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Perceptions of Barriers to Leadership Appointment and Promotion of African American Female Commissioned Officers in the United States Military

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PERCEPTIONS OF BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

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Dissertation Abstract
Perceptions of Barriers to Leadership Appointment and Promotion of African American Female Commissioned Officers in the United States Military

The U.S. military is perceived by many to be the example of workplace meritocracy, but historical studies have shown that the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers run counter to that belief. The military has as its goal the movement from a diverse fighting force to one that is totally inclusive of all members. The purpose of this study was to gather insights into whether the military has moved toward full integration from the viewpoint of the demographic that has shown the least confidence in the accomplishment of that task.

This qualitative study involved 12 participants: active duty, retired, and separated short of retirement African American female commissioned officers. Each participant shared their perceptions during structured interviews that averaged one hour by telephone and personal discussion. All data was consolidated and categorized based on the themes that emerged from the interviews. The three categories of importance to success were strong support as undergraduates by the Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadre that empowered those participants who had attended historically Black colleges and universities to be more outspoken in challenging the power structure to achieve equitable outcomes of situations, the importance of an influential mentor for military success, and that all participants had been the target of or witnessed either racial- or gender-based discrimination in the course of their military service.

Data from interviews indicated that 3 of the 4 propositions of equity theory were applicable to participants' military-service time. Study participants who separated short of retirement displayed actions posited by Propositions I, II, and IV of equity theory in a

more compressed time. At the end of their military-service time, resignation and acceptance by study participants who stayed in the military until retirement that they could not change the system eventually manifested in Proposition IV and they gave up fighting to do so. This study supported the call for further study in areas of (a) how to implement increased cultural-capital awareness among persons in positions of authority to retain valued personnel by routing out systematic discriminatory practices, (b) how to increase identification and prosecution of military persons accused of sexual harassment/assault, (c) examination of assignment practices and biases that resulted in lower representation of women and minority men from operational career fields and (d) tasks that lead to promotion and leadership appointment.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Beverly Henderson Davis	April 3, 2018
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Patricia A. Mitchell, Ph.D., Chairperson	April 3, 2018
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DEDICATION

To my husband, Mel: my partner, best friend, cheerleader and constant encourager that I could and I did. Your love and support pulled me through.

For my children, India, Cira, and Melvin III, who inspired and believed in me: I couldn't quit because I knew you were watching. To my parents, the late George S. Henderson and Alverta C. Steptoe, thank you for giving me life and belief that I was the most wonderful child ever. And to my grandmother, the late Oakley King Harris, who reinforced my parent's belief that I was the best.

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To Bridget and Emerald, who told me early on it's okay to cry as long as you keep pushing forward. To Dr. Z, who first helped me visualize that I could actually achieve my goal. To every single person in my first semester classes, you inspired me more than you will ever know to "press toward the goal of the high calling" (Philippians 3:13-14).

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THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

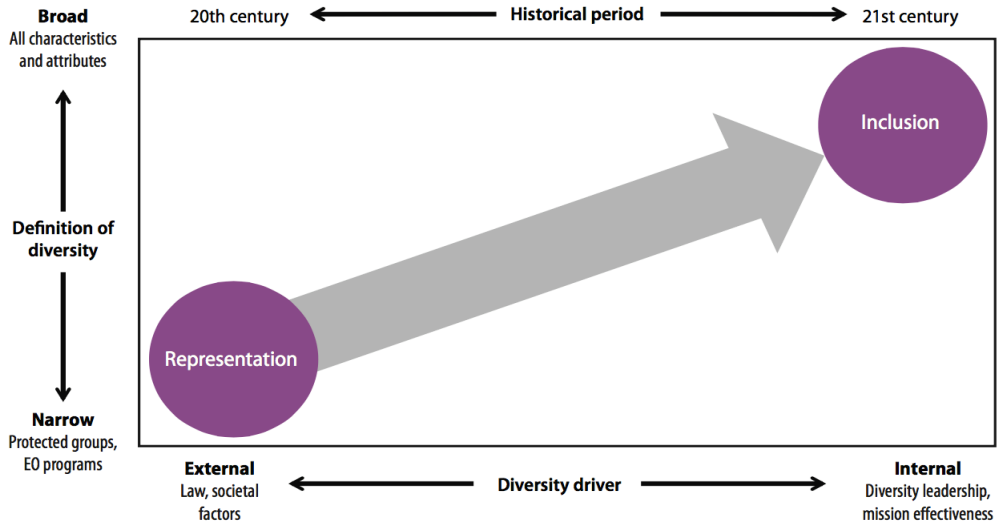
The 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2009 had as one of its provisions the establishment of a Military Leadership Diversity Commission to evaluate programs that affect minority personnel. The resultant report, *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st Century Military,* stated "the diversity of our service members is the unique strength of our military" (Lyles, 2011, p. iii). The report goes on to say that they found "the promotion policies and practices of the Department of Defense and the Services to be fair, [they] find also that there are some barriers to improving demographic representation among military leaders." These barriers are evident by the lack of diversity in the leadership of the U.S. military. An essay by Ambrose and Barber (1972) posits that the military is an acknowledged leader and at the forefront of equal opportunity for racial and gender opportunities in the United States. The Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers echoed this sentiment is echoed in the Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers (Gilroy et al., 1999, p. v), reporting that the military's record of equitable treatment of personnel often surpassed that of the overall civilian workforce. The foundation for his supposition could be grounded in two key pieces of legislation that affect military personnel: the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 and Executive Order 9981, which desegregated the military.

The Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 made women permanent members of all uniformed services and opened up more military-career fields for them to

work. Up to the time of this legislation, women, with the exception of nurses, were generally only allowed to be in the U.S. military during times of war to relieve men of support duties in clerical, maintenance, and other noncombat roles (Borlik, 1998). The other key law that plays a part in nurturing the perception of an egalitarian military is Executive Order 9981, signed by President Harry Truman in 1948. Even though this order officially ended racial segregation in the armed forces, the need for the Gesell Committee, chartered by President Kennedy in 1962 to investigate "problems affecting Negro servicemen" (Fortas et al., 1964) argued the awareness of a problem in the full implementation of the 1948 presidential directive. The failure to put into practice the recommendations of the Gesell Committee were a proximate cause of "tensions and conflicts that occurred in the (military) in the decades that followed" (Mershon & Schlossman, 1998, p. 6). The apparent disparities in underrepresentation of minorities at the leadership or senior-officer ranks could have been avoided if the Gesell recommendations had been fully achieved (Mershon & Schlossman, 1998).

A Public Broadcasting Service report (Sagalyn, 2011) surmised that even though the overall military officer corps is far more representative of the ethnic composition of the United States than private sector corporations, this is much less the case when perusing the demographic data of who occupies the highest ranks of leadership. The Department of Defense's (DoD's) own publicly available demographic information shows inverse proportionate minority representation by both race and gender as rank increases. This inverse racial and gender representation at the top displays that despite concerted efforts by the DoD to be a more inclusive representational organization, the goal has not bee achieved. Figure 1, From Goal to Reality, taken from a DoD document,

is an idealistic representation of how the U.S. military would like to emphasize equal-opportunity programs.



SOURCE: Adapted from Defense Business Board Task Group on Increasing Diversity in DoD's Flag and Senior Executive Ranks, 2004.

Figure 1. From goal to reality.

This research examines the effectiveness of U.S. DoD inclusion policies from 1948 through the 21st century and beyond. The underlying question is to evaluate the effectiveness of policies the U.S. military made to determine if quantifiable strides have been made to move from token representation of all minority groups to full integration at all levels of military service. To attempt to study policies across all minority groups in the military is too broad; this study focuses on the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers as to whether the U.S. military is achieving their goal. This group was chosen because an in-depth Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers (Gilroy, C, et. al., 1997) divulged that African American commissioned officers had the lowest belief that the opportunities available to them for promotion and leadership were equitable (Gilroy et al., 1999). The officers participating in the current study shared their

sentiments about the status of the military in the inclusion continuum and the factors that supported their opinion. Study results were juxtaposed with available demographic information of U.S. military personnel to discern if the surveyed perceptions may be representative of the perceptions of the group studied.

