.

Once I completed the focus groups, in-depth interviews soon followed and then document analysis; my sample again focused on combat proven soldiers. By selecting soldiers who have actually experienced combat (and one control group with no combat experience) and have a ground view of kinetic engagement, this sampling offers the potential to bridge the gap between theory and reality in the study of combat focused leadership.

I used several data gathering techniques, surveys, focus groups, observation, and in-depth interviews. My primary data was collected through focus groups and interviews, recording and transcribing the interviews. To best capture the true meaning of the participant, I took steps to mitigate my own biases by listing sensitizing concepts to ensure I was aware of my own biases and provide direction prior to

conducting each interview. To ensure accuracy, I recorded and transcribed each interview and then discussed the interview with each participant after they reviewed the transcription of the interview.

I employed a purposive sampling technique using typical case sampling from a population comprised of 2,000 soldiers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina from combat units that have redeployed from either Iraq or Afghanistan after January 1, 2011. Each participant took a Combat Leader Survey which was important for identifying soldiers who fit my sampling criterion. Each group was organized according to rank and gender to best facilitate the exchange of information and personal stories, without being concerned about the presence of junior or senior soldiers in their group. From the focus groups I selected 18 males and 6 females for in-depth interviews (3 from each focus group) and invited each to participate in a 1-2 hour semi-structured interview.

Often times in qualitative research, the researcher looks for ways to mitigate the possibility of participants saying what he or she thinks the interview wants to hear. To best control for this possibility, understanding I cannot completely control for this phenomena, I used the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The scale provides a measure that provides a researcher with an indication of a participant's propensity present him or herself in culturally sanctioned ways (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

Data coding was a challenge due to the enormous amount of information obtained during the interview process. I chose to use a traditional approach of inductive analysis which involves the process of identifying patterns, themes, and categories for coding. My coding system used one color for each major theme and then different

colors to the secondary topics. In addition, I also used the computer software package (NVivo) which provided an opportunity to utilize the latest computer technology to conduct a broader analysis.

In an effort to enhance the accuracy and validity of my study, I used a number of different data types, the Combat Leader Survey, detailed field notes from direct observation, focus groups, and individual interviews. By using a number of different techniques, I used a higher form of triangulation to best assure the accuracy of my results. In addition, I used Patton's four measures of validity common in qualitative research: Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability.

From an ethical perspective, I briefed each soldier prior to participating in the study, I made it very clear that participation was voluntary and a participant would be permitted to withdraw at any time. I also handed out and maintained completed consent forms, focus group notes, transcribed transcripts of each focus group and individual interviews. In addition, all audio files and associated data from participants will be retained in a secure manner for 3 years and then destroyed. To ensure ethical standards were in place and appropriate for this research, I solicited approval from Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects of my research protocol. This ensured that appropriate safeguards were in place to protect the rights of the all participants. I also provided full disclosure of information, the purpose of my study, all associated risks, and ensured the availability of support personnel in case a participant began to feel the symptoms PTSD stemming from discussions of combat.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

As previously defined, the purpose of this study was to examine both effective and non-effective leader behaviors exhibited by those entrusted with authority in the U.S. Army while in combat and under enemy fire. More specifically, leader behaviors were identified by using a stratified sample of soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and commissioned officers, all with varying degrees of experience, years of service, from both genders. The study used a hybrid research design that utilizes both qualitative and quantitative measures. It incorporated 2,000 soldier surveys, 8 focus groups of 10 soldiers each, and 24 in-depth interviews (18 male, 6 female) from 8 stratified groups.

Of the 2,000 soldiers identified to take the combat leader surveys I very quickly collected 287 actual surveys and found in excess of 30 soldiers for each of the 8 groups. I numbered each survey to provide for the anonymity of the soldier in order to better provide for the confidentiality of each soldier. I am the only person who is able to identify a soldier's number with his or her name. In this manner, I have ensured the confidentiality of each participant while retaining the ability to select solders with certain demographics (rank, gender, combat experience) for inclusion into 1 of the 8 groups. The total number of surveys collected was 287, with the group breakout as follows:

Group 1: N=35

Group 2: N=38

Group 3: N=34

Group 4: N=35

Group 5: N=38

Group 6: N=37

Group 7: N=36

Group 8: N=34
_____
N=287

The combat leader survey was important to identify a soldier's rank, job, gender, number of deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the total number of direct fire engagements with the enemy. These individual characteristics were critical to properly place each of the participants into 1 of the 8 groups for this study. Each group was designed to have soldiers who share commonalities so that each would feel free to discuss his or her story and not feel threatened by either junior or senior soldiers. In this manner, I was able to gain trust and cooperation.

Individual Group Demographic Data

Before conducting my data analysis, findings, and interpretations it is important to first explain the demographic for each of the 8 groups. Each group represents a different demographic and when compared to another group, divides my sample into a group where soldiers share the same rank, approximate age, social desirability scale score, and all combat veterans with the exception of group 8.

Table 2

Summary of Focus Groups

	Focus Group	Avg. Age	Average Deployed Iraq	Average Deployed Afghanistan	Average of SD Scale	Average Direct Fire Engagements
1	Male SPC	22	1.63	1.13	11.13	2.25
2	Male SSG	29	1.86	0.93	10.23	4.93
3	Male SFC	34	1.40	2.30	12.90	6.50
4	Male CPT	29	2.30	0.40	13.80	4.10
5	Male LTC	41	2.50	0.10	14.30	3.10
6	Female SSG	30	1.80	0.10	11.80	1.30
7	Female CPT	29	1.30	0.40	11.70	0.50
8	Male SSG No Combat	30	0	0	15.83	0
	Survey Average		1.83	0.76	12.27	3.24

N=80

Below is a table to help the reader gain an understanding of the different military ranks for U.S. Army, titles, and their abbreviations.

Table 3

U.S. Army Rank and Abbreviations

Enlisted	**Ranks**	**Abbreviation**
E-1	Private	PVT
E-2	Private	PV2
E-3	Private First Class	PFC
E-4	Specialist	SPC
E-5	Sergeant	SGT
E-6	Staff Sergeant	SSG
E-7	Sergeant First Class	SFC
E-8	Master Sergeant	MSG
E-9	Sergeant Major	SGM

Officer	**Ranks**	**Abbreviation**
0-1	Second Lieutenant	2LT
0-2	First Lieutenant	1LT
0-3	Captain	CPT
0-4	Major	MAJ
0-5	Lieutenant Colonel	LTC
0-6	Colonel	COL
0-7	Brigadier General	BG (1 Star)
0-7	Major General	MG (2 Star)
0-8	Lieutenant General	LTG (3 Star)
0-10	General	GEN (4 Star)

The graph's below are a graphical depiction of the overall sample, stratified by rank (see Table 3 above) of the 287 participants as well as specific criteria that defined the sample of the groups.
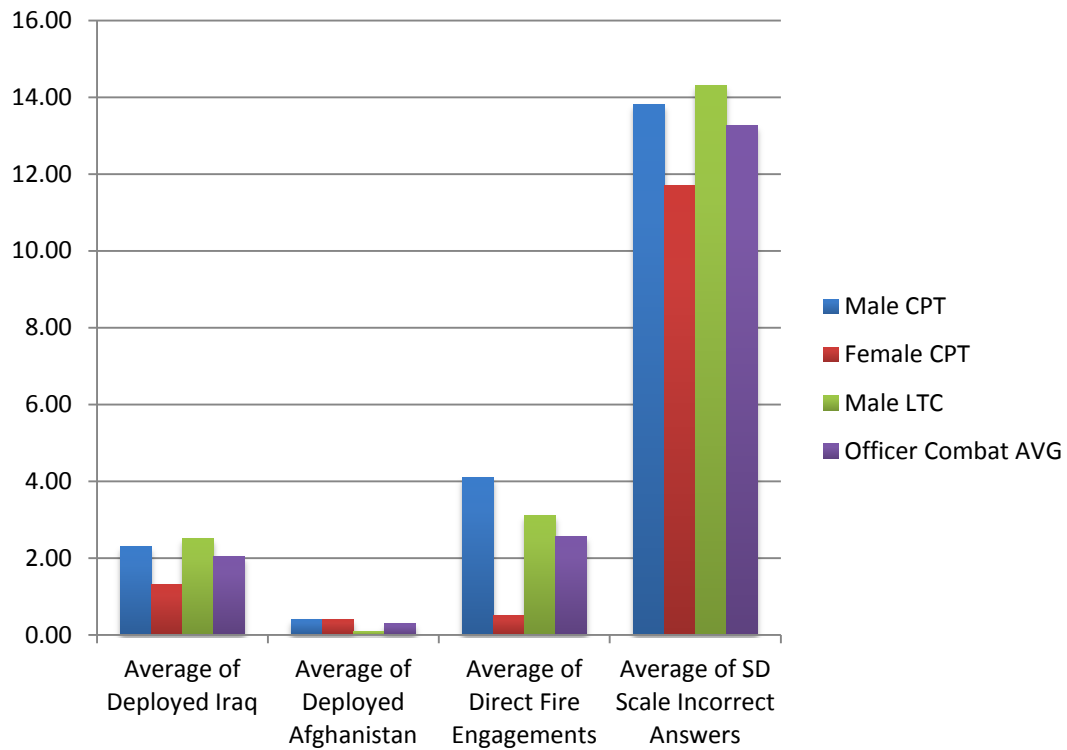
Figure 2. Overall statistics for all officer groups.
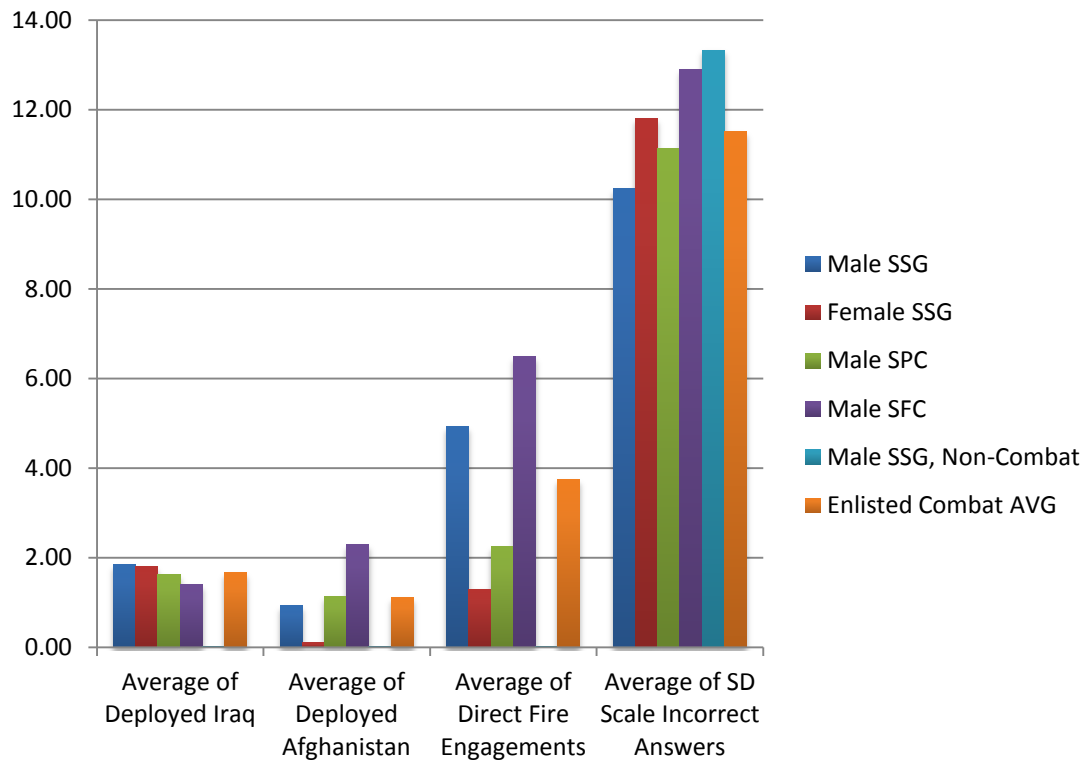
Figure 3. Overall statistics for all noncommissioned officer groups.

Immediately recognizable, there are a number of bars in the graphs that are clearly not within the norm. Noticeably, 3 (Male, SFC Group) has the most amount of combat experience with the most number of deployments, with a mid-range on the SD Scale. This is important for the purpose of my study and I will discuss in depth later in the individual interviews section of this dissertation. Before further discussion, below is a brief description of each group's survey results.

Group 1 Data

Group 1 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of E-4 (Specialist) and below (E-1 to E-3), under the age of 25, and with combat experience. The average age of

participants from this group was 22 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.3 and .9 deployment average to Afghanistan; average number of kinetic engagements was 1.8; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 8.9.

Group 2 Data

Group 2 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant) under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.9, to Afghanistan was 1.9; average number of firefights was 5.3; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.2.

Group 3 Data

Group 3 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of E-7 (Sergeant First Class), under the age of 40, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 34 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.1, to Afghanistan was 2.3; average number of firefights was 6.5; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.9.

Group 4 Data

Group 4 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain), under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 2.3; to Afghanistan was .4,

average number of firefights was 4.1; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 13.8.

Group 5 Data

Group 5 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of 0-5 (Lieutenant Colonel) and below, under the age of 45, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 41 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 2.5 and to Afghanistan was .1; average number of firefights was 3.1; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.

Group 6 Data

Group 6 consisted of female soldiers with the rank of E-5 and E-6 (Sergeant and Staff Sergeant), under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 30 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.7; to Afghanistan was .1; average number of firefights was 1.2; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.6.

Group 7 Data

Group 7 consisted of female soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain), under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.4 and to Afghanistan was 1.7; average number of firefights was .3; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12

Group 8 Data

Group 8 consisted of 10 male, noncommissioned officers with the rank

of E-5 to E-6 (Sergeant and Staff Sergeant) with less than 10 years of service, under

the age of 30, and with NO combat experience. The average age of participants from

this group was 30 years old, No combat deployments, and average score of The

Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 13.7.

Group Data Summary

I stratified my sample from 2,000 soldiers, selected from 287 soldier surveys, and

placed more than 30 soldiers into 8 different groups, leaving me with a sample of 80

soldiers stratified into independent groups using the combat leader survey to identify a

soldier's rank, gender, and number of direct fire engagements. By using these

individual characteristics, I was able to place each of the 80 selected soldiers into 8

groups, 10 per group, where soldiers share commonalities to best facilitate

communication. Each group was finalized using rank, gender, and combat experience

with the end result being a sample of 10 enlisted soldiers, 40 noncommissioned

officers, and 30 commissioned officers, all with varying degrees of experience but

sharing common characteristics making it appropriate to stratify them into the

different groups.

Focus Group Design

I stratified my sample from 287 combat leader surveys into 8 different and

independent groups using rank as the standard from which to place each soldier. Once

each survey was placed into its respective group, I used a purposeful sampling

technique to identify 10 soldiers for inclusion into 1 of the 8 focus groups; the purpose

was to use 4 criteria for inclusion into an independent focus group and to maintain

balance among my groups:

1. Rank

2. Gender

3. Total number of deployments

4. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale score within the range of *9-14, I*

chose subjects who scored between 9 and 14 on the Marlowe-Crowne Social

Desirability Scale in order to establish and maintain consistency among the groups. I

purposefully excluded participants outside of this range and selected those of whom I

believed were typical of combat veterans from my sample; I did not want outliers in

my groups.

Each group was independent of each other and labeled "Group 1…8", this was

designed to maximize the opportunity for soldiers to talk freely of their combat

experience without having to concern themselves with officers or noncommissioned

officers of a different rank in their group. This focus group sample consisted of 80

participants assigned to 1 of 8 different focus groups. Below is a table to illustrate the

focus group rank structure, and overall balance of my methodology, and a graph to

illustrate average number of deployments for both males and females in my sample.

Table 4

Focus Group Rank Structure

Focus Group	Number Surveyed	Percentage
1. Male SPC	10	12.5 %
2. Male SSG	10	12.5 %
3. Male SFC	10	12.5 %
4. Male CPT	10	12.5 %
5. Male LTC	10	12.5 %
6. Female SSG	10	12.5 %
7. Female CPT	10	12.5 %
8. Male SSG-No Combat	10	12.5 %

N = 80

Analysis of Focus Group 1 Data

Focus Group 1 consisted of 10 male soldiers with the rank of E-4 (Specialist), under the age of 25, all with combat experience. I conducted the focus group at Fort Bragg, NC on May 7, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in a U.S. Army classroom large enough to accommodate 35 soldiers. The classroom was configured with tables and chairs designed to seat 2 people per table. There were 2 large windows with natural sunlight shining through. Ventilation was good, we pushed aside some of the tables and chairs and reconfigured the tables into a square to permit each participant to see everyone in the group to better facilitate verbal interaction. This was the youngest of the 8 groups with an average age of 22, each of the soldiers deployed to Iraq and all but 1 deployed to Afghanistan (average number of deployments to Iraq, 1.3, and Afghanistan .9). Each soldier was involved in at least 1 direct fire engagement with the enemy with the

average being 1.8. Lastly, the average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 11 which is 1.2 points below the average of the 7 combat groups.

This focus group was very active with each soldier participating. Immediately noticeable was the discussion focused on what each individual did at the onset of an engagement. They were talking back and forth discussing what they did when the bullets started flying at them. They all agreed their initial reaction was to take cover for self-preservation. They were not focused on anything else, just simply survival. The discussion continued with each participant relating what they experienced about 15 seconds into a firefight, each related how they had difficulty identifying the enemy, but felt the intense impulse to eliminate the threat and kill the enemy.

My observation was that during the first few seconds of an engagement, each individual soldier took immediate action without regard to other members in his unit. Self-preservation was at the forefront of their minds until each gathered his thoughts and moved into a battle drill where a soldier's military training took over.

Analysis of Focus Group 2 Data

Focus Group 2 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant), under the age of 30, with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan was 1.9 with the average number of firefights of 5.3 ; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.2 which is 2 points below the combat average of the 7 groups.

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I conducted the focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 12:00 p.m. in the same U.S. Army classroom as and immediately following focus group 1. I kept the same classroom configuration as to permit each participant to see everyone in the group to best facilitate verbal interaction. This group was 2 ranks above focus group 1 and considered to be the immediate and direct supervisors of soldiers with the rank of focus group 1.

This focus group was somewhat guarded for the first 10-15 minutes of the discussion. They were noticeably older and more mature in tone and manner as opposed to focus group 1. This group had a tremendous amount of combat experience and related that at the onset of a direct fire engagement, each immediately took cover and without hesitation formulated a plan to identify and put their soldiers onto the target for suppressive fire. Once they initiated suppressive fire, typically within 5-10 seconds of the onset, each believed it important to take control of their subordinate soldiers and direct their movements, the movements of soldiers of group 1.

Each of the 10 soldiers agreed the number one characteristic to be the most effective combat leader during a firefight is to remain calm. Closely following the number one characteristic in their opinion was for an individual to have situational awareness of his surroundings and the intellectual ability to decide whether or not to maneuver his unit to a different position during the firefight. This group dynamic was such that I could clearly identify these soldiers were less focused on their own survival than the survival of their subordinates. They began some type of transition from self indulgence or survival, and became much more focused on their men, their mission,

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and what it would take to accomplish their mission while keeping their subordinates safe.

Analysis of Focus Group 3 Data

Focus Group 3 is the group with the greatest amount of combat experience. This group consisted of male soldiers with the rank of E-7 (Sergeant First Class), under the age of 40, with an enormous amount of combat experience with an average number of firefights at 6.5. The average age of participants from this group was 34 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.1 with the average number of deployments to Afghanistan at 1.9. The average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.9 which is slightly above the overall combat average of the 7 groups combined.

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 2:00 p.m. in the same U.S. Army classroom immediately following focus group 2. In an effort to maintain a consistent environment I kept the same classroom configuration as the previous 2 groups to best facilitate verbal interaction. This group was 1 rank above focus group 2, 3 ranks above group 1, and considered to be the immediate and direct supervisors of all soldiers with ranks of focus groups 1 and 2. This group is also responsible for training, mentoring, and development of newly commissioned officers from their commission date, well into their 4th year of service. Focus Group 3 soldiers are the consummate professionals, and as a result of their rank and role within the U.S. Army, are at the forefront of any and all direct fire combat scenarios.

This focus group was interactive, thoughtful, professional, and rather stoic in tone and manner. They recalled many different combat situations and discussed victories, defeats, and challenges from their position as well as the position of their subordinates. They discussed initial reactions on contact, agreeing that the first second or so was typically used for self-preservation.

After initial contact with the enemy, this group determined (at least in their experiences) the next step of combat was to pause for just a brief second, assess the situation, and immediately maneuver toward the threat and do whatever was necessary to kill the enemy. They were absolutely focused on their mission and would do whatever necessary to accomplish that mission, even if it meant to put soldiers in positions where they might be hurt or killed. Group 3 would maneuver and eliminate any and all opposition-or die trying.

10 soldiers in group 3 stated the number one desired characteristic in a firefight was to remain calm. They believe the second and third most important traits were for an individual to have confidence and situational awareness which will be discussed in the interview section of this dissertation immediately following the focus group section.

Analysis of Focus Group 4 Data

Focus Group 4 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain), under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 2.3; to Afghanistan was .4, average number of firefights was 4.1; with the average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 13.8, which consequently was 2.7

points higher than the combat average. This indicated a greater likelihood of this group trying to appear acceptable to the rest of its group members.

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 4:00 p.m. in the same U.S. Army classroom immediately following focus group 3. Once again, in an effort to maintain a consistent environment I kept the same classroom configuration as the previous 2 groups to best facilitate verbal interaction. This group was the first group of officers I sampled, and each outranked all of the 3 previous groups. A Captain in the U.S. Army is required to have a bachelor's degree, obtain and maintain a secret security clearance, and is typically responsible for (in command of) 100 or more soldiers at any given time. This group would in effect, have authority over all soldiers below his rank and direct supervisory authority over the Sergeants First Class identified in group 3.

This group is responsible for everything that does or does not happen within his command to include but not limited to the training, developing, mentoring, planning, coordination, and execution of all combat and non-combat tasks of all soldiers in his command. They normally have between 5 and 11 years of service and are the group within the officer corps with the most amount of combat experience.

This focus group was thoughtful, calculating in terms of response, interactive with me and with others in the group, and very professional in tone and manner. They talked about many different things both combat and non-combat situations with a focus on subordinate actions during an engagement. They were completely mission focused and believe to a great extent, the better prepared mentally you are prior to an engagement, the better off you and your subordinates will fair during the firefight.

They all agreed that after initial contact with the enemy, the best way to eliminate

the threat was to take in vast amounts of information and process that information in an instant. They all said the first decision from the leader was most critical and the leader must remain calm when giving the orders. If the leader panics or shows any kind of fear this would be very bad for the unit. Once the information was processed and acted upon, the next step was to bring all possible assets to the fight and accomplish the mission no matter what was required.

Analysis of Focus Group 5 Data

Focus Group 5 consisted of male soldiers with the rank of 0-5 (Lieutenant Colonel), under the age of 45, and with combat experience with an average of 2.5 deployments to Iraq and no deployments to Afghanistan. The average age of participants from this group was 41 years old; average number of firefights 3.1; and surprisingly the average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 13.3. Scoring an average of 13.3 on the MCSD Scale was the highest average score of all groups. This was interesting in that lieutenant colonels are considered senior leaders in the U.S. Army and have an enormous amount of formal academic education; formal officer level training and education, and both formal and informal combat training. This indicates likelihood, more so than any other group to make oneself appear different than one is in real life.

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC on July 23, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in a different location of the first 4 focus groups, although with the same physical setup as the other classroom. I attempted to make this classroom as close to the other as

possible. The timing of this focus group, as well as with focus groups 6-8 was approximately 6 weeks after the focus groups 1-4.

Focus Group 5 participants were the senior leaders in the U.S. Army who held the highest rank of the in my sample. This group outranked all in my sample, they typically have command authority over 500-750 soldiers and an enormous amount of responsibility for all under their command. Each is required to have a bachelor's degree and maintain a secret security clearance. Most in my sample had in excess of 20 years of military service, a Master's degree, and a Top Secret Security Clearance. This group would in effect be the most educated, experienced, and have authority over more than 99% of the soldiers in a combat theater.

As with each preceding group, lieutenant colonels believe the top leader trait in combat is to remain calm while under fire. Additional discussions were more conceptual in nature, what a soldier needs to do for success during a firefight. The lieutenant colonels spoke of confidence as a prerequisite for leadership, as well as the ability to consume and process vast amounts of information while maintaining the ability to make split second decisions. Trust and situational awareness were also key and important while maintaining mental agility and flexibility on the battlefield. They all spoke of leadership from an institutional perspective, almost reciting the U.S. Army's manual for leadership. Each was well versed in what should probably happen in a firefight although all had little experience under fire. Each also spoke very forcibly regarding the need for better training prior to placing soldiers in a combat situation.

Each lieutenant colonel also emphasized the importance of empowering junior and

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subordinate leaders. They believe if you fail to provide subordinate leaders with

power and authority, you would be placing him and his soldiers at greater risk.

Perhaps the most important thing I took from this group was the need for better

training prior to combat. The need for realistic training scenarios, complete with all of

the cultural norms of a given area (the area a soldier is likely to fight in), with the

sights, sounds, and people of the area.

Analysis of Focus Group 6 Data

Focus Group 6 consisted of female soldiers with the rank of E-5 and E-6 (Sergeant

and Staff Sergeant), under the age of 30, all with combat experience. The average age

of participants from this group was 30 years old; average number of deployments to

Iraq was 1.7; to Afghanistan was .1; average number of firefights was 1.2; and average

score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.6.

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 12:00 p.m. in the same U.S.

Army classroom as focus group 5 immediately following its conclusion. To maintain

consistency I used the same classroom with the same configuration to facilitate

participant interaction. This group was the same rank as group 2 and 2 ranks above

group 1. At the time it was the policy of the U.S. Army that females were not to be

assigned to units or to positions requiring direct contact or combat with the enemy.

Despite this policy, all females in this group experienced combat and performed no

better, and no worse than their male counterparts.

This focus group was very talkative and forthcoming with their thoughts,

observations, and opinions. I was eager to listen and learn from this group. These

soldiers were intelligent, tactically proficient, and technically sound on their weapons systems and equipment. They discussed initial contact with the enemy and had similar thoughts of the men at their rank. This group was interested in surviving initial contact by taking cover for the first 1 or 2 seconds, and then identifying where the enemy fire was coming from, then effectively placing counter-fire on the enemy.

Focus group 6 participants were about the same age as focus group 2 and although they held the same rank, this group appeared to be cautious prior to their direct fire engagements, although once the ferocity of combat began, the women were similar to men in how they handled themselves.

Of particular note, was that female soldiers appeared to be somewhat hesitant prior to a mission where the likelihood of enemy contact was increased, not afraid, but timid. I explored this with each female soldier and came to the understanding with each participant that the behavior appears to be innate among women, although once engaged by the enemy, they were able to draw upon the primal instinct to kill for survival, and in that respect they were just as aggressive as men once the firefight began. After struggling with this concept over many months, I have come to the conclusion this behavior is more of a tactical prudence type of behavior. As opposed to tactical patience; where leaders in combat who demonstrate the ability to wait for favorable conditions to develop before making critical decisions. It is important to make the distinction between the two concepts, so just think in simple terms of patience versus prudence. In many respects, both behaviors can be employed at any given place or time for the advantage of the user. And this is what makes this so important; I am certain that tactical prudence can play a significant role in future

warfare if used in the proper place and time. Female soldiers are just as capable as men in combat, although the U.S. Army would be well served to further investigate this type of phenomenon among women in combat and determine if a tactical advantage may exists as a result.

Each of the 10 soldiers in this group believed the number one characteristic for an effective combat leader is to remain calm while under fire. They also closely paralleled the other groups by stating an individual must have an awareness of the situation, the environment, and the battlefield conditions. They were all initially focused on their individual survival although after the initial onslaught, became focused on their subordinates and their mission. Focus group 6 participants seemed slightly reluctant to state that their mission was more important than the lives of their subordinates, although as the discussion continued they all agreed the mission comes first and it must be accomplished whether soldiers are at great risk or not.

Analysis of Focus Group 7 Data

Focus Group 7 consisted of female soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain), under the age of 30, and with combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 29 years old; average number of deployments to Iraq was 1.4 and 1.7 to Afghanistan; average number of firefights was .3; and average score of the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 2:00 p.m. in the same U.S. Army classroom as focus group 6 immediately following the conclusion. Again, to maintain consistency in the process I used the same classroom with the same configuration to

best facilitate participant interaction. This group was the same rank as group 3 with the same characteristics (age, experience, education, authority, and responsibilities) with one exception; this group was made up of female participants. Although the policy of the U.S. Army was to not permit females to serve in units likely to be involved in direct fire engagements with the enemy.

Just like its male counterparts in group 4, this group was responsible for everything that did or did not happen within her command. She was responsible for the training, developing, mentoring, planning, coordination, and execution of all non-combat tasks within her command. Unlike their male counterparts of the same rank, this group had very limited combat leadership experience, in fact only one of the participants in this group had more than 1 firefight. Each participant was focused on their individual subordinates and their welfare. During the initial blast, this group was focused on self-preservation for the first second or two, but quickly transitioned to gaining critical information of what was happening and the location of the enemy.