This study also evaluated if the current perceptions of promotion and leadership-selection process opportunities, as expressed by African American female military officers, have changed or remained stagnant in the last 20 years. The baseline of comparison was the DoD-wide Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers (Gilroy et. al., 1999) study undertaken for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness. According to the that study, African American female officers did not believe opportunities for promotion were equally available to them (Gilroy et al., 1999). This opinion can be contrasted with the perceptions of Caucasian military men who perceived the exact opposite. Caucasian military men perceived the situation to be that minorities and especially minority women are given more support for promotion and leadership appointment beyond what is warranted.

Women in male-dominated jobs generally have lower job satisfaction, even though they may have a higher salary than their same-gender peers in female-dominated career fields, commensurate with the status of higher wage earners (Hakim, 1996; Lundquist, 2008). An ongoing General Social Survey was conducted annually since 1972, with the exception of 1979, 1981, and every other year starting in 1994, by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago (Lundquist, 2008). Study results revealed that African Americans are notably less pleased with their workplace situations than their Caucasian counterparts (Davis, 1985; Deitch et al., 2003). Although on the

whole, women have a higher job satisfaction than men, when responses are disaggregated by race the outcome differs. African American women are the least satisfied with their workplace situations compared to other ethnic groups. This dissatisfaction can be attributed to lower salaries. Caucasian women have the highest pay of female workers whereas African American women have the lowest pay. Latin and Asian women fall in the spectrum between Caucasian and African American women when salaries are evaluated.

Minority women experience "double jeopardy" in the workforce by having to address the negative effects of race and gender (McGuire & Reskin, 1993, Petrie & Roman, 2004, as cited in McGuire & Reskin, 1993). When comparing the conditions of workers, the top of the hierarchy is Caucasian men followed by Caucasian women; then African American men. The African American woman is consistently at the bottom of the list in salary and opportunities afforded than those in other categories of workers. The cumulative effect is that being a African American woman in the workforce negates the otherwise high level of job satisfaction experienced by women as a homogenous group. In a study of African American women in the Navy "women … exemplify what some researchers refer to as the 'double whammy' phenomenon: disadvantaged because of both their race and gender" (Moore & Webb, 1998). The Gilroy et al. (1999) report also spoke to "the effects of this 'double jeopardy' and indicates that minority women consistently experienced the lowest rates of promotion and retention" (p. 79). This study also solicited from the respondents if they believed they were working from a double disadvantage, as they attempted to climb in rank and the leadership structure of the military.

Background and Need for the Study

Nearly 50 years after the signing of the legislation that granted equal opportunity to all military personnel regardless of race or gender, the Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers (Gilroy et. al., 1999) study conducted for the DoD Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness questioned if the implementation of the integration laws were proceeding as envisioned. The report provided insight into quantifiable data as well as the subjective perceptions of equal opportunity in the military about and by minority members. The 1999 study revealed that even though the raw numbers and percentages of minorities and women in the military had increased, this increase was not reflected in the gender and race representation at the highest (admiral/general officer: 0–7 to 0–10 pay-grade) levels in any of the military services (p. ix). A comparison of the 2015 military demographic information of all military services revealed that 18 years after the initial study, disparities in role occupancy persist. The highest positions and ranks are still held by Caucasian men in operational career fields.

The 2015 DoD demographic report aggregates information of minority service members at all officer ranks. African American officers, female and male, comprise 9.1% of the officer corps at all ranks (p. 26). A review of the percentage of active-duty minority officer data, male and female, for fiscal year 2007 (DoD, 2015,, p. 17) indicated that African American officers in the military have remained constant at 9.1% of the officer corps.

Aggregation of minority data leads to the masking of the unequal achievement for minorities in institutional settings (Bensimon, 2005). Aggregated data shapes how

organizations develop and implement institutional policy on personnel, masking minority representation "patterns of inequality" and does not cause unequal outcomes to rise to the level of importance that warrants concerted effort to correct (Bensimon, 2005, p. 100).

The report does not provide disaggregated data on numbers of African American female officers at the admiral/general-officer level so it cannot be determined how many are currently on active duty. Exactly which minority group occupies flag/generalofficer positions is also difficult to determine, as all minority officers, male and female, are aggregated. Aggregation of demographic data is an ongoing issue in reporting on DoD personnel statistics. A General Accounting Office (GAO) study criticized the military for not fully implementing the 1997 congressional mandate to collect and report disaggregated race data and makes it harder for congressional oversight to in matters related to the military (Stewart, 2005).

All minorities, including African American, Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islander, multi-race, and other/unknown of both genders only comprise 11.6% of flag/general-officer positions (DoD, 2015, p. 28) even though they make up 22.8% of the overall officer corps numbers shown in Table 1.

According to a GAO report, African American women comprised 28% of female service members, officers and enlisted (Stewart, 2005). This number is more than double the 13% representation of African American women in the civilian workforce. Women of all ethnic backgrounds comprise 17% of the total military-officer force yet hold only 7% of the flag/general-officer positions in the services (see Table 2). The demographics provided are not disaggregated sufficiently to discern the racial composition of female flag/general officers (Stewart, 2005).

Table 1

Military Demographics 2015 Report Percentages

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total DoD	
Pay grade	Racial minority	Nonminority	Racial minority	Nonminority	Racial minority	Nonminority	Racial minority	Nonminority	Racial minority	Nonminority
E1–E4	32.0	68.0	42.5	57.5	17.2	82.8	28.0	72.0	30.7	69.3
E5–E6	34.3	65.7	43.5	56.5	25.3	74.7	30.9	69.1	35.1	64.9
W1–W5	33.3	66.7	38.1	61.9	27.4	72.6	N/A*	N/A*	33.1	66.9
01–03	25.7	74.3	22.0	78.0	18.9	81.1	21.8	78.2	23.0	77.0
04–06	24.5	75.5	18.1	81.9	17.4	82.6	17.2	82.8	20.1	79.9
07–010	16.0	84.0	10.6	89.4	12.3	87.7	7.1	92.9	11.6	88.4
Total	32.9	67.1	38.6	61.4	20.5	79.5	27.5	72.5	31.3	68.7

Note. *The Air Force does not have warrant officers. Racial minority includes Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Multiracial, and Other/Unknown, percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding, from DMDC Active Duty Military personnel Master File, September, 2015.

Table 2

Military Members by Rank and Gender (2015)

Pay grade	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total DoD	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
E1–E4	180,956	31,862	99,834	29,465	100,826	8,845	94,956	21,389	476,572	91,561
E5–E6	112,227	15,654	92,566	17,242	36,839	3,083	79,806	18,999	321,438	54,978
E7–E9	45,833	5,902	26,873	3,148	12,479	697	25,271	5,901	110,456	15,648
W1–W5	13,629	1,425	1,543	106	1,949	120	N/A*	N/A*	17,121	1,651
01–03	39,595	9,884	25,317	6,474	11,148	1,036	27,283	8,118	103,343	25,512
04–06	25,414	4,661	17,737	2,813	6,015	299	21,077	4,230	70,243	12,003
07–010	305	19	195	21	80	1	277	19	857	60
Subtotal	417.959	69,407	264,065	59,269	169,336	14,081	248,670	58,656	1,100,030	201,413
Total	487,366		323,334		183,417		307,326		1,301,443	

Note. The Air Force does not have warrant officers, Source: DMDC Active Duty Military Personnel Master File (September, 2015); Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015.

This distinction is noteworthy because one study finding was that African American female officers have the least trust that the military system is egalitarian (Gilroy et. al., 1999). The Lundquist research (2008) directly contradicted this assessment and concluded that African American women have the highest level of satisfaction with the military. These diametrically opposed reports of perceptions studied just 9 years apart point to a possible evolution of perceptions unresolved in reviewing DoD annual demographic information.