This group of female captains was initially focused on their subordinate's welfare and what they needed to do to keep their soldiers safe. They did have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to coordinate counteroffensive operations but did not use them until they were 5-10 minutes into the firefight, demonstrating tactical patience. I am still uncertain why the female officers waited a few extra minutes to call in additional fire support, and am not willing to call this tactical prudence. But this group did perform very well, did demonstrate tactical prudence, and once engaged with the enemy, did draw upon the primal instinct to kill their enemy.

Analysis of Focus Group 8 Data

I conducted this focus group at Fort Bragg, NC at 4:00 p.m. in the same U.S. Army classroom as focus group 7 immediately following their conclusion. Again, to maintain consistency in the process I used the same classroom with the same configuration to best facilitate participant interaction. This group was the same rank as group 2 with the same characteristics (age, experience, education, authority, and responsibilities) with one exception; this group was made up of soldiers who have not served in combat nor experienced direct contact with the enemy.

Focus Group 8 consisted of 10 male, noncommissioned officers with the rank of E-5 to E-6 (Sergeant and Staff Sergeant) with less than 10 years of service, under the age of 30, and with NO combat experience. The average age of participants from this group was 30 years old, no deployments to a combat zone, and average score of The Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 15.8, the highest of all groups.

This group was asked the same questions as each of the previous 7 groups although with the insertion of "training" for "combat" and re-writing the interview guide questions with minimal changes. In effect, when anything relating to combat in the original interview guide, I simply changed the focus from combat to training for combat, and training exercises preparing for combat. In this manner, I was able to maintain consistency across all 8 groups which enhanced the credibility of group 8.

Each of these participants had similar training as focus group 2 (Male SSG with combat experience) and all had many years of military training and experience. Each believed the number one characteristic of a leader preparing for combat was for soldiers to remain loyal to their commander. This is the first I heard of loyalty being

so very important for combat and can draw no conclusion as to why this group placed this trait as number one. They were similar to the combat experienced groups in discussing the second most important characteristic for a leader to have for future combat, and that was for a leader to have the ability to be flexible. Flexibility in both mental agility and the flexibility to change a plan if the plan is not going well. The third characteristic and once again only discussed by this group, is respect. They believe respect to be very important for leaders preparing for combat, respect of both superiors and subordinates. This group had a "book smart" way of approaching the subject with very little idea of what combat truly is; the ferocity, horror, and incredible violence of an engagement.

Analysis of Interview Data

Once the focus groups were complete, I selected 18 males and 6 females for in-depth interviews. Each participant was selected based on his or her ability to provide candid responses to my questions as well as candid feedback to others in the group. This strategy facilitated selecting the participants with relevant combat experience, whom were willing to answer questions, who were articulate, and who were willing to talk freely of their combat experience. I took detailed field notes during each focus group and by the end of each group, was able to identify the 3 individuals I would request to interview. I chose this strategy to facilitate gaining the best possible information during the 1-2 hour, in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The focus groups were helpful to identify whom to select for the interviews permitting the best opportunity to gather very insightful information about each participant before

selecting for an interview. Of the 24 soldier's I selected for interviews, 3 soldiers came

from each of the 8 focus groups, 6 of the soldier's were female, to approximate the

current female population of soldiers percentages present within U.S. Army.

Each interview was designed to take between 1-2 hours; I used an interview guide

with a list of questions to assist in maintaining consistency throughout each interview

and to ensure the questions most important for my research were addressed. In this

manner, each of the participants were asked relevant questions in a consistent tone and

manner; which provided the framework for gathering credible and honest feedback.

Please refer to the next page to Table 5 for a table with the 24 soldier's selected for

interviews.

Table 5

Summary of Interviews

	Focus Group	Avg. Age	Average Deployed Iraq	Average Deployed Afghanistan	Average of SD Scale	Average Direct Fire Engagements
1	Male SPC	23.8	2	1.33	12	5.3
2	Male SSG	29	2	2	9	5
3	Male SFC	35	2.3	3	12.3	9.6
4	Male CPT	29	2.66	0.67	10.3	6.3
5	Male LTC	41	3	0	9.67	3
6	Female SSG	29	1.67	0	11.34	4
7	Female CPT	30	1.33	.67	13	1
8	Male SSG No Combat	29	0	0	14	0
	Survey Average		1.83	0.76	12.27	3.24

N = 24

Below is a list of questions asked of 21 of the 24 participants during each of their interviews, the last 3 of the 24 were asked the same questions but with the substituting word "training" when combat types of questions or scenarios appear. This of course due to the last 3 participants not being combat qualified.

1. Please define your understanding of leadership.

2. What makes the best leader when confronted with a direct fire engagement?

3. Please think of a specific enemy engagement over your previous deployment and detail the circumstances. Now that you have thought back to that incident, what do you think the leader (On Scene Commander) did right and wrong?

4. If you were in his position, what would you have done differently and why?

5. What do you consider the three most important leader traits or characteristics when confronted with a direct fire engagement?

6. After it was over, do you believe your actions were consistent with your combat training?

7. Is there anything in the preparation for combat you would have changed knowing what you now know? If yes; Why. If no; Why not?

8. Is there anything you would like to add to our discussion?

Analysis of Group 1 Interviews

Group 1 soldiers were male, held the rank of E-4 (Specialist), under the age of 25, with 1 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 1, the average interview lasting 43 minutes. One soldier had 2 deployments to Iraq while the other two had multiple deployments to

both Iraq and Afghanistan. The average age of participants from this group was 22

years old, and interestingly the average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability

Scale was 8.9.

For each of the 8 focus groups, I used an interview guide to establish a baseline for

questioning and provide a consistent tone and manner in which to ask each question.

An interview guide is a helpful tool for the qualitative researcher which provides a

general guide for each interview to accomplish two goals, add consistency and provide

the freedom to deviate from current questions to ask relevant questions based on

previous responses. For groups 1 though 7 I used Appendix A, Interview Guide and

for group 8 I used Appendix A1, Interview Guide (Non-Combat) for my 1 non-combat

group of soldiers.

During each of their interviews, all 3 stated that their most fundamental concern

when confronted with enemy fire was that the leader remains calm and collected.

During the confusion of battle, soldiers reported that they needed the guidance of

someone that seemed firm in the face of chaos. Additionally, there were multiple

responses that explained the need for self-confidence among leaders in combat.

Tactical patience is a term frequently used in the U.S. Army which refers to the ability

of leaders to assess a situation, determine possible courses of action (COA), and then

select the best COA to execute the mission.

Each interview was done separately and independently of another so when themes

began to emerge I took special note of both the individual relating the information as

well as the content. Each explained how frustrating and confusing the initial onset of

their first engagement had been. They believed if the U.S. Army could somehow train

them in a way that their first engagement was not really in fact their first taste of battle, they would have all performed better on the battlefield. They believe their training for specific combat roles and specific countries to be substandard and should have placed more focus on individual battle drills. Battle drills are simply a doctrinal way of performing certain tasks in combat, similar to what a football team does while on offense; each individual has certain responsibilities and practices each of their duties until they can complete each task with little or no thought. Below is a list of the U.S. Army Battle Drills taken from the U.S. Army Field Manual 7-8 (Battle Drills, Appendix I).

Battle Drill 1: Platoon Attack

Battle Drill 2: React to Contact

Battle Drill 3: Break Contact

Battle Drill 4: React to Ambush

Battle Drill 5: Knock out Bunkers

Battle Drill 6: Enter a Building/Clear a Room

Battle Drill 7: Enter/Clear a Trench

Battle Drill 8: Conduct Initial Breach of a Mined Wire Obstacle

Analysis of Group 2 Interviews

Group 2 soldiers were male, held the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant), with an average age of 29 and each had 5 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 2, the average interview lasting 41 minutes. One soldier had 2 deployments to Iraq while the other two had

multiple deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.2.

   Just as with group 1, during each of their interviews, all 3 stated their number one leader trait or characteristic when confronted with enemy fire was for a leader to remain calm. Although unlike the first group of younger soldiers, I began to see a slight shift in participant responses. These 3 individuals were older than group 1, more mature, and had an additional 5-10 years of U.S. Army service. Each of the 3 Staff Sergeants not only related the number one trait is to remain calm under fire, but that a good leader will also take in an enormous amount of information related to the firefight, process the information in an instant, and maneuver his element to the most advantages position given the local environment and terrain (what the U.S. Army refers to as "Tactical Patience").

   This group also mentioned on several different occasions that leaders must be able trust his or her subordinates. ME62 stated the issue succinctly: "Basically, it's having the trust and respect of your men so that you know when you give a command; they will follow it without question. Especially in a combat environment because you can't have anybody that would hesitate, you need to develop trust before you go into combat and earn that respect from a lower soldiers so you don't have to worry about that".

Analysis of Group 3 Interviews

   Group 3 soldiers were male, held the rank of E-7 (Sergeants First Class), with an average age of 34 and each had 9 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 3, the average interview

lasting 47 minutes. One soldier had 6 deployments to Afghanistan while the other two

had multiple deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan. The average of their

Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.3.

These individuals differed from younger soldiers from groups 1 and 2; they were

completely stoic during the interviews and appeared more professional in tone and

manner. They were senior noncommissioned officers who spent their entire adult

lives in intensive training on the battlefield. Each of the Sergeants First Class was a

Platoon Sergeant with many years of combat experience, each led a platoon in combat

(a platoon consists of 30 or more soldiers), each have lost subordinates while in

combat to enemy fire, and as part of their professional training have held every

position of the soldiers in groups 1 and 2 during their U.S. Army career.

First, these individuals were very vocal about the view that a leader must remain

calm and collected during a firefight. But they explained that the reason for such a

disposition was due to the fact that split second decisions are required in combat and

must be commanded with a steeled sense of confidence.

> ME71 reported: "Yeah, that kind of fits exactly what in the moment of
>
> you think you are going to get shot at, you think you are going to die, in
>
> those moments like when the rounds are hitting two inches in front of
>
> your face, you got a guy who gets shot or whatever and if you are at the
>
> leadership you have to stay stoic and fight those moments. I really think
>
> it's not looking good for us, but he remained calm, collected like
>
> everything was going his way even though I know it wasn't, I have taken
>
> that the rest of my career and used it. He just had faith that we were

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going to come out alright, and if you go into an engagement or during an engagement you have to train yourself to do that-you just can't go around shouting. You know rounds landed two inches from my face, I'm going to keep my heart rate at you know a hundred and twenty. You know you just can't do that but you have to train yourself to do that you have to realize that this it is going to happen, and when it does happen everyone feeds off you cause the worst engagements I have seen were when leaders lose their control and it spread like wild fire. You just cannot, the rest of the platoon is going crazy except one or two people who are trying bring everybody back down. In the moment you know you have one minute of your heart rate racing and then after that initial minute is when everything kind of calms down and you just fight the fight. Some people instead of a minute it's like ten minutes or instead of a minute its thirty seconds. Well for the Captain it wasn't even thirty seconds, it was five seconds. So when your heart rate goes up for five seconds and it immediately drops back down like all right guys ,'I've got this' and he calms everybody down. So to describe that would be calming everybody else down in the initial minutes beginning of a fire fight is the most important part of being a leader and a direct engagement."

This group offered a particularly helpful insight in that they commonly explained the qualities of leadership from a behavioral rather than an institutional perspective. Perhaps since they were senior noncommissioned officers with both formal and

informal training at all levels of the U.S. Army's training system, they understood the dynamics of leadership to lie beyond mere rank or formal military assignment. They each mentioned on several occasions the need to be tactically proficient, an expert in weapons, and the need for charismatic leadership. The Sergeants First Class talk of the need to perform battle drills to the point of exhaustion, and rehearsal after rehearsal to best prepare for combat gave me the sense that these individuals felt that training was the essence of leadership preparation. They believe a leader, young or old, who is well trained in the battle drills and well-rehearsed, has a better chance of remaining calm while under fire, and therefore a better chance to stay alive, keep his soldiers alive, and accomplish the mission.

Analysis of Group 4 Interviews

Group 4 soldiers were male, held the rank of 0-3 (Captain), with an average age of 29 and each had 5 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 4, the average interview lasting 40 minutes. One soldier had 2 deployments to Iraq while the other two had multiple deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 10.3.

Captains in the U. S. Army are considered on the lower end of the officer's rank scale. Captains are commissioned as Second Lieutenants from either the United States Military Academy (West Point), a college Reserve Officers Training Corps Program (ROTC), or Officer's Candidate School for the older, previously enlisted soldiers. Captains have at least a bachelor's degree, a 7 month basic officer's leaders course,

and generally a 7 month career captain's course, with any number of specialized training schools like Airborne, Air Assault, Mountain Warfare, and/or many other schools. Captains are considered very well trained in both the science and art of war and I expect their responses to be somewhat institutionalized due to their enormous amounts of formal military training.

During each interview, all 3 Captains stated their preferred leadership trait or characteristic when confronted with enemy fire was confidence. Two of the three referenced the need to remain calm, and one stated a leader in combat needs to be decisive when issuing commands. Interestingly, one elaborated the importance of decisive leadership.

> M031 stated, "The best leader is a decisive one, someone who makes a decision even when we are having such overwhelming firepower. It's kind of hard to make a bad decision… I guess you'd say, but the key thing is just not putting your soldiers in a fateful decision of putting your soldiers in a really bad situation that could not accomplish the mission. But not to put your soldiers in a position where it's a no win for them."

Each Captain stressed the need for leaders to have the ability to digest as much preliminary information as possible in order to make the best decision given the circumstances. A good practice to prepare a leader for combat, some reported, was to rehearse the battle drills to the point every soldier in a platoon fully comprehended his or her task without thinking about it. Tactical proficiency was noted on numerous occasions and like the previous 3 groups; senior leaders in the U.S. Army must push for resources to recreate a battle space before actually entering the real battle space. In

simple terms, create the homes, sights, smells, language, culture, music, roads, everything should look, smell, and feel like the actual location you will deploy to.

Analysis of Group 5 Interviews

Group 5 soldiers were male, held the rank of 0-5 (Lieutenant Colonel), with an average age of 41 and each had 2 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 5, the average interview lasting 38 minutes. All soldiers had 2 deployments to Iraq and no deployments to Afghanistan. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 9.7.

Lieutenant Colonels are considered senior leaders in the U.S. Army with an enormous amount of formal academic education; formal officer level schools generally totaling in excess of 3 years, with both formal and informal combat training. As such, I would expect responses to be more formal and institutionalized than all of the other 7 groups, and contain a certain level of institutional verbiage.