Harris-Perry (2011), in her seminal book *Sister Citizen,* examined the stereotypes of African American women in the United States, quoting Zora Neil Hurston's 1937 book, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, to encapsulate the plight of the African American woman. Chapter 2 of Hurston's book described the power hierarchy of the world:

> So de white man throw down de load and tell de nigger man tuh pick it up. He pick it up because he have to, but he don't tote it. He hand it to his womenfolks. De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see. (p. 19)

Evaluating this perception of the task faced by the African American female officer provides an insight into the challenges faced in progressing through the ranks to the top level of the male-dominated military structure. Are African American female commissioned officers the mule of the military services and is this reflected in their selection for promotion and leadership appointment?

Dorn (1991) synopsized DoD reports, indicating that despite being at the forefront of equal opportunity, certain areas should be cause for concern:

1. The low number of minorities and women in the top ranks (admiral/general officer
2. The high number of women in administrative and support career fields instead of the operational track from which most military leaders are gleaned
3. The continued disparity in the perceptions between the races and genders of fairness in all aspects of the evaluation and assignment system

Dorn's (1991) assessment of the situation in the military connects to Hurston's 1937 statement that African American military members, especially women, are the least represented in the tactical-operations areas in all services. This career fact is important because it is from the tactical/operational career areas that the majority of military leaders are selected (Baldwin, 1996). Table 3, taken from the GAO report (Stewart, 2005, p. 34) provides the career fields where members of various different ethnic groups are assigned in the military. Of note is that the

highest concentration of African American officers of both genders is in the administration and supply/procurement career fields.

Table 3

Department of Defense Officer Occupational Codes

DOD officer occupational codes and areas	Racial/Ethnic subgroup						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Other/ Unknown	Total
1 General officers & executives N.E.C.	91	5	2	<1	<1	2	100
2 Tactical operations officeresofficers	85	5	5	2	<1	3	100
3 Intelligence officers	79	8	5	3	<1	4	99
4 Engineering and maintenance officers	74	13	5	3	<1	4	99
5 Scientists & professionals	83	7	4	3	<1	3	100
6 Health care officers	76	9	4	5	<1	5	99
7 Administrators	69	17	6	2	<1	4	98
8 Supply, procurement, & allied officers	69	17	6	3	<1	4	99
9 Nonoccupational	78	5	5	3	<1	9	100
Total AC officers	79	9	5	3	<1	4	100

Note. N.E.C. = not elsewhere classified. Source: GAO analysis of DOD-provided data from *Reporting Additional Servicemember Demographics Could Enhance Congressional Oversight,* by D. B. Stewart, 2005, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, retrieved from https://www.gao.gov /products/GAO-05-952. Non-occupational areas include patients, students, those with unassigned duties, and unknowns; rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

Findings from the 2nd Biennial Equal Opportunity (EO)/Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Research Survey (Dansby, 1998) were presented at a symposium held at Patrick Air Force Base Florida for the heads of all military organizations in 1998. The survey reiterated the perceptions of minorities and women in the Gilroy report. The EO/EEO survey reported that of all the demographics in the military, the African American female officer had the least favorable perception of equal opportunity within the military. The research reported at the symposium reiterated that of all service members responding to the Military Equal Opportunity Climate Survey on active duty from June 1990 to July 1995, approximately 385,000 respondents of the

approximately 1.4 million on active duty during this period, minority women officers viewed the military's overall equal opportunity climate least favorably.

The DoD 2015 demographic report stated that women comprised 16.8% of the force; an increase of 1.4% since 2000, and African Americans, male and female, comprised 360,690 or 17% of the active-duty military force. Further review of the same report indicated that of all active-duty officers in the U.S. military, only 9.1% of the officer corps is African American. According to the 2015 U.S. Census, African Americans comprised 13.3% of the U.S. population, up from 12.6% in 2010. This statistical fact is important when noting that even though they comprise just 13.3% of the population, African Americans comprise 30% of the enlisted corps. The over-representation of African Americans in the enlisted ranks is counterbalanced by the underrepresentation of African Americans in the officer ranks, compared to the census data.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers in the U.S. military concerning the equity of the promotion and selection for leadership system. This study solicited perceptions from current, retired, and separated short of retirement female African American military officers to determine if study participants believed disparate opportunities exist for promotion and leadership in the United States, based on gender and race. Previous researchers indicated that even though the military has made strides toward the implementation of programs and practices to ensure selection for advancement was strictly merit-based, African American female officers have the least trust in this being true. Using the 1997 Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers study as the baseline (Gilroy et al., 1999), this new research assessed the current perceptions of equity, regardless of gender and ethnic background.

Research Questions

The questions used to elicit the individual perceptions from the study fell under the broad categories listed below. Even though it was expected that more topics of concern would arise organically from interviews, it was believed that the below high-level topic areas would serve as a foundation for further discussion. A full list of questions used appears in Appendix A.

Research Question 1: What work or life experiences contribute to African American female commissioned officers' success in the military?

Research Question 2: Do African American female officers perceive that race and gender play a negative role in selection for promotions and leadership positions?

Research Question 3: To what extent has race and/or gender been a factor in African American female commissioned officers' promotions, professional military education (PME), and appointments to leadership positions?

Research Question 4: What are some of the challenges African American female commissioned officers have had to overcome in their military career?

Research Question 5: What recommendations would interviewees offer to African American female commissioned officers aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was equity theory. J. S. Adams developed equity theory in 1963 in work explaining factors that motivate workers to be more productive. Huseman, Hatfield, and Miles (1987, p. 222) stated that equity theory is

drawn from "exchange, dissonance and social comparison theories in making predictions how individuals will manage their relationships with others." On the most basic level, equity theory can be encapsulated as all persons in a workplace environment wanting to be fairly compensated for their contributions in proportion to the amount of expended effort and effectiveness. The entering assumption stated by J. S. Adams, Berkowitz and Hatfield (1976, p. 2) is that "man is selfish." Equity theory recognizes that when compensation is meted out for performance, it cannot be done in a vacuum; it must be done in relation to other workers for the compensation to be believed to be fair (J. S. Adams et. al., 1976). How people choose to address inequities in the workplace can be measured on a scale of equity sensitivity (Huseman et al., 1987). Equity sensitivity determines whether a worker will stay on the job and attempt to rectify an inequity or leave to reduce their dissonance.

Dissatisfaction with one's work environment can be evaluated as a cost-of-business equation. The cost to train a new military officer was $112,000 in 2004 (Wilson, 2009). When the General Accounting Office attempted to do a quantitative evaluation of the cost of onboarding a new officer in 2005, they were unable to do so because the number of variables needed to accurately calculate costs across all career fields were too numerous to tabulate (Wilson, 2009). In 1981, the cost to train an officer in the present researcher's career field was $250,000 and this cost was surpassed by training costs associated with navigators and pilots. The initial cost to train a military pilot is $1 million and to fully train them to be independently operational is $9 million (Gebicke & Farrell, 1999). With such high training costs, it is prudent to determine the factors that are dissatisfiers of military personnel and attempt to remedy them.

Women of all ethnic backgrounds leave the military short of retirement at higher rates than White men (Gilroy et al., 1999). This higher rate translates into increased costs to recruit and train a combat-ready force. It takes 6–9 months to prepare a new enlisted person to be a productive soldier (Thomas, 2004). Although these military members are being trained in what is, by its very nature, the unique jobs in the military, they are not fully productive. This point can be extrapolated to equate to turnover of personnel due to dissatisfaction at having a negative economic effect on the military budget.

According to equity theory, workers evaluate their efforts, experience, education, and competence, and compare them to the compensation of others in a similar job when determining their own satisfaction and whether it is in their best interest to stay in the job or go. Equity-theory provides explanations of the theory in many areas of life. One of the applications of equity theory is in the ‘“fight or flight” scenario (Austin, Walster, & Utne, 1976). When people’s rising expectations consistently meet with the frustration of not being rewarded for the work done, people implement it gives rise to the implementation of the decision to stay and attempt to rectify the situation, or as they call it a revolution, or they leave and seek gratification elsewhere (Austin et al., 1976). Equity theory work is a natural outgrowth of hygienes identified by Herzberg in two sectors: intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction (Maidani, 1991).