As with each preceding group, all 3 Lieutenant Colonels believe the top leader trait in combat is to remain calm while under fire. They went on to say a leader who can handle the initial shock, the initial blast, the initial horror of what is happening at that moment and remain calm and composed will have the best chance for mission success, and the best chance to bring all of his soldiers home alive. The Lieutenant Colonels strongly believe confidence is a prerequisite for leadership, as well as the ability to digest and process enormous amounts of information and make a split second decision-the right decision. Trust and situational awareness were also identified as being extremely important while maintaining mental agility, or have the ability to be

flexible from one location to another, one mission to another, or one frame of mind to another. After all, U.S Army Soldiers may be in a firefight one minute, and then handing out candy to local kids the next; this takes an incredible amount of mental agility from our young leaders.

Each Lieutenant Colonel also discussed the importance of empowering junior and subordinate leaders. They stated by not empowering a leader, you would be placing him and his soldiers in danger due to the probability the leader has had little opportunity to make critical decisions while under stress. Lastly, this group noted that realistic combat training is essential for future success of our Army. Realistic scenarios, including the ancillary sights, sounds, smells, geography, climate, structures, traffic, that accompany the environment of combat need to be replicated in order to hone the skills of our military leaders.

Analysis of Group 6 Interviews

Group 6 soldiers were female, holding the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant), with an average age of 30, and each had 1 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 6; the average interview lasted 33 minutes. All soldiers had 1 deployment to Iraq and no deployments to Afghanistan. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.

The primary preferred leadership characteristic among this group of mid-grade female noncommissioned officers was composure. Each of the three Staff Sergeants believed leaders stand a higher chance for success if he or she is composed during a firefight, especially at the onset of an engagement.

FE61 stated the common refrain in this way, "That day when we got hit

with rockets, mortars, and small arms fire it was like it just rained fire from

heaven and my commander lost his composure; he absolutely went psycho

for about a second." She continued, "Before that, we all thought he was a

great leader, very charismatic, emotional type of guy and appeared to have

his shit together. But when it hit the fan, you could see his leadership skills

also became very charismatic and emotional, and I think that is what he was

doing- he was acting on what he felt but it was clear to see that what he was

doing was not a good idea and put soldiers in an unnecessary dangerous

position when they were already in relative safety of a hardened building."

In this case, the commander clearly lost his ability to exercise foresight in the

absence of composure. He was running from building to building yelling at his

subordinates to evacuate and get into the bunkers which were at a dangerous 100

meters away. As a combat veteran myself; I know how dangerous this situation was

thanks to the lack of composure in the commander. This was apparently the

commander's first engagement. He was concerned for the welfare of his soldiers, but

his lack of confidence and calm composure undermined his purpose. FE61 further

explained that she believed this officer lacked trust in his subordinate

noncommissioned officers. Here then we see that trust in subordinates neatly

correlates, at least in the mind of this focus group, to both confident and composed

leadership.

Question 7 in the interview guide asks: Is there anything in preparation for you

would have changed knowing what you know now? Each of the 3 noncommissioned

officers stated they would have focused more attention on the 8 battle drills. They believe by learning, memorizing, and rehearsing the battle drills the end result might be that a leader will simply react as trained for the first few seconds of a firefight and this might buy him or her those critical 1 or 2 seconds needed to gain their composure.

Analysis of Group 7 Interviews

Group 7 soldiers were female, held the rank of 0-3 (Captain), with an average age of 28 and each had 1 or more direct fire engagements with the enemy. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 7, the average interview lasting 35 minutes. All soldiers had 1 deployment to Iraq and no deployments to Afghanistan. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 12.

The predominant character preference for combat leadership from this group of female commissioned officers was also that leaders possess a calm, composed demeanor at the onset of a firefight. Each of the three officers said they did not feel well prepared for their first engagement and were all in the position of the junior officer on scene. They also said they look for a leader who has the ability to take in, process, and use available information to make the best decision immediately after the firefight began. They look for a leader who maintains an overall awareness of what is happening on the battlefield and takes charge of the situation.

> F072 stated, "I think it's important for a leader to remain calm when the
> fight begins, but also have the ability to communicate and give commands
> without freaking out." She also said the best way to prepare for the

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incredible violence of a firefight is to have a complete understanding of a mastery of the battle drills.

Analysis of Group 8 Interviews

Group 8 soldiers were male, held the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant), with an average age of 30, and none had any combat deployments. I interviewed 3 of these soldiers selected from focus group 8, the average interview lasting 43 minutes. The average of their Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale was 15.4 (the highest score of all 8 groups).

Interestingly, the preferred leader traits among these soldiers were loyalty, flexibility, and respect. Flexibility in both thought and action, having the ability to maneuver physically and mentally similar to a football coach or quarterback during a big game. Loyalty and respect of their subordinate soldiers, having respect which goes both up and down the chain of command while reaming loyal to your subordinates and earning their loyalty and respect as well.

Themes that Emerged from Interviews

My interest in conducting this study was simply identify what behaviors or individual traits make the best leader in combat while under fire. I used qualitative research to gain a deep understanding of each individual soldier I interviewed. Their interviews were transcribed and analyzed first using a coding system to identify emergent themes and patterns of behavior.

I used inductive analysis as the process for identifying patterns, themes, and categories. To best maintain control of and manage the data, I used a behavioral science software program, NVivo as a method to check my themes and add credibility to my findings. NVivo assists scholars in developing a constant comparative method of analysis for coding data. Data coding can be very subjective in nature, but useful for identifying common patterns. Once data is coded, constant comparative method can be used to systematically describe, define, and redefine emergent themes and patterns. The virtue of this method is that, through the use of a systematic, thoughtful, and vigorous analysis, the data can be analyzed in a systematic manner that presents the reader with a rich and informative study.

The NVivo software was vital to further identify trends, themes, and patterns to ensure I did not miss anything in my first order analysis. This hierarchical coding system provided the structure for additional analysis and identified the following themes:

1. The number one behavior a leader needs to demonstrate while under enemy fire is to remain calm in both demeanor and actions.

2. The second most important behavior or trait is for a leader in combat to have the ability to consume vast amounts of information in an instant, then direct subordinates where to go and what to do for the first 30-60 seconds of a firefight.

3. Demonstrate tactical patience.

4. Trust in subordinates, have the confidence subordinates will fall back on their training and react to contact in an appropriate manner.

5. Decisiveness, exhibit the ability to make a decision quickly and without wavering or showing fear, hesitation, or anything that might tip a subordinate the leader questions whether or not he or she made the right decision.

Identified through NVivo, two additional themes (Nodes) surfaced in my data:

1. The need for leaders to ensure they and their subordinate units are expert in conducting all of the 8 U.S. Army Battle Drills. By being expert in these drills, a leader will generally have the first 2-5 seconds of a firefight to quickly determine if he is under fire, consume available information, assess the situation, and direct an immediate course of action. If the unit is expert in all of its battle drills, members will react automatically during those critical initial seconds. This will permit the leader to quickly conduct his mental battle drill.

2. NVivo also helped to identify the need for proper training prior to soldiers being deployed to foreign countries where the environment and terrain are unfamiliar. 16 of 21 combat soldiers in my sample population stated the U.S. Army would be better suited if training practices included recreating and replicating foreign locations. For example, we deployed over a million soldiers to Iraq and all were housed within what was termed a forward operating base (FOB). All FOBs were constructed according to a common standard, complete with tents, buildings, latrines, fences, guard towers, entry and exit points, ammunition holding areas, armories, and a thousand other things that made up a secure FOB. In other words, conditions at the FOB were alike and what soldiers were likely to encounter in Iraq.

Figure 4. NVivo stored interview data.

Figure 5. NVivo example of coding with transcribed interviews.

Last and perhaps most importantly my study, especially with respect to the date

from group ME7 (Male, E-7) which had the most combat experience of all soldiers in

the U.S. Army, and certainly the most combat experience from my sample population

is the following: Soldiers lives could be saved if we could somehow replicate a

leader's first firefight. Somehow imitate the unbelievable violence, ferocity, and flood

of emotion so in reality, one's first "real" firefight is actually his second firefight.

This would accomplish two very critical things: train a leader how to remain calm

during his or her first firefight, and permit a leader to identify life threatening mistakes

prior to actually making the mistakes when it is all on the line.

Chapter Summary

Soldiers of the U.S. Army are the best qualified individuals this country has to

offer, and also the best trained soldiers in the world. With this in mind, I have taken a

sample from 2,000 soldiers from the premier, most elite unit in the U.S. Army; the

82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, NC. I then used a purposeful sampling

technique of typical case sampling and identified 10 soldiers for each 1 of the 8 focus

groups. Typical case sampling was important for this study due to the small sample of

interviews for each group, 3 per group, and if an extreme case participant was selected

for my sample, this would have marginalized one or more of the group outcomes.

I had the privilege of direct contact with 287 soldiers, along with extended contact

with 80 of those soldiers during the focus group, followed by an extensive

conversation during the in-depth interviews with 24 soldiers, 21 having had direct

contact with our enemy in combat. I am confident my sample reflects attitudes,

beliefs, and knowledge from my sample population, and reflects many of the same beliefs of soldiers across the U.S. Army.

After 10 years of war fighting the Global War on Terror, research of this nature has never been more relevant. As a quick review, the purpose of this study was to examine both effective and non-effective leader behaviors of soldiers while in combat and under direct enemy fire. My goal was to discuss and identify leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors from a stratified sample of enlisted soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and commissioned officers, both male and female. I used a hybrid design of qualitative and quantitative measures beginning with a combat leader survey, followed by 8 different focus groups, 24 in-depth interviews, and a Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale used as an indicator of who might be more likely to try and appear favorable to the researcher during the process.

Initially, the combat leader survey was used to identify a soldier's rank, gender, job, deployment history, and number of direct fire engagements. This was useful for identifying certain individual characteristics for placement of participants into 1 of the 8 stratified groups. Before placing participants into the groups, I removed each of the participant's names from the combat leader survey, and coded each name to a different designation based on their rank and group to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of each. As determined and stated early in the process, I am the only person who can identify a soldier's coded designation to his or her name. Each individual participant was assigned to Group 1-8 based on rank and gender.

Group 1: Male soldiers with the rank of E-4 (Specialist).

Group 2: Male soldiers with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant).

Group 3: Male soldiers with the rank of E-7 (Sergeant First Class).

Group 4: Male soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain).

Group 5: Male soldiers with the rank of 0-5 (Lieutenant Colonel).

Group 6: Female soldiers with the rank of E-5 and E-6 (Sergeant, Staff Sergeant).

Group 7: Female soldiers with the rank of 0-3 (Captain).

Group 8: Male soldiers with the rank of E-6 (Staff Sergeant) with No Combat

After assigning each participant to a group, I held each of the focus groups at

Fort Bragg, NC in a classroom. The classroom was a typical type of setting and was

configured with tables and chairs designed to seat 2 people per table. The setting was

clean, comfortable, and with plenty of natural and artificial lighting. I conducted

extensive analysis of each focus group with the goal of purposefully selecting 3

soldiers from each group whom I believe would add be the best for subsequent

interviews and add the most to my study and to the body of knowledge for military

leadership in combat.

After completion of the focus groups, I began individual interviews with each of

the 3 soldiers from each group. I recorded and transcribed each interview into a

Microsoft Word document making it more manageable for subsequent analysis. I used

inductive analysis to identify patterns, themes, and categories. To assist in maintaining

control of my data, I used the behavioral science software program NVivo as a method

of both data management and to verify patterns, themes, and categorize my data.

NVivo was important in developing a constant comparative method of analysis for the

coding of my data. As qualitative researchers know, data coding is subjective in nature, NViVo helps to control that subjectivity by electronically checking ones data. As a result, I was able to identify the 3 most important combat leader attributes:

1. To remain calm in a firefight.

2. Having the ability to handle enormous amounts of information and process immediately.

3. To demonstrate tactical patience. Interestingly, the U.S. Army does not have a doctrinal definition of tactical patience. While discussing this concept with soldiers whom I interviewed, I gained an understanding of their perspective and as a result, developed the following definition as a basis for future discussions of this dissertation. Leaders in combat who demonstrate the ability to wait for favorable conditions to develop before making critical decisions exhibit tactical patience on the battlefield.

As a result of using NViVo, additional information was obtained that might have been missed by simply conducting data analysis in a manual manner.

1. The need for leaders to ensure themselves, and their subordinate units are expert in conducting any of the 8 U.S. Army Battle Drills.

2. The need for proper training prior to a deployment: 16 of 21 combat soldiers stated the U.S. Army would be better suited if training practices included recreating and replicating foreign locations.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The overall purpose of this study was to explore a set of themes and behaviors commonly found among effective leaders in combat while under enemy fire. Furthermore, this study raised the question whether these traits and behaviors can be learned by others and taught both inside and outside of the military. Are these traits and characteristics strictly innate among certain individuals or can they be cultivated by training and instruction? Because this study employs a systematic approach to the subject of effective leadership, it does promise the possibility of identifying a certain set of qualities that enhance leadership and might be replicated through training. Future instructors could utilize this study to identify and even improve those qualities that enhance combat effective leadership, as well as identify and mitigate behaviors that undermine leadership.

Human behavior is very complex, and when coupled with the added stress of combat, the challenges are compounded. In this chapter, I will attempt to provide the reader with an understanding of how human behavior is manifested in the actions of individual leaders in combat who were fighting the Global War on Terror. I have discovered the complexities of leadership in combat through study, observation, and personal experience spanning a decade of war. In an effort to assist in working through the complexity of this issue, I will provide a brief introduction to establish a framework from which this discussion will follow.

The U.S. Army is currently struggling with how to study leadership and how leadership is manifested in soldiers in an asymmetric fight in the Global War of Terror. Military centric leadership research studies focus on a multitude of different leadership approaches and theories. They come from repositories in behaviors, traits, skills, cognitive predictors of leadership, leader dimensions, core values, leader competencies, and a host of other unproven methods. As with civilian scholars, military centric researchers seem to value virtually every trait, characteristic, and behavior soldiers have been developing over centuries of warfare, capture each and every positive aspect of leadership, and place into a U.S. Army Field Manual 6-22 titled *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile* (2006).

Dating back many decades, the U.S. Army has devoted years of research to the more traditional leadership theories of the trait, behavioral, contingency, transactional, and transformational approaches, although recently gravitated to the more abstract cognitive models along with Authentic and Adaptive Leadership theories. However, none of these approaches adequately accounts for the common traits, characteristics, behaviors, and cognitive abilities found among successful leaders on the battlefield.