Intrinsic factors are motivators and include advancement and recognition for a job well done and opportunities for advancement. These factors can make people happier at work; equity theory goes a step further, providing a “strikingly simple theory” (Austin et al., 1976, p. 164). The four propositions of equity theory follow:

1. Individuals will try to maximize their outcomes (outcomes = rewards - costs)

2. Groups can maximize collective rewards by evolving accepted systems for "equitably" apportioning rewards and cost among members
3. When individuals find themselves participating in inequitable relationships, they become distressed. The more inequitable the relationship, the more distress the individual feels
4. Individuals who discover they are in an inequitable relationship attempt to eliminate their distress by restoring equity. The greater the inequity that exists, the more. (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978, p. 6)

If people perceive a lack of equitable evaluation of performance for promotion and appointment to leadership positions, this theory states that those being denied equality will try to repair the situation. Most important to military leaders is the application of Proposition II of the theory, that can be restated as equitability in the ranks will provide the greatest efficiency for the organization and thus the ability to meet the unique mission of the military. This study explored if the propositions of equity theory are in play in the U.S. military as they specifically apply to African American female commissioned officers and if dissonance with the propositions, especially Proposition I, are factors in perceptions of dissatisfaction.

An auxiliary theory used to evaluate the perceptions of study participants was deficit-cognitive-frame theory. Deficit-cognitive-framework theory, initially applied only to students, is equally applicable in the study of why African American female officers are not represented at the highest ranks of the military structure in numbers proportionate to their initial accession into the military. The theory states that underrepresented groups who do not succeed in the environment, whether school or work, do not excel because it

is not in their nature to excel in a situation foreign to their background. Estela Bensimons says in her research on deficit cognitive frame theory that persons in authority who subscribe to deficit-cognitive-frame theory may well believe in diversity and are generally positive toward increasing minority participation (Bensimon, 2005, p. 102).

To extrapolate from this theory to the military would provide a rationale for the belief that the reason African American female commissioned officers fail to be promoted and selected for leadership positions is due to their inadequate socialization into the military structure (Smith, 2010). Despite rising accessions of African American officers, they are not reaching the top echelons of the rank structure due to an inability to adhere to unspoken military-culture rules. African American graduates of the service academies have been inculcated with these mores before beginning active service and are thereby better able to navigate the system, and are rewarded with promotions and appointments to leadership positions (Smith, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of this study was finding sufficient people in the demographic group willing to discuss their perceptions of the equal-opportunity structure of the military. Service in the U.S. military does not end upon separation/retirement from the military. People with regular commissions are obligated to be recalled to active duty up to 30 years beyond the original commissioning date. Being obligated to be recalled to service opens the path for actions and utterances of former military members to be tried under the Uniform Code of Military Justice if it is determined that statements or writings of prior military personnel reflect poorly on the military. Additionally, if they have received a regular commission, they are liable to be tried under military law until death.

Because the population of female African American commissioned officers in the U.S. military is numerically so limited and the military "community" is correspondingly small, great lengths must be attempted to mask the identity of study participants. Providing direct quotations in descriptions could identify study participants by associating speech mannerisms with individuals. Providing exact locations of situations could identify study participants. Another limitation of the study is the over-identification of the researcher with study participants.

An additional limitation was finding sufficient disaggregated military demographic data with which to evaluate the perceptions of study participants. A dearth of recent scholarly works reviewed information on the topic of African American female commissioned officers in the military is also a concern.

Delimitations of the Study

The researcher contacted people in the researcher's social network to request participation. The convenience-sample group was enlarged by asking participants to disseminate the participant request to their social networks. To overcome the reticence of participation, due to possible retaliation by the military structure, all participants were provided with written and verbal assurances that all identifying data would be aggregated and masked to ensure individual identification was highly unlikely. Additionally, each study participant was assured that, at the end of the study, all oral interviews and written transcripts would be destroyed. To combat the possibility of researcher bias, the researcher secured additional corroboration from other sources to support statements by participants.

All efforts were employed to find disaggregated data. In addition to online exploration, the researcher contacted the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, to review their database and results of DoD equal-opportunity-climate survey results. The Defense Equal Opportunity Management declined to provide the information and directed the researcher to the individual services. Requesting the information from the individual services was likewise unsuccessful. Even though each service provided an acknowledgment of the Freedom of Information Act request by the researcher, only the Marine Corps responded. The link to the data in the Marine Corps database could not be used, as they have a proprietary database that the researcher could not access.

It was projected that some data would be available in the public domain and that has proven to be the case. Information was gained by looking at third-party announcements concerning promotions of African American commissioned officers. Additionally, a search of images of military generals allows researchers to identify people who are the focus of this study by phenotype identification.

Significance of Study

The study of perceptions of barriers to leadership and promotion for all women is significant in that it will illuminate whether the military is truly an egalitarian organization. An article in the June 2013 edition of the *Military Review* also added credence to the importance of this work. In the article (Escobar, 2013, p. 71) "The U.S. military cannot reach its maximum potential until our personnel system fully integrates women into all facets of service and all levels of leadership." The article further stated that by not fully incorporating women at the highest echelons of decision-making, the

Army is putting itself in a sub-optimal position for strategic decision making. The historical patterns of gender- and race-based discrimination in the U.S. military have not been easily overcome and the lack of minorities and women at the top of military organizations are evidence that more work needs to be done to rectify this situation. Despite previous research on the topic, it has generally been service specific. A cross-service view offers a common point of reference to evaluate if perceptions are more widely held based on the branch of service. To evaluate the perceptions of a subset of the military force is a starting place in the adoption of policies to maximize the satisfaction and productivity of all military members and with it, a reduced retraining cost of replacing service people who leave, due to perceptions of inequity. At the conclusion of the analysis, a foundation is laid for further evaluation of whether race is a factor that negatively affects the promotion of African American women across the commissioned ranks in the military. The results of the study are a starting point for the military to review its policies on the evaluation of performance and face implicit biases experienced by all ethnic minorities.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been operationalized for this study:

Commissioned officer: Those members of the armed forces who have an official commission by the U.S. president. These commissions are usually obtained through one of three avenues: Service Academy, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) or an Officer Candidate School. In rare instances, battlefield commissions have been awarded in the heat of battle. Commissioned officers can command all military people in rank

below them including the enlisted ranks (E–1 to E–9) and Warrant Officers (W–1 to W–4).

Enlisted personnel: People who entered the military from basic recruitment. Their designation is noted as E–1 through E–9.

Flag officer: Commissioned officers with the rank of O–7 to O–10 with the "O" standing for officer. These persons are at the top of the military rank structure. The Air Force, Army, and Marine Corps designate these ranks as general officers, whereas the Navy gives these officers the title of Admiral.

Noncommissioned officers: Enlisted personnel at the rank of E–4 through E–9. The nomenclature of how these people are addressed varies by branch of service.

Reduction in forces: Voluntary and involuntary separation of military personnel enacted to meet budgetary restraints and to be in line with projected mission requirements.

Regular officer: A person who has been commissioned as an officer in the armed forces by the President of the United States. Until 2005 all graduates of service academies were given automatic regular commissions as well as some ROTC cadets identified as having superior potential. Currently, all people receive a reserve commission and must compete for regular commissions. This category of officer cannot be removed from duty during a reduction-in-forces action.

Reserve officer: A person who has received a commission as an officer in the armed forces. This officer can only serve up to 20 years in the active force but that period can be extended, at the discretion of the service. This officer can be removed from active duty in the event of a reduction in force.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC): A civilian college-based training program to prepare students to become commissioned officers in the U.S. military.

Service academy: Federally funded undergraduate colleges with the sole purpose of training students to become commissioned officers in the U.S. Armed Forces. For this research, this designation is assigned to the Air Force Academy, Annapolis (Navy and Marine Corps) and West Point (Army).

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the issues, laying a foundation about the scarcity of representation of African American female officers at the highest ranks of the U.S. military. This chapter introduced the theoretical guidelines used in the evaluation of the responses of study participants. The theories were selected as most likely to encompass the range of responses from participants.

Chapter 2 is a literature review that covers the topics used in the evaluation of participants' responses. Examined was the glass-ceiling hypothesis, which indicates that women will only be able to ascend to a certain level in organizations and will be stopped by an invisible glass ceiling that inhibits them from being selected for the top positions in an organization. The chapter includes a review of research on the historical discrimination faced by African American men in the U.S. military, providing a lens into how the military has used race as a determiner of occupations, promotions, and selection for leadership in the military.

The review of documentation on the status of women in the military provided a historical perspective on the progress of women in the U.S. military in times of war and peace. The final segment of Chapter 2 evaluates the literature to determine what scholars

say about historic discrimination against African American men and women in the military. Additionally, literature reviews revealed a perception that African American military women, and especially African American commissioned officers, face a “double whammy” that must be overcome for them to be equitably rewarded for their service. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the methodology used in the study and a description of the participants in the study. Chapter 4 describes the results of the research. Chapter 5 includes a discussion, conclusions, implications, and recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review examines discrimination against women, personified by a perceptual glass ceiling, African American military men, military women in general, and how the combined effects of race and gender discriminatory practices affect the status of African American female officers in the military. The chapter provides an overview of the written documentation of the historical foundations of discrimination and the legislative and societal actions that were factors in changing the hurdles minorities faced in serving the United States in the military.

The military has more African American female commissioned officers on active duty than Caucasian women or African American male officers, yet they do not hold top leadership positions or rank in proportion to this representation (Melin, 2016). With the removal of the combat-exclusion ban in January 2013 by then Secretary of Defense Panetta (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013), the last overt barrier to military women, including African American female commissioned officers, having the opportunity to acquire the requisite operational background for promotion to the highest positions in the U.S. military was lifted. DoD personnel committees (Bohon, 2011) argued that the exclusionary policy was actually a de facto, barrier to women being promoted to leadership positions in the military (Burelli, 2013). In a report on the lack of diversity in military leadership, Segalyn (2011) noted that although the enlisted force is quite diverse at all ranks, this level of diversity is not the case in the officer ranks. The present study examined if African American female officers perceive a de facto barrier to their

promotion to the highest ranks or places in positions of authority, based on their gender and race.

This research also focused on whether African American female commissioned officers believed other discriminatory factors keep them from being equitably represented at the highest levels of the military. To evaluate the reason African American female officers in the U.S. military are not represented at the highest ranks proportionate to the general population of the United States or the gross numbers of African American female officer accessions, this chapter reviewed the following: (a) historical discrimination faced by women of all ethnic groups in society at large, (b) historic sanctioned discrimination against African American men at all ranks in the U.S. military, (c) historic discrimination against women in the military, and (d) perceived barriers that African American military women face that prevent them from achieving the highest ranks and positions of authority and leadership in the U.S. military. This inquiry examined if some of the sanctioned discriminatory practices used to exclude African American men from full integration into the armed forces until the 1948 Presidential Executive Order formally ended those practices are parallel to discriminatory practices aimed at women, and especially African American female officers. This investigation studied if African American female commissioned officers believe they face a 'double whammy' circumstances while serving in the military.

Glass Ceiling—Myth or Fact

According to the American Association of University Women (K. Miller, 2017), women have made progress in bridging the pay gap with men in the United States. As of 2015, women who work outside of the home have reached 80% parity with men. By

following the trend of past wage growth for women who work outside the home and extrapolating into the future, women's pay will be on par with men's by 2052. Further research provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics showed that, as of school year 2013–2014, women were awarded 57% of all bachelor's degrees, 60% of all master's degrees, and 52% of all doctoral level degrees. This higher level of educational achievement appears inconsistent with the lower pay received by women.

A June 7, 2017, edition of *Fortune Magazine* lists 32 women as being heads of Fortune 500 companies worldwide. At 6.4% position occupancy, women at the helm of the largest companies in the world significantly lag the global female population. This group of Fortune 500 company heads has no African American women. According to the world-population clock, as of July 28, 2017, the world population comprised 49.6% females. This study examined the proposition that the same reasons women are not rising to the top of corporations are similar to the reasons for the low representation of all women, and especially African American women, at the top of the military structure.. This study examined the views of African American female commissioned officers to elicit their views as to whether this situation relates to the supposition that the gender and color of the skin of the aspirant is a factor in the selection for promotion and leadership in the military.

The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) commissioned an advisory group to study the topic of women in leadership at the intelligence agency (Albright, 2012). The report revealed that the CIA had a history of women being promoted on par with the men with whom they worked alongside, but a slow down and stagnation has occurred in this trend. The results of the advisory group pointed out that the cultivated

atmosphere of male-domination culture at the CIA belies the expected historic negative matriculation of women to higher ranks at rates in relation to their raw accession numbers. The then Director of the CIA General (retired) David Petraeus, saw that the rate of advancement of female CIA members was declining and convened a committee to determine the underlying root of the slowdown in promotion. The CIA, like the military, is a male-dominated society (Ellefson & Magee, 1998, p. 3). Military recognition of the problem (Gilroy et al., 1999; Lyles, 2011) may lead military leaders to remediation, like that attempted at the CIA.

Acker (2006, p. 441) defined inequality regimes as "loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations." To further this concept to the military is to provide a rationale for why so many military leaders are men. Even though women comprise approximately 18% of the military, they are represented at only 7% at the general/admiral levels. Homosocial reproduction is a concept that can be applied to this situation. Arxer (2011, p. 392) summarized work done by Connell (1987) on homosocial reproduction as it relates to gender in the following statement: "hegemonic masculinity specifically works to enforce a gender order, wherein masculine qualities are elevated in social status over "feminine" ones so as to suppress the competing interests of women." Arxer encapsulated Demetriou's (2001) description of the ideal hegemonic masculine manifestation as a western European White male who is self-centered, violent, and attempting to put as much distance as possible between themselves and anything that could be construed as feminine.

Even though White men comprised only 66% of the non-Hispanic U.S. population, in 2011 they comprised 77% of the U.S. military officer corps (Sagalyn, 2011). In the same year, Hispanics comprised 15% of the U.S. population but they were represented in the U.S. military officer corps at a rate of only 5%. Sagalyn (2011) was especially attuned to hear if respondents volunteered the concept of men favoring other men who look like them for high-level promotions and leadership positions.

Research conducted by Cook and Glass (2014) of Fortune 500 companies examined support given to leadership by women and men. They determined that women are more scrutinized for on- and off-job-related issues and judged more harshly than men. They also determined that women are more often given the chance to lead at large organizations when the organizations are in crisis or there is a greater chance of failure.

To counter the supposition presented by Glass and Cook is the proposition by Schuh et al. (2014) that the reason women are not selected for promotion is that they do not want to be promoted. Women, they conjectured, do not have the drive to achieve higher levels of leadership and power. The team acknowledged that women still face discrimination in the workplace, but the reason for the underrepresentation of women at the top is because they do not want leadership enough. The concept of women not having a strong enough desire to be promoted was a concept listened for during interviews but not presented to study participants as a rationale for the lack of selection of women for promotion and leadership positions.

Work performed by Boyce and Herd (2003) at the Air Force Academy with cadets attempted to replicate an earlier study by Schein in 1973 and 1975 on acceptance of women in management-leadership positions. The Boyce and Herd study assumed that,

based on the highly selective admission process and the investment of resources in their training, these cadets, who will be the leaders of U.S. military services, would display the highest levels of enlightenment on equity in leadership, regardless of gender. The researchers were quite disappointed. The Air Force Academy study directly contraindicated the Schein (1973, 1975) studies. The Schein studies showed that increased interaction with women in the workplace moderated civilian men's gender-role stereotypes. The Boyce and Herd study revealed that senior cadets were more entrenched in the perception that leadership is an attribute most closely aligned with men than did first-year male cadets. The leaders of tomorrow were still entrenched in an outmoded assessment of a woman's place—and it is not in the military.

This inequity and the systems that keeps it in place is not a new concept in the United States. Farnell (2009, p. 17) spoke to the prevailing beliefs in Western civilizations that women are "intellectually inferior to men, as the weaker sex … and also as a major source of temptation and evil." Western societies have relegated women to the role of procreation of the species as their primary *raison d'etre* and to provide a support system for men. The view of women as primarily driven by emotional logic has repeatedly been proven incorrect in studies conducted by such unrelated entities as the Rand Institute, the Alliance for National Defense, and the Women's Research and Education Institute.