Previously discussed, professors from the U.S. Army at West Point have recently introduced Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT) as a new approach for U.S. Army research. ALT analyzes the role of confidence and the role of certain ethical norms in training (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leaders appear to be effective at commanding follower loyalty, obedience, admiration, and respect of their subordinates (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Researchers in the U.S. Army are studying ALT in an attempt to move beyond the current understanding of leadership, beyond the traditional theories of

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leadership (although still not fully understood) and into an approach of understanding leadership through a different lens while still operating in a complex combat environment.

From my experience, I believe that leaders with certain behavioral characteristics, personality factors, when properly matched with solid cognitive skills will produce a much better leader in combat. The question is: can we accurately predict a leader's future success on the battlefield? This will be explored in detail later in this discussion, but worth mentioning now is Bartone et al. (2002) who showed a positive correlation between cognitive functioning and personality predictors in leader performance. Based on their research and my experience, I would argue that certain cognitive factors coupled with the personality factors could accurately predict success in military service and subsequent success on the battlefield.

The U.S. Army has put a tremendous amount of resources into producing a better leader, but without any clear sense of the underlying qualities of character that can be systematically identified by research. In particular, the U.S. Army research teams seemingly separate peacetime leadership from combat leadership and fail to conduct studies with a combat leader focus.

U.S. Army Leadership manual FM 6-22 identifies a laundry list of leader behaviors, characteristics, traits, concepts, and requirements that the U.S. Army assumes will enhance its rank and file leadership skills. This manual, created for future U.S. Army leaders have an enormous list of required leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors, grounded in the concrete and observable. This mountain of information from researchers who study traditional leadership skills

served to both frame the research question of my dissertation as well as to illustrate the need for new venues of investigation to enhance our understanding of the challenges of leadership.

Adaptive Leadership Theory: Is This Where the Army Needs to Go?

Human behavior is very complex, particularly when examined in the helter-skelter environment of combat. Nevertheless, modern methodological tools allow for a more systematic, empirically based study that permits us to dissect the parts of any particular phenomenon with greater precision than ever before. Whereas leadership was once considered a spontaneous activity that could not be analyzed with systematic rigor, today we can categorize the precise qualities that leaders employ in their most effective moments even within combat. In fact, the element of combat while under enemy fire provides a useful context for identifying the leadership qualities that distinguish between successful and unsuccessful leaders given that this environment brings those qualities that make for effective leadership into clear focus. Consequently, I believe that my work has shown that researchers can now systematically identify an individual leader's positive and negative traits and correlate them among clearly discernible categories of empirical analysis. Once we understand the pattern of effective combat leadership as a sequence of distinguishable behavioral traits, I believe that we can eventually develop a leadership model that will be serviceable to the training of future combat and non-combat leaders.

This is where I believe Adaptive Leadership Theory can provide the best framework for U.S. Army research teams to conduct studies on military leadership in

combat. At this point in our history as a country and as an Army, one might think

there would be a single comprehensive theory on leadership embraced by the U.S.

Army as a definitive standard from which to study leadership in combat. My research

has illuminated that there is still no, one, single consolidated source for research on

what best-prepared leaders for success in combat when in contact with the enemy.

The current military centric research simply attempts to identify how to best develop

individual leader competencies to teach and train a flexible and adaptive leader. Even

as previously noted, there appears to be a gap in knowledge and theory with this new

type of combat leader. Studies on military leadership need to discover how to produce

an adaptive, intelligent, mentally agile leader who possesses advanced cognitive skills

beyond the level of a typical person his or her age.

Contribution to Current Scholarship

In my literature review, I examined a vast assortment of both qualitative and

quantitative studies of leadership. I discovered many differences between the general

study of leadership and studies that focus on combat leadership particularly in the field

of military research. Current studies in leadership continue to follow along the lines as

they have for many years with scholars often being conflicted even on the basic

understanding of the definition of leadership. Chemers states that through much of its

history, leadership theory and the empirical supporting research have been regarded as

a fractured and confusing set of contradictory findings and assertions without

coherence or interpretability (2000). History in this field of study has proven to be

conflicted with seemingly as many definitions of leadership as scholars. How then,

are we to gain a deeper understanding of leadership in the most intense condition possible, the condition of combat when in contact with the enemy? The U.S. Army continues to struggle with the definition of leadership much in the same manner as leading scholars, settling on a definition of leadership coupled with the hundreds of attributes needed to be an effective leader as previously noted in U.S. Army field manuals and doctrine. Given the vast amounts of information on leadership, and conflicting information at that, military and civilian scholars do share commonalities.

The U.S. Army is currently struggling with how leadership is manifested in an asymmetric combat zone typical of the Global War of Terror. Military centric leadership research studies focus on a multitude of different leadership approaches and theories. They come from repositories in behaviors, traits, skills, cognitive predictors of leadership, leader dimensions, core values, leader competencies and a host of other unproven methods. As previously noted, leadership scholars, both civilian and military, seem to value virtually every trait, characteristic, and behavior soldiers have been developing over centuries of warfare, and capture each and every positive aspect of leadership.

I also learned a great deal regarding current research on leadership studies with individuals with no combat experience, or the more traditional type of leadership studies. Among the most relevant for this study are the works from Bartone, Bass, Beng-Chong, Burns, Chemers, Heifetz, Mastrangelo, Mumford, Northouse, Yukl, and a host of others I have referenced throughout this dissertation. Chemers was most helpful in laying out a more recent understanding of current leadership research by reviewing the past 50 years. In his work on Leadership Research and Theory: A

Functional Integration he reviews a brief history of leadership studies worth citing, once we gain an understanding of the past research, it will be clear in helping to understand the current research and where the gaps in research may be. I'll begin with the Trait Approach to leadership. Chemers believes this is a naive populist view of leadership stereotypically associated with dominance, assertiveness, intelligence, physical stature, social sensitivity, and many others, which were somewhat easy to identify in leaders although fall short of explaining why some leaders have necessary traits and why some do not (2000). Moving to behavioral approaches, the styles approach, to more abstract models of the 1970s and 1980s of the cognitive models most concerned with perceptions of leaders by others, followers and observers as well as leaders' perceptions and evaluations of subordinates (2000).

Leadership research took a new direction in the late 1980s with the popularizing of Transformational Leadership Theories. Burns' book on great leaders differentiated transactional leaders, whose relationship to followers was based on mutually beneficial transactions, from transformational leaders, who influence followers to transcend personal interests and transform themselves into agents of collective achievement (1978). The U.S. Army was conducting research in this area with the goal of producing a better leader with a focus other than a better combat leader. It seemingly separated peacetime leadership from combat leadership but failed to conduct studies with a combat leader focus.

Bass et al. conducted empirical analyses of transformational leadership by interviewing managers about transformational leaders they had known, and built and validated a questionnaire designed to measure transformational leadership: the Multi-

Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (1993). This MLQ yielded seven factors including 3 transactional leadership factors:

1. Contingent Reward.

2. Management by Exception.

3. Laissez-Faire Leadership that were associated with moderate to poor leadership. The transformational factors included:

1. Idealized Influence (charisma).

2. Inspirational Motivation, involving the articulation of the group's goals in emotional, moral, or visionary terms.

3. Intellectual Stimulation, entailing the encouragement of followers to think independently and creatively and to move away from past ideas or limitations.

4. Individualized Consideration, relating to the leader's capacity to understand each follower's personal needs and goals.

> "My analysis argues that leaders must first establish the legitimacy of their authority by appearing competent and trustworthy to their followers. When leaders are extremely effective in image management they are seen as possessing remarkable, charismatic levels of capability and trust. Next, leaders must coach, guide, and support their followers in a way that allows the followers to contribute to group goal attainment while satisfying their own personal needs and goals. To do this, leaders must understand the abilities, values, and personalities of their subordinates, so they can provide the type of coaching and support that will be most effective. Sometimes leaders are so effective at creating a motivational environment that followers merge their

personal goals with collective group goals and are transformed in the process. Finally, effective leaders must use the skills and abilities possessed by themselves and their followers to accomplish the group's mission" (Chemers, 2000).

The U.S. Army seems to have lagged behind its civilian sector in leadership studies and attempted to incorporate the concepts from transformational leadership by teaching and training soldiers in the concepts without regard to how the concepts would transcend across the spectrum in combat. As I progress through this discussion one will see this as a pattern. Transformational leadership theory moved leadership research toward the concept of a leader influencing followers to transcend personal interests and transform themselves into agents who facilitate change to move the organization forward. Mastrangelo et al. fall somewhere on this spectrum by arguing that personal and professional leadership behaviors can be categorized by leaders who demonstrate personal leadership skills although measured using professional leadership responsibilities. Professional leadership encompassed formal part of leadership while personal leadership being the personal behavior of leaders in performing the responsibilities of professional leadership. This attempt by Mastrangelo et al. veered from the traditional research which focused on examining leader behaviors which focused on the behavior of an individual leader and its impact on his or her followers (Yukl, 1998). Newer approaches such as charismatic and transformational leadership emphasize inspiring and transforming the organization which was still typically explored from the perspective of a single leader impacting his or her followers (1998). While their observations and research offer helpful insight

into transformational and charismatic leadership, they fall short of explaining how an individual with leadership skills can best be groomed or trained to be the best leader possible unless he or she has a group of individuals who buy into the group dynamic. Here my work on leadership in combat examines how to best accomplish a mission with effective leader traits and skills based not on theoretical altruisms, but on actual accomplishment or failure of a mission that has life and death consequences. It is in this respect my work can fully illuminate and identify effective and non-effective leader traits due to the circumstances of both the leader and the group.

Beng-Chong et al. also offer an important contribution to current leadership studies by the addition of what they term "transformational antecedents." identified as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (2004). Essentially, they argue that these transformational antecedents are critical attributes of transformational leadership and can be developed in individuals for effective leadership (2004). Beng-Chong et al. use the Five-Factor model to address each attribute to identify the critical attributes and show how a leader at any level can develop the attributes and make them a part of his daily repertoire (2004). In their study, they used transformational leadership factors and the Five-Factor model to compile results in rating team performance through theory and model. Although it proves difficult to draw any conclusions in assessing team performance when both systems focus on a leader's attributes. The Five-Factor model focused on results of the team performance in assessing an individual's leadership abilities. While I find their contribution helps us to understand the relationship between

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individual leader's traits, attributes, and the effect on team performance, they fall short of explaining how the team's performance affects the individual leader. My work enhances their study by focusing on specific behaviors of effective leaders regardless of team performance. A leader can be effective even if a team fails at a mission, so the problem comes down to developing effective leader behaviors to enhance team performance, not simply a laundry list of traits and characteristics.

This information from researchers who study traditional leadership skills served to both frame the research question of my dissertation as well as to illustrate the need for new venues of investigation to enhance our understanding of the challenges of leadership. Overall, I believe my studies greatest contribution to the current state of scholarship in this area has been to establish the framework to identify and dissect effective leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors in the most primal setting possible, when someone is trying to kill you. This has proven to intensify and magnify leader behaviors allowing the illumination of effective and non-effective leader qualities in the most visible manner possible.

Contribution to Military Training

While I hope that my work offers a unique contribution to the study of leadership in general, I am confident that this study has many practical benefits for future improvements to military training. In particular, I believe the U.S. Army could improve on their focus in becoming expert in weapons systems and the 8 battle drills, and to also provide and resource realistic training in an environment which replicates the environment in which the combat will likely by conducted. That is, to replicate the

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sights, sounds, smells, climate, people, culture, language, and anything else that adds

reality to where a soldier will fight.

Additionally, the U.S. Army would better serve its leaders and soldiers by

providing increased focus on leader training realizing the better a leader adapts to the

current fight against terrorists, the better he or she will lead in combat. The U.S.

Army at present provides a baseline understanding of leadership in its manual FM 6-

22. This manual identifies a laundry list of leader behaviors, characteristics, traits,

concepts, and requirements that the Army assumes will enhance its rank and file

leadership skills.

Seven core values define its understanding of leadership: loyalty, duty, respect,

selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage (U.S. Department of Army,

2006). These U.S. Army values are not simply specific to a leader, but common

throughout U.S. Army training as they are taught to each soldier from the beginning of

their training and lived on a daily basis. Consequently, leadership is currently

regarded in the U.S. Army as simply the achievement of these values. Thus we find

the elements of leadership in the Army manual described in quite abstract terms: leads,

develops, and achieves results (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). "Leads:

provides purpose, direction, and motivation to others while extending influence

beyond the chain of command" (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). "Develops: a

leader creates a positive environment and develops others to become leaders

themselves" (U.S. Department of the Army, 2006). "Achieves results: a leader must

achieve results and complete his or her mission to be a successful leader" (U.S.

Department of the Army, 2006).

The U.S. Army has been in existence for more than 200 years and has developed

training and doctrine throughout, and this I believe has led to an enormous list of

required leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors, grounded in what used to be

concrete and observable. Although with time and evolution, this has grown to a set of

7 values, leader competencies (leads, develops, achieves), then to officer core

competencies, requiring mastery of 212 tasks not simply grounded in concrete and

observable behaviors, but evolving into the abstract world of leadership requiring

advanced cognitive skills to master. It is at this point where current research on

leadership in respect to the U.S. Army moves into the more abstract and extremely

difficult world of identifying personality predictors and advanced cognitive skills

required to be an effective leader.

Studies of Military Leadership in Non-Combat Situations

The U.S. Army itself appears to be aware of these limitations, as they have

attempted to develop their own model that will hopefully bridge the gap between

theory and practice. With the many different repositories, researchers, research teams,

and fragmented systems of leadership studies throughout the U.S. Army, professors

from the U.S. Army at West Point have introduced Authentic Leadership Theory

(ALT) as a new approach for U.S. Army research. ALT embodies confidence,

optimistic leaders of high moral character who are keenly aware of their own thoughts,

behaviors, abilities, and values (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leaders seem to be

effective at commanding follower loyalty, obedience, admiration, and respect of their

subordinates (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Researchers in the U.S. Army are studying

ALT in an attempt to move beyond the current understanding of leadership, beyond adaptive leadership and into an approach of understanding leadership through a different lens while still operating in a complex combat environment.

U.S. Army researchers are attempting to discover if authentic leaders share traits and characteristics similar to charismatic leaders, and if so will this be of benefit to the leader in both combat and non-combat situations. Authentic leaders are confident, optimistic leaders who are well in tune with their surroundings. Authentic Leaders are attentive to these characteristics in others and the situational context in which they operate Avolio et al. (2004). ALT is an emerging theory where a leader's optimism, hopefulness, and resiliency reflect an understanding of why authentic leaders command a follower's loyalty, obedience, admiration, and respect. If we as researchers can somehow identify if authentic leaders actually command followers obedience, there would be obvious applications to the combat leader.