Historical Discrimination Against African American Men in the U.S. Military

According to Wintermute (2012), assimilation was the ultimate source of legitimization and financial and social success in the United States. Service in the military was the first rung in the assimilation ladder for many ethnic groups. He states

that it was in the military, that immigrant males of many nations such as Ireland, Greece, and a plethora of eastern European nations were able to prove their loyalty to their adopted nation and thereby earning the full rights of citizenship. By the virtue color of their skin, Americans of African ancestry were denied access to the dominant society by military service and not given the opportunity to be treated as quasi-equals, despite being born in the U.S. This denial was rationalized by saying Negros would display cowardice on the battlefield (Wintermute, 2012).

A memorandum to the Chief of Staff of the Army, writing on a study performed by the Army War College in 1925, provided an assessment of the negro (*sic*) soldier capability for battle. The 1925 memorandum begins by stating that negroes, as a group, did not perform their civic duties in proportion to their population. The memorandum went on to state, "His mental inferiority and the inherent weakness of his character are factors that must be considered with great care in the preparation of any plan for his employment in war" (Ely,1925, p. 4). Based on the opinion of this study, the military-service role of the African American man was further restricted. The 1925 study further stated that even though negroes have the rights of citizenship and are physically qualified for combat duty, they should not be assigned due to the propensity to display cowardice in the face of battle.

To further support the exclusion of negro men from military service, several Army medical doctors postulated that recently freed men of color did not display the temperament or ability to learn and adapt to military life (*Military Surgeon,* 1899). To further support the rationale that the negro was not fit to serve as a full-fledged member of the military in any but subordinate, domestic roles, a *National Medical Review* article

stated that to expect Colored men to serve in other than "the most menial tasks suited to their allegedly primitive intellectual/ emotional/ physiological states" would frustrate them (pp. 195–196). These doctors forwarded this theory to maintain the whiteness of the military. The initial theory was greeted with skepticism by the War Department but politics became a factor in changing this skepticism. As Jim Crow became more prevalent and accepted by the wider society outside of the U.S. southern states, this view of the African American man being unfit for military service was likewise accepted into belief systems.

This view of the capability of the African American soldier was disproved by the bravery displayed by Colored soldiers in the Spanish-American War. The conduct of Negro soldiers surprised their Caucasian counterparts, according to the *Journal of the Military Service Institution* (N. Y. Evening Post, 1901) at the battle of Santiago. The journal reported that, when commenting on the conduct of the Negro soldier "even when their beloved white officers were shot down they went ahead under their sturdy sergeants' with their eyes to the front" (N. Y. Evening post, 1901, p. 288). This was not the action predicted by the *Medical Review* article of 1899.

Despite a stellar showing of bravery in Cuba, the policy of exclusion of negro soldiers was further codified into law and practice by the advocacy of politicians. Leading proponents of this exclusion were White southern Democrats like Mississippi Senator Vardaman, who advocated that, beyond the concept that negro men would not make good soldiers, them joining the military would deplete the labor pool by taking too many away from the farm and would disrupt southern agricultural production (Wintermute, 2012). The Senator also warned against the aftermath of service members

returning to their southern towns after serving in the military. Addressing the Senate, Vardaman said that returning soldiers would disrupt the social norms of the south (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017).

Despite overwhelming obstacles, a few African American men were able to slip into military service. The Negroes who served were sent to the worst assignments, such as the western U.S., and colonized outposts such as the Philippines. From this limited cadre of Negro soldiers was drawn the Buffalo Soldiers, who were given the task of "civilizing" the American West (Wintermute, 2012). According to National Park Service Archives (n.d.), it was thought that African Americans had a natural immunity to tropical diseases such as yellow fever. For that reason, the Buffalo Soldiers were sent first to Cuba and then to the Philippines and other colonial possessions where tropical diseases were rife, to spare the health of as many people of western European descent as possible.

As the years progressed, the U.S. government acquiesced to the reality that in the time of world war, the blatantly racist tactics of preventing Colored people from serving in the military was counterproductive to the aim of winning battles with high attrition. The Selective Service Act of 1940 prohibited segregation of selection and opportunity based on race and Colored boys registered for military service in record numbers. Despite laws to the contrary, units were essentially kept segregated and Jim Crow continued in the disparate treatment of soldiers.

Despite blatant discrimination, is not so blatant as that evidenced by Senator Vardaman, but the African American service person still faces an implicit level of discrimination in the military-justice system. In a study on the administration of the death penalty under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Baldus, Grosso, Woodworth, and

Newell (2011, pp. 1261–1262) identified a pattern of "disparate treatment" of the accused that can only be attributed to race. They found that those in the military-criminal-justice system did not purposely discriminate based on race of the accused or the victim but there is "substantial evidence that many actors in the U.S. criminal justice system are unconsciously influenced by the race of defendants and their victims."

The Baldus et al. (2011) report aligns with perceptions of the disparity of the application of punitive action of military personnel, based on their race. A study completed by a team associated with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute determined that, even though the rates of courts-martial has diminished, the convictions of African Americans has remained constant at a rate of twice that of their Caucasian counterparts (Landis, Dansby, & Hoyle, 1998). The reason for the disparity in punishment is that Whites are more apt to accept a plea bargain, but that can be explained by the fact that "blacks received less favorable charge reductions compared to whites" (Landis et al., 1998, p. 191). The study conclusion confirmed that the perception of unfair treatment in the military-justice system by Blacks in the military is justified. The study said that race is the greatest factor in forecasting the outcome of the application of punitive justice in the military judicial system.

Other high-profile cases of seemingly disparate sentencing based on race are rife in military history. The Port Chicago California munitions explosion in 1944, which resulted in the death of 320 in the fire and the injuring of an additional 200 men, was the impetus for the first mutiny trial of World War II and the longest mutiny trial in naval history (Wollenberg, 1979). One of the African American sailors who was court-martialed after the explosion for refusing to load the same types of munitions at Mare

Island, another military installation close to Port Chicago, spoke to a reporter from *The Guardian* newspaper about his recollection of the incident (Gumble, 2015). Freddie Meeks, an African American sailor, missed being killed that day because he was on leave in Oakland, California.

Upon returning from leave, African American sailors were ordered to Mare Island to begin loading munitions on other ships, but Caucasian naval workers were given leave to recover from the catastrophe. Meeks and 49 other sailors were courts-martialed for refusing a direct order to load the ships. The courts-martial were of such high profile that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sent Thurgood Marshall to observe the trial. Wollenberg (1979) quoted Marshall in the November 1944 issue of *Crisis Magazine,* the official magazine of the NAACP, as saying the trial against the sailors was solely based on the race of the soldiers. The publicity and scrutiny brought about by this incident were the impetus for the Navy being the first uniformed service to fully desegregate.

Historical Perspectives on Women in Military Service

The military has historically been quite dominated by masculine culture with no allowance for deviation for problem assessment and solution with any but brute strength (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). This macho-focused lens of the world rewards people who fit into the social-identity theory of leadership, as typified by the unquestioning man and in direct conflict with the woman who does not look like them and flatter their ego (Ellefson & Magee, 1998). When formally allowed to join the military, the roles of women were highly prescribed and restrictive. Women had to fight for acceptance into the armed services not only from men but also from women. The

former head of the Women Airforce Service Pilots during World War II, Jacqueline Cochran, asserted that "a woman's primary function in life is to get married, maintain a home and raise a family," and not to fight in combat (Hearings Before Subcommittee No. 2, 1974). This statement from the woman who was at the head of the nontraditional group of female pilots whose sole job was to free men from non-direct combat-related jobs is only one indication of the uphill battle women had to face to volunteer to serve their country in the military.

The societal orientation that a woman's place was in the home may be the reason women have not received recognition for their support of the war effort of Western civilizations. The book, *Women and War* (Cometti, 1947, p. 31) said that "women were expected to remain largely within the home unless forced by necessity, such as illness or death of their husbands, to do otherwise." According to Goldstein (2003), "War and Gender," women as warriors has not been an acceptable social constraint with two notable exceptions: the Dahomey Kingdom of West Africa and the Soviet Army that drafted women into combat during World War II. Even though Greek mythology and other folklore speaks of all-female fighting forces, the only documented history of a separate female unit is that of the Dahomey kingdom (Alpern, 2011). The kings of Dahomey used these female soldiers as elite royal bodyguards. Even though they were considered premier soldiers, they were still under the indirect command of a larger armed force commanded by men. These two notable exceptions have not been widely heralded in history books but rather are mentioned as aberrant anomalies.

Women saw active combat in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars of the United States as well as having been camp followers who did the cooking and washing for male

soldiers. It is estimated that tens of thousands of women served in one of three categories (De Pauw, 1981, pp. 210–211). The title "women of the army" was assigned to those women who comprised separate units of the Continental Army. The second category was women who enlisted as regular troops; the third category was "irregular fighters affiliated with local militia" (De Pauw, 1981, p. 211). De Pauw emphasized that these female soldiers were not "camp followers" but full-fledged fighting elements of the Army.

In an article in the April 7, 2011 edition of *Smithsonian Magazine,* Righthand reported that approximately 400 women fought in the Civil War. Even though women were not allowed by custom and law from being soldiers, many resourceful women found ways to be a part of the war on both sides of the fight. Because women were not considered mentally or physically strong enough to be soldiers (Farnell, 2009), they had to disguise themselves by various means. Many war conscripts were young men, many of whom who had not begun to grow facial hair, so it was not difficult for a truly determined woman to take measures to present as a male, such as binding her breasts, to fight. Regardless of their service, no provision was made by the U.S. government to acknowledge the contributions of the Revolutionary or Civil War women who fought alongside male soldiers or to provide women a legitimate route to service until 1901.

Even though the Navy initially recruited women to serve solely in clerical roles during World War I, they found that women's roles could be expanded to include the tasks of draftsmen and translators. The Marine Corps began recruiting women just before the end of World War I because they, like the other services, had suffered heavy casualties (Murnane, 2007). The Armistice of 1918 saw the majority of the Navy and

Marine women sent home, with the exception of nurses, not to be reactivated until World War II.

The Army Nurses Corps was created in 1901 to allow permanent military slots for women. If an Army nurse got married or pregnant then they would have to leave the military. This provision for restricting the number and occupation of women to serve in the military was kept in place until the beginning of World War II. The outbreak of World War II prompted Congress to expand the role of women in the military with the creation of places for women in the Army, Navy, and Coast Guard. Women were again brought into active duty to free men to do combat duty while women were trained to handle clerical and maintenance tasks.

There was significant opposition of many members of the 77th Congress had many members who garnered significant opposition to allowing women to be a part of the military during World War II (Permeswaran, 2008). The 77th Congress second session established the new Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, the Women's Naval Reserve Corps, and the Women's Auxiliary Reserve of the Coast Guard. Even though the nation at war needed all of the manpower it could muster, fierce opposition arose to allowing women to have any part in the struggle. The House of Representatives raised a proposed change to the original bill allowing women into the military. The amendment to the bill that these new military women only be allowed to serve in the continental U.S. was rejected in the Senate by a 37 to 26 vote. An additional condition added to pass the new legislation was that the strength of the Army female component not exceed 150,000, the Navy component does not exceed 12,000, and the Coast Guard not exceed 10,000 (Congressional Record, S., 1942).

These female personnel were considered “special category” soldiers and were an attachment to the Army. The initial entry of women into the military in a category other than nurse was not met with full acceptance. When it was determined that women could fill positions in 239 categories and could do more than just type and cook, they could drive, rig parachutes, and maintain equipment, official opposition was largely removed (Permeswaran, 2008). Even though they presented no direct threat to the position of male soldiers at any time during their military service, women were subject to overt and covert criticism by the male military members.

Farley (2009) wrote about the treatment and condition of the use of women in World War II. Women and men knew they were temporarily assigned and would be out of a job at the end of the war plus 6 months, according to the laws in place before the start of the conflict. Despite this limited-duration employment by the armed services, it did not prevent many servicemen from denigrating the military women. The same is the case today

Even though men in the Army are the dominant group, they spend an inordinate amount of time attempting to undermine their female coworkers and especially their commanders (L. Miller, 1997). The methods employed by male soldiers are like those used by high school age “mean girls” including gossip, malingering, derogatory comments, and attempts to put women in compromising positions; such methods rarely include direct confrontation. L. Miller (1997) referenced this type of behavior as gender harassment and averred it is effective because men do not elevate their actions to the level of warranting official admonishment, but their actions are damaging to the efficient accomplishment of the unit’s mission.

DeGroot (2006) recounted that women suffered especially from male Marines. This component of the service was especially resistant to female service people and participants went out of their way to malign women. In a 1997 study on gender harassment (L. Miller, 1997), an explanation for this type of behavior was described as a "weapon of the weak." This type of behavior is most exhibited by people who are in formal positions of dominance. They comport themselves as oppressed group members because they believe people in another group who have less formal power are the more powerful group. The weapons of the weak, documented as used by men in the military include "foot-dragging, feigning ignorance, constant scrutiny, gossip and rumors, and indirect threats" (L. Miller, 1997, p. 33).

The Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 allowed military women to remain members of the service after the war but also capped the number of women allowed to 2% of the total force. The act also denied women the right to claim husband and children as dependents and denied their ability to have command over men. To complete the circumvention of the full servicepersons' rights to women, Executive Order No. 10,240, 16 Federal Regulation 3689, April 27, 1951, required any woman who became pregnant while on active duty to be automatically discharged from military service, married or not.

The act also mandated that any woman who stayed at home with a minor child at least 30 days a year, whether the child was a biological offspring, adopted, or stepchild, would be automatically discharged. The rules on women being excluded from having dependents and automatic discharge upon becoming pregnant or having to provide childcare for a husband's children from a former relationship were not ended until the

1970s, followed by many areas of prohibition still in place after this time. The Supreme Court Case of *Crawford v. Cushman* (2d Cir. 1976) finally fully integrated women into the U.S. military. The Crawford decision determined that forcing the separation of servicewomen from military service based solely on pregnancy was a violation of their fifth amendment right to due process.

African American Women in the U.S. Military

Following the change in personnel procurement in the mid-1970s, the entrance of women into the military increased exponentially. African American women entered the military at rates higher than other racial ethnicities, per capita. Even though they enter the military at a proportionately higher number than any other demographic (Melin, 2016) African American female officers are not proportionality represented in the highest ranks of the military. The number of African American women officers rose from 3.3% of all active-duty officers to 13.2% from the 1970s through 1990. The factors that contribute to the documented disparate numbers of African Americans selected for promotion and appointment to positions of leadership and power in the U.S. military during this time and afterward are not directly attributable to any single factor.

Although the proportion of women increased between 1974 and 1989 from 3.3% to 10.9% of the total force, African American military women, officer and enlisted, increased six-fold during the same time (Moore, 1991). Table 4 from the 2007 DoD Demographic Report (p. 13) shows the military active-duty trends for officer and enlisted women, supporting Moore's (1991) research.

Table 4

Department of Defense 2007 Demographic Report by Percentage

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total DoD	
Year	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted
1990	11.8	11.3	10.8	9.8	3.4	4.9	13.3	14.0	11.5	10.9
1995	13.0	13.4	13.5	12.0	3.9	4.7	15.4	16.2	13.2	12.6
2000	14.0	15.5	14.7	13.6	5.2	6.1	17.1	19.3	14.4	14.7
2005	15.3	14.1	14.8	14.3	5.8	6.1	18.4	19.9	15.4	14.4
2006	15.3	13.8	14.7	14.4	5.8	6.2	18.2	20.1	15.3	14.4
2007	15.3	13.4	14.8	14.7	5.8	6.3	18.0	20.0	15.2	14.2

Note. DMDC Active Duty Master File (September, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2007).