Bartone et al. termed as the 12 basic leadership dimensions: military bearing, teamwork, influencing others, consideration for others, professional ethics, planning and organizing, delegating, supervising, developing subordinates, decision making, oral and written communication (2002). In addition to the 12 leader dimensions, Bartone et al. conducted research on what they termed cognitive indicators: spatial judgment, logical reasoning, social judgment, problem solving, college entrance SAT and ACT exam scores (2002). Their contribution is an attempt to determine if cognitive factors coupled with personality could accurately predict success at West Point and beyond. The shortcoming of their argument is in their sample, they chose to use an all-male sample of cadets from West Point in their sophomore year. Their

sample is inadequate in that results may indicate potential success at West Point, although part two of their argument of accurately predicting success in future military service also falls short.

My contribution would be to expand on their model by using a sample of combat proven soldiers ranging in age from 18-45, in addition to including female soldiers as well. Bartone et al. have a solid design although the major flaw is in their sample population. A subsequent study would need to provide a bridge between the concrete, observable, identifiable behaviors and the abstract in their study.

In exploring the many different dynamics in the study of leadership, many different issues surfaced. Issues with methodology, issues in the approach to the study leadership, issues of how the U.S. Army approaches the study of leadership in and out of combat, and issues of how combat focused leadership is studied, researched, and documented. Lastly, the issue surfaced of how soldiers and leaders are presented the information and subsequently trained for military service and combat. To date, one must rely on anecdotal writings from warriors of old and not from empirically based research. This dissertation better defines how to establish a framework for the systematic, scholarly-based approach to the study of leadership while in combat and under enemy fire, then formally document and provide to the U.S. Army so they might better produce the combat effective leader.

Studies of Military Leadership in Combat Situations

I set out to gain an understanding of what effective leaders do when they are in a direct fire engagement with their enemy. At this point, I have only been able to

review combat focused literature from more of an anecdotal point of view. In the past

decade, while the United States struggles with the Global War on Terror, one might

expect a multitude of different studies of leadership in combat. This is, however, not

the case, and it is my hope that my contribution to the current state of scholarship in

this field will be to recognize a different methodology in the study of combat focused

leadership. Rather, one must draw from different sample populations and identify

strengths and weaknesses for each population. For instance, before conducting this

research I had no idea that sergeants first class (E-7, Group 3) had the most amounts of

direct fire engagements with our enemy. In addition, I discovered although they were

the most experienced, they are also somewhat institutionalized in their training and

conceptual ideas on leadership. They readily recited what they believe leadership to

be and it followed U.S. Army doctrine. Although useful, to gain a complete

understanding of effective leader behaviors in a firefight, a researcher needs to take

information from each group of soldiers and make inferences given the limitations of

each group.

One characteristic in combat reported by all in my study was that, in a firefight,

soldiers often report a heightened sense and awareness thereby magnifying previously

imperceptible phenomenon around them. During this period, time seems to pass by

more slowly reflecting the fact that mind becomes increasingly attuned to events or

circumstances that normally do not register at the level of our consciousness. Sights,

smells, physical and auditory perceptions become more intense and even

overwhelming for some combat veterans (Henrickson, 2007). Soldiers who have

experienced this phenomenon on the battlefield report events so vividly, sometimes so

intensely, that it would appear that these events constitute a different level of existence. This was never more evident than during my interviews with soldiers in my stratified groups who have experienced combat; each one of these soldiers had very clear, concise, and detailed accounts of their experiences while under enemy fire. Their recollection of events was so precise, so detailed; they even described facial expressions of different individuals who were also in the engagement. Their accounts seemed to be magnified many times over allowing them to give such detailed accounts of their experience which might be seemingly imperceptible to someone who has never experienced such a phenomenon.

During my research, I found that these accounts of combat actually offered a unique insight into the qualities that define effective leadership. I learned that this heightened sense and awareness provides a researcher with incredible detail from participants. Participants seem to remember the slightest seemingly insignificant detail and therefore have the ability to provide insight of effective leader traits magnified many times over. By systematically and empirically analyzing the data gleaned from their experience of combat, I was able to learn what they believe to be most important leader traits when in a firefight.

Most Important Leader Traits for a Firefight

1. To be most effective in a firefight, one must remain calm. While a seemingly obvious observation regarding the nature of leadership in a particularly anxious moment, scholars have not done enough to explain either why repose in the face of danger is desirable or how it can be cultivated systematically among leaders.

According to my research, remaining calm while in a firefight was essential to the welfare and well-being of subordinate soldiers in combat, most of the 70 soldiers in the combat experienced focus groups all agreed that a leader must develop and refine this characteristic before being in a firefight.

They reported that the key to cultivating this quality in leaders is experience. In order for leaders to exhibit repose in any anxious environment, they must perceive a situation as routine. But we know that the more leaders perceive their duties as routine, the less they are inclined to invest great effort in tasks. Combat situations can be particularly instructive to leadership studies because they teach us that leadership is really a delicate balance between the proper level or repose and anxiety. If even the most veteran combatant experiences a heightened sense perception during a firefight, then no soldier can fully master the emotions that occur in battle. Therefore, no combat engagement ever fully seems routine. Consequently, each engagement tends to crystallize the qualities of leadership by demonstrating those qualities that are unique to leaders as opposed to those that are characteristic of subordinates.

2. An effective leader in combat must have the mental agility to handle enormous amounts of information, process the information, and then properly direct subordinates. The U.S. Army has identified this as an essential trait and incorporates into its formal training programs a method of developing this skill. They have purposefully placed soldiers and officers under varying degrees of stress while in different training environments and scenarios. In my research I found that this training has proved very efficient in routine decision making on the battlefield, but there are many limitations to this training as well. In so far as combat typically

involves the element of surprise, routine habits among leaders can be as detrimental to leadership as they can be helpful depending on the circumstance. In the end, leadership cannot be simply treated as a set of formalized or pre-packaged decisions; rather, leadership ultimately consists in certain qualities of mind, which the U.S. Army would do well to cultivate in training.

3. A leader must have the ability to demonstrate and practice tactical patience. Tactical patience is a phrase common among soldiers and leaders; it requires an enormous amount of self-discipline along with trust and authority over subordinates. This concept appears straightforward and concrete, although with no empirical studies or research on how to develop a leader with tactical patience, I often wonder if what the U.S. Army teaches regarding tactical patience is important. For instance, a unit in Iraq in the summer of 2007 was hit with an improvised explosive device (IED), sustained wounded and practiced tactical patience by establishing a secure perimeter while waiting for the helicopter medevac to arrive. This was standard operating procedure at the time and considered tactically sound (tactical patience), although while the helicopter was en route the enemy insurgents regrouped and attacked the unit once again. One might think the leader in this unit was exhibiting tactical patience, and he was, although in retrospect was this a good idea? Tactical patience may be favorable in one element, but not so good in another and the literature fails to adequately address this concern.

4. A leader must cultivate trust among his or her subordinates. Again, this may seem like a truism, but the scholarly problem lies in the lack of much explanation of why this is among the most prominent traits of a leader or how it can be cultivated

systematically. The U.S. Army pushes leaders at all levels to develop trust among their subordinates as witnessed in their practical training exercises, formal schooling, leadership manuals, field manuals, and policies.

"Take care of your people" is a phrase often mentioned in U.S. Army circles centered on discussions for gaining trust. But what does that mean? And why is it more important than say superior strength or intelligence? In my research I found that group 3, the group of senior noncommissioned officers with the most amount of both combat experience, and institutional knowledge of leadership training believed trust in a leader among subordinates was critical to future success. They believe one of the best ways to gain trust of your subordinate soldiers was prior to combat when training for combat. These noncommissioned officers focus on training for combat, but also focused on gaining trust from subordinates by talking with soldiers before, during, and especially after the training was complete. They would gain trust by teaching and training these soldiers to be the best soldiers possible as well as caring for soldiers and their emotional needs prior to deployment.

5. An effective leader must also be decisive in battle. I have often heard a bad decision is better than no decision at all. While we wish this were not true, my research reveals that in fact this position received much approbation among combat soldiers. Yet, when I probed this question further, soldiers reported that they could not trust someone who is rash. How then is it possible that decisiveness, regardless of the quality of the decision, is desirable, but impetuous actions by a leader are undesirable? While more research would need to be done here, perhaps this points to certain ambivalence about leadership itself. We tend to think that effective leaders always

make good decisions. But if bad decisions are better than no decision, this may not be the case. Rather, what we appear to really seek in a leader is someone we can hold accountable whether the decisions they make are good or bad.

6. A leader must be an expert in his or her weapons' systems and an expert in conducting the 8 U.S. Army Battle Drills. Initially identified through the software program NVivo, Infantry Battle Drills were found to be critical to establishing conditions for success in combat. Battle drills describe how platoons and squads apply fire and maneuver to common situations. They require leaders to make decisions rapidly and to issue orders quickly. The 8 U.S. Army Battle Drills require a soldier and leader to be expert in their weapons and weapons' systems. They also require a leader to consume massive amounts of information, assess the situation, and direct an immediate course of action for his subordinate soldiers. If his unit is expert in all of the battle drills, they will simply react to hostility during the initial critical seconds of a firefight permitting the leader to quickly respond to the threat. This is the first of the findings that actually have something very concrete for the U.S. Army to explore. Becoming expert in one's weapon system and battle drills is something each soldier in the U.S. Army understands. It is not a conceptual or abstract theory, or some type of historical theoretical construct that requires some form of higher level thought process. It is a concrete, identifiable, and achievable goal for each and every soldier with proper training and practice. This is the first of these findings grounded in the concrete, not conceptual framework.

7. There is an urgent need for proper training prior to a soldier deploying for combat. Of the 24 soldiers interviewed, 21 had direct combat experience and were

involved in at least 1 firefight with their enemy. Of the 21, 18 combat experienced

soldiers noted a deficiency in training prior to deployment. Many of them stated they

would have focused more attention on the 8 battle drills and enforced the learning,

memorizing, and rehearsing of each drill with the end result simply being that soldiers

react to contact and not hesitate during those first few critical seconds of an

engagement.

To do this requires an enormous amount of training, training which requires senior

leaders to push for resources required to recreate a battle space before actually

entering a foreign country. Combat hardened soldiers agreed there is a critical need to

recreate the homes, sights, smells, language, culture, music, roads, and everything else

needed to replicate the actual location of the enemy. As with finding number 6 above,

this is something grounded in the concrete realm of reality and not in the theoretical or

abstract. Finding number 7 is something achievable, and something we owe each and

every soldier we send in harm's way. Proper training is critical for the success of our

soldiers and leaders and also might require adaptation or change to the training

depending on what part of the world where the conflict and combat are being fought.

Potential for Diverse Training

Based on the findings above, I have discovered the many different and diverse

methods for training soldiers for combat, perhaps as many methods as there are ideas.

The U.S. Army provides an enormous amount of latitude in the development of

training programs and exercises; this permits a certain amount of creativity and

ingenuity. Most personnel who train soldiers for a living would likely see this as

strength, to have the ability to conduct training from a thousand different avenues. Although I see a weakness in this approach, my research has illuminated a troubling find, a find that sheds light on the many different methods for training, and most methods developed by soldiers with limited understandings of why we are training soldiers in a specific manner. With the latitude to conduct training in the many different ways and methods, opens up the possibility of some not being trained in the best manner possible for a specific threat or enemy.

It is for this reason we need to look to groups 2 and 8, mid-career noncommissioned officers, staff sergeants, with 8-14 years of U.S. Army experience. They are considered the second level of training manager, which typically bridges the gap between the junior soldiers and senior noncommissioned officers. This group was in fact expert in basic military training on weapons and tactics when required to follow a standard training plan outlined by U.S. Army regulations and field manuals.

Group 2 and 8 are the same rank and approximate age, the difference was group 8 had no combat experience, yet was responsible for training thousands of soldiers for combat. Both groups had the same institutional training and both agreed on the importance of becoming an expert in your weapons' system and current on military tactics.

All Staff Sergeants from Group 2 (combat veterans) stated that better training of leadership could in fact, improve a soldier's initial reactions at the onset of a firefight, thereby reducing mistakes, and preventing soldiers from being killed due to unforeseeable errors in judgment. They explained that the U.S. Army should find a way to simulate, in real life training, the intensity and ferocity of an individual's first

firefight. In this way, leaders would be much better prepared to make better decisions while under fire if they too had been under fire prior to the engagement. Those soldiers with combat experience report that they have often seen leaders with no combat experience freeze up while under attack. Consequently, they believe the U.S. Army needs to improve the standard one size fits all pre-combat training currently conducted by most units.

In comparing and contrasting Groups 2 and 8, it was readily apparent group 8 was best suited for basic type of training for combat, although once we begin to enter into advanced type of training for soldiers who will definitely deploy to a combat zone, group 8 did not possess the experience to train these soldiers for combat. In simple terms, once we move beyond findings 6 and 7 (training addressed as mechanical in nature) and into the conceptual realm (findings 1-5) group 8 soldiers were not at all suited for administering this type of training.

Findings 1-5 are all of an intellectual or emotional framing; so the question is: Can we truly attempt to "train" in a calm demeanor when being fired upon? Or, can we "train" a soldier to consume large amounts of information, process, and then make the correct decision based on the information? The answer from my experience is "No" It is therefore important to review what has been studied to this point in history and the relationship with the findings above.

At this point of our history, one might think there would be a single comprehensive theory on leadership embraced by the U.S. Army as a definitive standard from which to study leadership in combat. My research has illuminated that there is no one consolidated source for research on, what best prepared leaders for success in combat.

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The current military focused research simply attempts to identify how to best develop individual leader competencies to teach and train a flexible and adaptive leader. As previously noted, there appears to be a gap in knowledge and theory with this new type of combat leader. To date, and as previously discussed but worth repeating, military literature is moving toward an adaptive, intelligent, mentally agile leader who possesses advanced cognitive skills beyond the level of a typical person his or her age which will be addressed in the following section.

The U.S. Army places an enormous amount of emphasis on the U.S. Army's foundation of leadership, which is a number of different models, phrases, key terms, and core leader competencies covered in chapter 2. This foundation of U.S. Army leadership has been developed over 2 centuries and at this point in our history, appears to be a list of anything and everything related to leadership over those 200 years. With the nature of combat becoming more and more complex, the U.S. Army seems to be on a path toward developing a leader with advanced cognitive and mental agility type of skills. Although as researchers working in and for the U.S. Army develop strategies for advancing the understanding of combat leadership, once one moves beyond the observable, identifiable traits, characteristics, and behaviors, and into the cognitive realm, this type of research becomes much more complex and time difficult.

From my experience, I believe that leaders with solid cognitive skills, when properly matched with certain personality factors will produce a much better leader in combat. The question is: Can we accurately predict a leader's future success on the battlefield? Bartone et al. (2002) showed a positive correlation between cognitive functioning and personality predictors in leader performance needed for a better leader

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in combat and argued that cognitive factors coupled with the personality factors could accurately predict success in military service.

If we are training an Army for combat, and the individuals who develop and conduct the training have no combat experience (as is the case in numerous occasions as civilians are in large part responsible for developing and publishing the U.S. Army training program) then is it possible for us as an Army to be training soldiers in a manner that is not advantageous for combat?

Contribution to Studies of Leadership

The U.S. Army has many different approaches to the study of leadership. The two most prominent approaches at present time are the study of Adaptive Leadership and Authentic Leadership Theory. Adaptive leadership became much more prominent in the wake of September 11th and the Global War on Terror due to the increased complexity of warfare.

Adaptive leadership has been under study for more than 60 years with recent advancements in theory from Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky who write extensively on the subject. Heifetz et al. believe that leadership is about influencing change that creates an environment where individuals have the ability to thrive; specifically, leaders in an organization provide an environment where individuals and groups of individuals are permitted to meet tough challenges and prosper (2009). With the ultimate goal being that leaders have the understanding he or she will need to adapt to ever changing environments and facilitate an organization's capacity to deal with the challenge.

U.S. Army Officers at the highest levels have embraced the idea of adaptive leadership; they in fact have established different research teams throughout the country to advance the concept and force it into the training and doctrine at all levels of formal U.S. Army schooling. The U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, advised me personally that he is pushing his research team to develop doctrine for an adaptive, agile, leader, and therein lies the problem. The U.S. Army leaders at the highest levels are pushing for and embracing this notion of adaptive leadership, although without the realization of the foundations of what adaptive leadership theory is or where it originated. It appears that many U.S. Army officers and researchers grasp at this notion of adaptive leadership, where leaders are flexible and mentally agile, although not truly realizing that adaptive leadership theory has a foundation from many years of research that may not be suitable for U.S. Army training and doctrine.

The U.S. Army is looking to develop training doctrine for the adaptive, agile leader based on the post 9-11 mindset of combat which requires maximum flexibility. Having this type of leader would facilitate mastery of newly developing tactics, techniques, and procedures for the current fight against the enemy. The current fight in the Global War on Terror requires operating in an asymmetric combat environment, which intensifies the leadership challenges as the warfare continues to evolve. Leaders must be prepared to rapidly transition from brutal kinetic combat one minute, to complex, non-kinetic interactions with locals the next (and back again) with mental agility, intelligence, and an exceptional level of emotional self-control (Hannah et al., 2010). With theory of adaptive leadership being grounded in more of a process than

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an individual's set of competencies, I would argue the U.S. Army needs to clearly

define the expectations and outcomes from this theory and not sprinkle different

aspects of the theory throughout its training, doctrine, and field manuals as we have

seen in Field Manual 6-22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*.

War will most certainly continue to be a part of the human race, and we as a nation

will absolutely be required to continue the fight in the Global War on Terror if we are

to continue to be a great nation. With this in mind, it is critical for leaders and

decision makers for the U.S. Army completely understand what they are attempting to

gain by shifting research focus from the more traditional theories of leadership, and if

putting valuable resources into the theory of adaptive leadership, understand and

discuss possible outcomes before putting key words and phrases as we now see

through the Army leadership doctrine.

Studies of Leadership in Non-Combat Situations

While the environment of direct contact with the enemy is peculiar to military life,

my purpose in the dissertation was to demonstrate how these situations offer an insight

into leadership in all walks of life. I think that my work makes an important

contribution to the scholarship on general leadership theory. Northouse and Chemers

theorized that charismatic leaders are able to engage followers by appealing to certain

common concepts and linking those concepts to the leader's vision and mission (2004,

2007). Such leaders transform the needs, values, preferences and aspirations of

followers from self-interests to collective interests. They encourage followers to

become highly committed to the leader's mission, which creates significant personal

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sacrifices in the interest of the mission. Therefore, followers perform above and beyond the call of duty (Chemers, 1997). How then are we to capture an understanding of leadership and use that to help produce a better leader, whether combat or not?

The idea of a charismatic leader is enlightening, although to understand, capture, and subsequently teach or replicate the charismatic leaders skill set seems ominous. The past decade, the U.S. Army has taken a keen interest in charismatic and transformational leadership that place emphasis on inspiring and transforming the organization. This process is still typically explored from the perspective of a single leader who impacts his or her followers in the professional workplace and from a perspective of professional leadership (Yukl, 1998), a leader in combat might not be considered a professional leader and may be as young as 19 or 20. Are we then going to attempt to produce a combat leader, or leader in non-combat to be charismatic and/or transformational when literature still has difficulty determining how to develop a charismatic or transformational leader?

Transformational Leadership Factors are concerned with the performance of followers and with developing followers to their fullest potential (Bass, 1985). They embody characteristics of idealized influence where leaders act as strong role models, maintain high standards, and inspire motivation. Leaders communicate high expectations to followers with intellectual stimulation creating an environment where followers are free to be creative and innovative. Leaders provide a supportive environment in which they listen carefully to an individual and focus on the needs of followers. Bass argues these transformational leadership factors conclude with

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individualized consideration where a leader produces a greater effect than that of other approaches to leadership (1985).

A review of literature from both a civilian perspective and the perspective from a military researcher has illuminated the following: It appears as though the U.S. Army lags behind civilian research by a few years and seems to jump every 10 years or so to the latest craze of leadership research and theory. For instance, the U.S. Army put an enormous amount of resources into the study of transformational leadership in the 1990s and never seemed to come to grips with how this theory might help to produce a better leader, and certainly not a better combat leader. Then with the events of September 11, 2001, the U.S. Army identified a need to fight a much more complex war in much different physical settings than in previous generations. It was then the U.S. Army began looking at ALT and Adaptive Leadership, although with limited understanding of both or how each theory might fit into the bigger picture.

I believe my findings support the notion that the U.S. Army should refocus resources into research in Adaptive Leadership Theory and how this might help produce the next generation of skilled leaders in combat.

Chapter Summary

War was forever changed on September 11, 2001 and the nature of combat would forever become much more complicated. The traditional venues and format for war would no longer exist; I suspect never again will we see a force from one country meet on a battlefield and slug it out with a force from another country with men and machines diligently lined up outside of the relative safety of a city or town. Combat

will be fought in the streets and alleys of suburbia, in the shopping malls and grocery stores, where one's enemy will blend with the surrounding population, fighting one minute, and working a civilian job the next. The question then is: Have we as a United States, adapted to the changing environment of the modern battlefield?

As the U.S. Army continues to evolve in the fight against the GWOT, it is in the beginning stages of attempting to develop leaders based on models that target a flexible and adaptive leader. The problem is that with the new type of leader, he or she will need to have the ability to consume and learn vast amounts of information to successfully perform and the modern battlefield.

Ultimately, my desire when I began this dissertation was to discover what traits, characteristics, and behaviors create an effective leader in combat. After a decade of wherein the nature of warfare has dramatically changed, we not only have the opportunity to assess the qualities that have made leaders effective in the past but we must respond to a growing need to prepare more of them as our engagements have become more dispersed and sporadic. Increasing the body of current knowledge in this particular field of study is more than a scholarly endeavor; rather, it is a necessity.

In this journey, I have discovered a variety of different leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors from senior leaders in the U.S. Army on down to the entry-level soldier. From my hybrid design of qualitative strategies and quantitative measures, I have established what could be a baseline for future studies on combat leadership. To date, there has been no identified sample from similar studies, using similar methodologies to compare what produces the best and most effective leader in combat. This study will help bridge that gap by identifying not only what type of research methodology

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can best be used for subsequent research in this field, but what leader traits and behaviors are most effective in combat. With future demands on leaders in combat sure to be forever more complicated and complex, history and current circumstances offer an opportunity to discover, determine, and identify the type of leader needed for future success on the battlefield.

It is my strongest belief, the U.S. Army needs to continue in its pursuit of understanding combat leadership as well as its pursuit of identifying knowledge, skills, abilities, traits, and appropriate leadership models to both prepare leaders for combat, and identifying early on who might be better suited for that combat role before the bullets start flying. I believe if we continue to work toward this goal, we will better develop combat leaders with the mental agility, adaptive behaviors, and flexibility both mental and physical, necessary for the fight in the Global War on Terror. With the nature of warfare changing so dramatically over the past decade, and so quickly, combat operations are so very complex and now require combat leaders with advanced skill sets well beyond that of their predecessors.

The U.S. Army has a long way to go in its understanding of leadership in combat, and has an opportunity to better train soldiers for combat based on the results of this study. I believe if we continue to place emphasis in this area of research, the U.S. Army will be in a much better position to develop combat leaders with mental agility, flexibility both mental and physical, with better adaptive skills necessary for the continued fight against our new enemy-the enemy we now fight in the Global War on Terror.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Summary

I began this journey of discovery more than 9 years ago with a number of assumptions and preconceived ideas about the nature of leadership while being fired upon in combat. While a few assumptions proved to be correct, many were not. As an officer in the U.S. Army, it is clear to me that the military has a lot to gain from the research of scholars in the field of leadership studies. I am now, more than ever, convinced the U.S. Army needs to establish a single repository for combat focused leadership studies.

The current fragmented system of leadership studies for the U.S. Army seems counterintuitive to U.S. Army operations. Basic military operations are organized in a vertical arrangement with a central command authority at the top, a center of gravity which is the unit itself, and a commander who delegates duties and responsibilities to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Given the military's hierarchically organized command structure, it makes sense to have a systematic and unified understanding of leadership and its role in military operations. My study has contributed by identifying the need for a centralized authority specifically for combat leadership focused studies and methodologies. My study magnified this point by addressing the 2 following questions:

1. Are there characteristics related to combat that can be taught to create combat effective leaders?

2.   Are characteristics, behaviors, and traits reflected in effective combat leadership found in non-combat leadership?

In general terms, my findings indicate the need for leaders in a combat situation to maintain control of their emotions and remain calm, while processing an enormous amount of information, and making good decisions based on the present information. Findings also indicate leaders in combat must demonstrate an ability to delay immediate impulses to react quickly and violently. Leaders must also ensure their soldiers are expert in their weapons systems and tactical combat maneuvers prior to combat.

Review of Methodology

My research revealed a great deal about leadership studies and the study of leadership in combat. To accomplish this research, I used the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research to establish a methodology which was essential to gather critical information from each soldier in this study. I used authority from U.S. Army Regulation 600-46 (November, 1979) to conduct this research which grants permission to conduct survey research.

I used a mixed methods design comprised of a combat leader survey, focus groups, individual interviews, and with my own detailed observation field notes. I conducted my research using ethnography by conducting the study with subjects in their normal environment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Grounded theory was also helpful and provided a framework for my study.

I employed the technique of constant comparative analysis by first coding primary data for later analysis using inductive analysis. The constant comparison method was instrumental for the systematic documentation and evaluation of data. Once identified, coded and documented, emergent themes and patterns began to surface.

My sample consisted of 2,000 soldiers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina; I selected and collected 287 combat leader surveys, then placed 30 or more soldiers from the 287 surveys into 8 different stratified groups. This culminated in a sample of 80 soldiers placed into 1 of 8 groups, 10 per group based on a soldier's rank, gender, and number of direct fire engagements. This established the framework for each of the focus groups which formed the basis for the selection of 24 soldiers for in-depth interviews. I chose 3 participants from each of the 8 focus groups for individual interviews based on their participation in the focus group, as well as their combat experience. One group with no combat experience acted as my control group. To best mitigate the possibility of participants saying what they thought I wanted to hear, I used the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The MCSDS provides a measure that gauges the participants' potential for presenting themselves in a positive light.

At every stage of the research process whenever soldiers were contacted, I briefed each soldier and made it very clear that participation was voluntary; in addition any participant could withdraw from the study at any time. I asked each participant to complete consent forms prior to their participation. I took detailed field notes at each stage of the process with a focus on detailed notes during the focus groups. I also recorded and transcribed each interview and will maintain a copy of the transcription for 3 years, and at that time I will destroy all documentation and recorded audio files

as per regulatory guidance. I received approval from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects for my research protocol which I believe helped to ensure that appropriate safeguards were in place to protect the rights of the all participants. In addition, I provided full disclosure to each participant with the purpose of my study, all associated risks, and ensured support personnel were present during each stage of the study in case a participant's recollection of combat events triggered symptoms of PTSD.

Future Research

Based on my findings, I believe future research needs to be focused on what and how we train leaders before their first direct fire engagement. The first kinetic engagement is extremely critical: emotions are intensely heightened and mistakes are made, soldiers die. I conclude that better training techniques are needed to develop a leader with the knowledge, skills, traits, characteristics, behaviors, and cognitive abilities that will best serve them in combat. Unfortunately, these training techniques have not yet been identified or developed; in fact I believe they are not even in existence yet. We need to develop training techniques that will bring a combat leader into that moment of the incredible ferocity and intense mindset of a kinetic engagement elevating the leader into that heightened sense of awareness so they understand and feel that "*state of being*" before he or she ever experiences combat.

I also believe there is an opportunity to investigate why female soldiers so readily display a behavior I termed *tactical prudence*. Different from tactical patience,

tactical prudence may someday prove a distinct advantage over our enemies. I believe

this behavior was and is of value to the U.S. Army. Men often rush into combat with

overwhelming firepower and ferocity, this new fight as witnessed in the GWOT

requires much more patience and tact. Perhaps less firepower and more human

interaction with our enemy is needed, as evidenced by the phrase certainly every

soldier in the U.S. Army has heard many times over: we must win their hearts and

minds in the current fight, this asymmetric counter-insurgency fight. And tactical

prudence might one day prove an advantage, and something certainly worth

investigating now that the U.S. Army has many different female veteran soldiers

involved in close contact firefights with our enemy.

Recently, research with human subjects, coupled with modern technology has

created an opportunity for leaders of military and civilian organizations. They can

now identify individuals with certain talents, behaviors, traits, abilities, and potential

for positions to best suit their individual characteristics and organizational needs. It

makes perfect sense that the U.S. Army should have some type of measure to best

select individuals for certain types of military occupational specialties. After

conducting an extensive review of literature in this area, I am confident there is no

acceptable test, instrument, or measure that accurately provides an indication of

personality, cognitive, aptitude, or other abilities that could be used to place future

leaders into a certain types of career fields that are appropriate for introduction into the

U.S. Army system. Researchers would benefit tremendously by developing some

form of measure to help select the best person for critical jobs in the U.S. Army.

Final Thoughts

To date, I know of no study or similar methodology to compare what produces the best and most effective leader in combat while under enemy fire. This study will help provide a conduit for subsequent study by identifying not only what type of research methodology can best be used for subsequent research in this field, but what leader traits and behaviors are most effective in combat. Current and future combat leaders require training to address increasingly complex circumstances. Demands on leaders in combat will be increasingly more complex, and now is the time to discover, identify, and determine what type of leader is needed for future success on the battlefield. Although success can and is defined in many different ways, for the purpose of this study; I will define leader success as the following: a successful leader in combat is one who minimizes combat related mistakes and maximizes military tactical achievement while imposing damage to enemy personnel, equipment, and his ability to continue the fight.

The U.S. Army should continue in its pursuit of understanding combat leadership and at the same time determine the knowledge, skills, abilities, traits, and appropriate training required to produce this type of leader. Future leaders in combat will need advanced mental agility, adaptive behaviors, and mental as well as physical flexibility to be successful in the fight against the Global War on Terror. The nature of warfare has changed quickly and dramatically over the past decade and combat operations are as complex as ever in history, producing the combat leader with the tools for this fight has never been more important than now.

Conclusion

The terror attacks on September 11, 2001 caused the longest war the United States has ever known. This terrorist event has forever changed the world and war, which tremendously intensified leadership challenges on the modern battlefield. This horrific event, as terrible as it was, created an opportunity for the scholar who wants to better understand leadership in combat from soldiers who were in direct contact with their enemy. The prolonged war presents an opportunity to study leadership challenges in the toughest, most complex combat environment ever known. The literature review reveals that there is insufficient data and an absence of theory about combat focused leadership. The literature review also demonstrated a need to continue the study of traditional approaches to leadership with characteristics, behaviors, and traits, in addition to the more abstract leadership traits. For instance, advanced cognitive skills along with desired personality traits and conceptual approaches to the study of combat leadership need to be developed in an appropriate scholarly manner.

A new type of combat leader is needed for the fight against terrorists who seem to know no bounds. This hybrid type of enemy will stop at nothing to kill anyone in his way regardless of citizenship, age, gender, and especially if a person does not ascribe to his religious beliefs. This enemy will be a seemingly normal people by day, farmers, fathers, husbands, school teachers, and brutal heinous combatants by night. They will use the relative safety of a town, a village, a school, or a hospital from which to launch their attacks, yet, befriend their enemy during the day to provide confusion and uncertainty among their enemy forces. This enemy is cunning and

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smart, to effectively deal with the hybrid enemy soldier, requires a military leader with specialized physical, mental, emotional, and cognitive capacities.

Over a 9-year span including 2 combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, temporary assignments in the Middle East and Africa, and 2 years of formal research, I have concluded that the results of this study can be neatly documented in 3 major points, and they are:

1. To be the best leader in combat, a leader must remain calm in a firefight.

2. A leader must possess the ability to handle enormous amounts of information and rapidly process that information in an instant.

3. A leader must have the ability to demonstrate tactical patience.

NVivo software is a tool used for qualitative data analysis and has been useful for the identification of trends regarding training, leader characteristics, behaviors, and traits in my study. This software helped to identify that leaders need to be expert in their ability to conduct all of the 8 U.S. Army Battle Drills, as well as ensure their subordinates become expert too. NVivo also identified a lack of proper training being given to soldiers prior to deployment, and the need for leaders to ensure soldiers are properly trained before becoming involved in a kinetic engagement.

The U.S. Army has numerous different methods and approaches to the study of leadership; it also has many different research teams and organizations responsible for identifying and developing leader competencies. In fact, I was unable to identify a single comprehensive approach or theory guiding the research or its focus. My research reinforces McCormack's argument that the U.S. Army spends an incredible amount of time, energy, and resources to select, develop, and train leaders using

unproven methods (2002). What I propose is for the U.S. Army to use its strength in its hierarchical design by appointing a central authority, a commander responsible for the research, documentation, storage of, and directing of Army resources in the pursuit of what produces the best leader in combat.

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Interview Guide

Introduction: Hello, my name is Buck Bollinger, I am conducting a study on leadership for a completion of my PhD in Administration and Leadership Studies from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I want you to know this interview is completely confidential and your name will not be used to identify you individually nor will you be identifiable to anyone else reading my research. You will subsequently be identified as interview subject # 1 (1…15...24). Neither your chain of command, nor the soldiers you speak of during this interview will have access to the information you provide unless you specify whom and with a written release, in other words, everything you provide is confidential with the following exceptions: I cannot provide "confidentiality" or "non-attribution," to a participant regarding comments involving criminal activity/behavior, or statements that pose a threat to yourself or others. Do NOT discuss or comment on classified or operationally sensitive information during this session. Before I release any of the information you provide you will have complete authority to change, modify, or delete any statements you previously made during this interview. Once again I would like to remind you; you and all persons you speak of will remain anonymous to anyone reading this paper. As we prepare to begin the interview; do you have any questions of me at this time?

Before we get started, I would like give you an idea of what I am attempting to understand so that you might be in a better position to provide your invaluable feedback. I am attempting to understand what makes the best leader in combat. My

interest is in identifying a leader's characteristics you have observed minutes before

coming under fire, characteristics you observed during the engagement, and

characteristics of the leader following the engagement.

Interview Guide Questions

Please define your understanding of leadership. *(**For the purpose of this discussion, I**

will define combat focused leadership as: "Leadership under conditions of risk of

bodily injury to loss of life)*

1. What makes the best leader when confronted with a direct fire engagement?

2. Please think of a specific enemy engagement over your previous deployment

   and detail the circumstances. Now that you have thought back to that incident,

   what do you think the leader (On Scene Commander) did right and wrong?

3. If you were in his position, what would you have done differently and why?

4. What do you consider the three most important leader traits or characteristics

   when confronted with a direct fire engagement?

5. After it was over, do you believe your actions were consistent with your

   combat training?

6. Is there anything in the preparation for combat you would have changed

   knowing what you now know? If yes; Why. If no; Why not?

8. Is there anything you would like to add to our discussion?

Appendix A1

Interview Guide (Non-Combat)

1. Please define your understanding of leadership. *(For the purpose of this discussion, I will define leadership as: "Leadership under **training** conditions when there is risk of bodily injury or loss of life)*

2. What makes the best leader when **training** for combat?

3. Please think of a specific **training exercise** and detail the circumstances. Now that you have thought back to that incident, what do you think the leader (On Scene Commander) did right and wrong?

4. If you were in his position, what would you have done differently and why?

5. What do you consider the three most important leader traits or characteristics when confronted with a **training scenario** of a direct fire engagement?

6. After it was over, do you believe your actions were consistent with your combat **training**?

7. Is there anything in the preparation for **combat training** you would have changed knowing what you now know? If yes; Why. If no; Why not?

8. Is there anything you would like to add to our discussion?

Appendix B

Combat Leader Survey
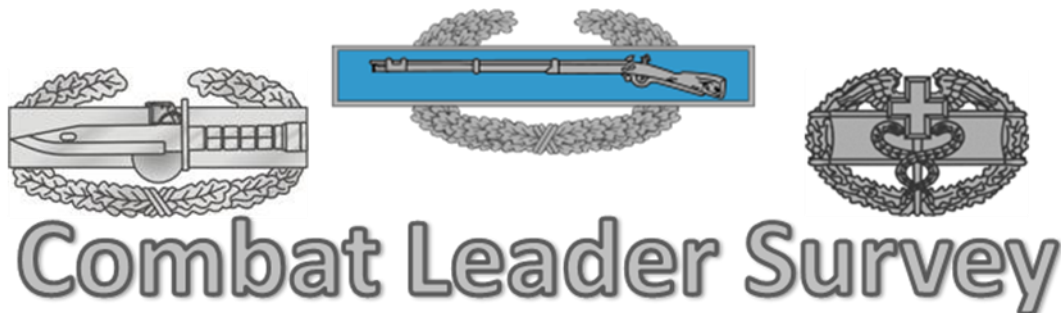
Name: _____
          First   *MI*   *Last*

Email Address*:* _____ *@us.army.mil*

Rank: _____

MOS: _____

Sex: ☐ ☐ *(*
     Male Female
     (check one)

Deployments:
(check all that apply)

2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**
OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF	OIF OEF

Awards:
(check all applicable)

___ Silver Star   ___ Combat Infantryman's Badge
___ Bronze Star ___with Valor   ___ Combat Action Badge
___ Purple Heart   ___ Combat Medic's Badge
___ Army Commendation Medal ___with Valor

Number of direct fire engagements: ___ None
(check one)   ___ 1–2
                              ___ 3–5
                              ___ 6–9
                              ___ 10 or more

Number of personnel supervised during combat operations: _____

Duty position during deployment: _____
(ex: Commander, Battle Captain, Platoon Sergeant, Platoon Leader, Squad Leader, etc)

Appendix C

Focus Group Protocol

1. Informal introduction from the facilitator (Buck Bollinger). *(2 minutes)*

   (__Facilitator will reinforce the following__):

"Neither your chain of command, nor the soldiers you speak of during this discussion will have access to the information you provide unless you specify whom and with a written release, in other words, everything you provide is confidential with the following exceptions: I cannot provide "confidentiality" or "non-attribution," to a participant regarding comments involving criminal activity/behavior, or statements that pose a threat to yourself or others. Do NOT discuss or comment on classified or operationally sensitive information during this session".

2. Individual members of the focus group introduce themselves. *(5 minutes)*

3. Facilitator discusses goals of the focus group, establishes timelines, ground rules, and administers the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale Inventory. *(10 minutes)*

4. Facilitator begins the focus group discussion by asking the first of 5 questions for discussion. *(75 minutes)*

   a. In your opinion, what is combat focused leadership?

   b. What makes the best leader when confronted with a direct fire engagement?

   c. What do you consider to be the most important leader traits or characteristics?

d. Is there anything in the preparation for combat you would have changed knowing what you now know? Why or why not?

e. Is there anything you would like to add to our discussion?

5. Facilitator closes the group by thanking all whom have attended.

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form for Participation

INFORMED CONSENT
Project Title: Leadership in Combat While Under Enemy Fire

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this project is to examine the behaviors exhibited by soldiers in leadership positions while in combat and under enemy direct and/or indirect fire.

What you will be asked to do in this study: You will be asked to complete a questionnaire to assess your background and military history. Once finished with the questionnaire you may be asked to continue with the process by attending 1 of 8 focus groups and a possible individual interview. Participation is voluntary and you may opt out of the process at any time with no penalty or fear of repercussions from your chain of command or the Army. You will be asked to provide your name, age, and other personal information so that I can contact you if you are selected and asked to further participate in this study.

Location: This study will be conducted at Fort Bragg, NC.

Voluntary participation: Your participation is voluntary; there is no penalty for not participating. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without bias. If you choose not to participate, you are requested to sit quietly until the questionnaire has been completed. You must be 18 years or older to participate.

Time required: Questionnaire: 3-5 minutes (Day 1)
Subsequent Focus Group: 1-1.5 hours (1 week from today)
Subsequent Individual Interviews: 1-2 hours (2 weeks from today)

Risks: The focus of this research is to examine leader behavior while involved in combat and not to evaluate you. The data collected will be used for research purposes only. It will not be used to evaluate you or any other specific individual. Your responses will not become part of your U.S. Army record and will have no impact on your Army career. We anticipate a minimal risk associated with this study due to possible symptoms of PTSD surfacing as a result of combat related discussions.

Benefits: Your responses will help in developing training measures to increase combat effectiveness of leaders in the U.S. Army.

Compensation: No compensation is provided for your participation.

Who to contact is you have any questions about the study: You should send your questions to PRB@iup.edu and reference the Leadership in Combat Survey.

Whom to contact about your rights as a subject/participant: Dr. Mary Jane Kuffner-Hirt: Professor of Political Science, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 102 Keith Hall Annex, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705.
e-mail: MJK@iup.edu or by telephone 724-357-2290.

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

Agreement: I have read the Informed Consent described above.
_____ I am at least 18 years of age (check)
_____ I voluntarily agree to participate in this study (check)

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____   **Date:** _____

Appendix E

Privacy Act Statement for Participation in this Combat Leader Study

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT
Project Title: Understanding Leadership in Combat While Under Enemy Fire

Authority: The Department of the Army may collect the information requested in this session under the authority of 10 U.S. Code, Section 2358, "Research and Development Projects." In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 930579), this notice informs you of the purpose, use, and confidentiality of this session.

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to see if examining leadership in combat settings can be used to better develop a leadership training program to increase combat effectiveness of U.S. Army leaders.

Routine Uses: Feedback from this and similar sessions may be used to improve the process for identifying both positive and negative behaviors while in combat and under enemy fire. The data collected will be used for research purposes only. It will not be used to evaluate you or any other specific individual. Your responses will not become part of your Army record and will have no impact on your Army career.

Disclosure: Participating in this session is voluntary and you may choose at any time not to participate. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate.

Confidentiality: All responses will be kept confidential and your privacy protected. All data analyses will be conducted only by persons engaged in, and for purpose of, this study. Moreover, all reports of findings will describe groups of individuals and, in no case, a particular individual. We will not identify you or include your name or other personally identifiable information in our notes or subsequent reports.

We cannot provide "confidentiality" or "non-attribution," to a participant regarding comments involving criminal activity/behavior, or statements that pose a threat to yourself or others. Do NOT discuss or comment on classified or operationally sensitive information during this session.

Contact: For further information about this project or your rights as a subject/participant, please contact Dr. Mary Jane Kuffner-Hirt, Professor of Political Science, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 102 Keith Hall Annex, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705. e-mail: MJK@iup.edu or by telephone 724-357-2290.

Excerpt from U.S. Army field Manual 7-8

The U.S Army has developed 8 battle drills focused on basic execution of critical

combat tasks designed for redundancy of tasks worldwide. With 1.2 million Active

Duty, Reserve, and National Guard soldiers in the U.S. Army, the importance of

learning and understanding the 8 battle drills as the standard way in which we fight

can truly be a life altering event. The goal of the battle drills being for soldiers

worldwide to have the ability to move from one unit to another regardless of their

brigade or division affiliation, and have the ability to employ combat firepower

regardless of what unit you are fighting with or for. I understand most people who

read this dissertation might not have been exposed to, or have an understanding of

basic military combat operations; I added this excerpt from FM 7-8 listing the 8 Battle

Drills for their benefit.

<u>Battle Drills</u>

Infantry battle drills describe how platoons and squads apply fire and maneuver to commonly encountered situations. They require leaders to make decisions rapidly and to issue brief oral orders quickly.

<u>Battle Drill 1</u>: Platoon Attack

<u>Battle Drill 2</u>: React to Contact

<u>Battle Drill 3</u>: Break Contact

<u>Battle Drill 4</u>: React to Ambush

<u>Battle Drill 5</u>: Knock Out Bunkers

<u>Battle Drill 6</u>: Enter a Building-Clear a Room

Battle Drill 7: Enter-Clear a Trench

Battle Drill 8: Conduct Initial Breach of Wire, Mined, Obstacle