African American commissioned military women do not fit the stereotype assumed as the reason they joined and stayed with the military more than their Caucasian female counterparts. African American military women are not in the military only because of job security (Moore & Webb, 2000). Military service is an acceptable career field and generally provides more opportunities to display leadership. With their desire to display leadership, the myths of what a woman can do are being shattered, often in direct conflict with the military's evaluation performance of African American women. African American women do not fit the construct of the social roles expected of women by the masculine-dominated military establishment (Baldwin, 1996). Because of the effects of slavery, racism, and a patriarchal system that is part of U.S. political system, African American women have had created for them an image to which they are expected to conform (Harris-Perry, 2011). Bourdieu (2011) initiated the concept of cultural capital or how elements of everyone's life such as skills, tastes, posture, clothing, and mannerisms work together to produce a nonfinancial advantage/disadvantage. In acknowledging the reality of cultural capital, how does a regimented organization such as the military incorporate differences in the cultural makeup of the individual service person, as

represented by African American female commissioned officers, while maintaining a uniform service that must think and act as a well-functioning machine?

Recorded history of African American women serving in the U.S. military documents soldiers as far back as the Civil War era. Like White American women, Black women also disguised themselves to work in the war, with a notable example being Cathey Williams who enlisted as William Cathey (Arkles, 2014). Initially conscripted to serve as a laundress and cook, at the conclusion of the Civil War Williams enlisted in 1866 and served for 2 years as William Cathey before being discharged with a disability rating. According to the Women's Memorial Archives, when she applied for her disability pension as a woman, she was denied the pension, but still holds the honor of the first African American woman to serve in the U.S. Regular Army (Sheldon, n.d.). Though they did not participate in active combat, the U.S. Army Medical Department Office of Medical History cited that up to 181 negro nurses, male and female, served in convalescent and government hospitals during the Civil War.

Records show that African American female nurses were recruited to work in Cuba because they were thought to be immune from yellow fever and typhoid (Moore, 1991). According to Army Medical History records, up to 80 Negro women were hired to care for the most serious of cases. The Negro nurses were the ones sent to actually care for patients in Santiago, Cuba, and two of the women succumbed to yellow fever in performing their duties. Army medical history cited the performance of nurses during the Spanish-American War as being the foundation of the establishment of the Army nursing corps. Even though they had proved so useful during the Spanish-American War, once

the war was over, Jim Crow rules were enforced that excluded Negro nurses from joining the Army or the American Red Cross.

Once again, it took an epidemic, this time influenza, for the military to enlist the aid of nurses of color. When other resources had been stretched to the limit, and in the last month of World War I, 18 Negro nurses were finally allowed to become a part of the military. They were assigned to segregated quarters and only allowed to care for African American soldiers and German prisoners (Mullenbach, 2013).

HR 6293 established the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps on May 14, 1942. This bill also placed a cap on how many Negro women could be accepted into the military. Negro women could comprise up to 10.6% of overall female strength and no more (Lee, 1966). Despite a critical shortage of personnel in the Army, 18 months into the war the Army had only managed to find 2,532 Negro Women's Army Auxiliary Corps members, which amounted to 5.7% of the full amount allocated in the 1942 legislation.

Though not a threat, women of all races were treated with disrespect and suspicion. African American women were treated even more contemptibly. The first class of female officers was trained at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. The African American and Caucasian candidates were housed in separate quarters and, initially, assigned to different parts of the cafeteria. A separate table with the word "Colored" had been set aside for them in the corner of the mess hall (Mullenbach, 2013). The African American officer candidates ate the first day but, as a consolidated group, refused to eat subsequent days until the segregated signage and assignment of eating areas were eliminated. A further indignity was meted out in the use of the base swimming pool. The African American female officers were allowed to use the pool in the hot, humid climate only 1 hour per

week—on Friday nights. After the African American female officer candidates used the pool it was "cleansed and purified" so as not to contaminate those who would subsequently use the pool (Mullenbach, 2013, p. 98).

The disparate treatment of African American women in the military continued through World War II when the number of nurses allowed into the nurse corps was limited to 56 and African American women were barred from the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, the female "equivalent" of the Navy. It took the intervention of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune to force their admittance (Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, n.d.). Despite technically being allowed to be part of the military, African American enlisted and officer personnel experienced racism and were forced to endure segregated quarters, eating facilities, and assignments. The Marine Corps did not allow African American women to join their ranks during World War II. It took Executive Order 9981, issued in 1948, to order the desegregation of all military units for the number of African American servicewomen to increase without an arbitrary maximum.

Regardless of how they were treated in the Continental United States, the Negro servicewomen overseas experienced a level of respect and deference when serving in occupied countries from the local populace (Okada, 2012); a level of respect they could never hope to get at home. Formally segregated units had been prohibited from being part of the initial occupation forces but this barrier was removed with the outbreak of the Korean War and the assignment of integrated units to support the conflict. While stationed overseas, Negro female soldiers were trailblazers in establishing new meaning for the racial and gender roles of women of color. They experienced respect and deference unheard of in the United States. However, these newly empowered women of

color, regardless of how well they did their job, still had to contend with racism and sexism (Okada, 2012). This discrimination came from the formal U.S. Army hierarchy and from the African American community of military personnel and civilians stationed in Japan, with the highest concentration of disrespect coming from enlisted Negro men. Still, they persisted.

Another source of concern faced by African American servicewomen, including commissioned officers, is sexual harassment. African American military women were the victims of "more sexual and intrusive forms of harassment (i.e., unwanted sexual attention and coercion) than White women. … With the exception of sexual coercion, this pattern of racial differences was observed for both enlisted women and officers" (Buchanan, Settles, & Woods, 2008, p. 361). The source of this unwanted attention rests in the perception of African American women in general. Harris-Perry (2011, p. 55) spoke of the societally accepted myth of African American women being hypersexual as "historically created and perpetuated by white social, political and economic institutions."

Buchanan et al. (2008) referenced the work of Bowleg, Huang, Brooks, Black, and Burkholder (2003), surmising that owing to their lower status in the workplace based solely on their race and gender, African American women are especially open to sexual assault; beliefs held over from the time of slavery, where rape of African American women was not considered a criminal offense but a civil one, owing to misappropriation of property. Buchanan et al. (2008, p. 350) introduced the archetype of the Jezebel to describe perceptions of African American women who are "sexually insatiable, promiscuous, and morally corrupt." This myth is present in current depictions of African American women and "make Black women more prone to experience sexualized forms

of sexual harassment at work" (Buchanan et al., 2008, p. 364), in the military setting also. Buchanan et al. (2008, p. 364) in speaking of the military workplace stated, "Black women reported experiencing the more severe, but less common forms of sexual harassment. … the pattern of racial differences … applied to (African American) women with both high and low organizational status (rank)" (Buchanan et al., 2008, p. 364). Being sexually objectified is a circumstance African American women face more than women from other ethnic backgrounds.

According to the DoD Population Representation in the Military Services: the Fiscal Year 2014 Summary Report, women in military service are more likely to be minorities than their male counterparts. African American women make up 31% of the enlisted female population of the military (Melin, 2016). According to the DoD Active Duty Master Personnel File, as of May 2017, 205,939 women were on active duty with 63,841 African American officer and enlisted women on active duty. This large representation of 31% African American enlisted women (DoD, 2015) should be compared to the general population of the United States, where 13.6% are African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). In comparison, the number of African American men is in proportion to the overall population of the United States.

African American women are relegated to low technical areas that put them in danger of being phased out with technological increases or any general personnel drawdown (Moore, 1991). If this is the case, why is the rate of joining the military accelerated for this demographic over the past 3 decades? Melin (2016) suggested that the reason is economic and social. The military is considered to be a socialist meritocracy (Lundquist, 2008; *Merriam Webster,* 2017) and though not perfect, college-educated

African American female officers believe they have a better chance of advancement in the imperfect military than in a more imperfect civilian sector. “Today’s gender-wealth gap is alarmingly high for women of all races. But factors of race compound the issues of gender, and African American women experience far greater wealth disadvantages than do men of color or white women” (Melin, 2016, p. 3).

Proposition IIA of equity theory (J. S. Adams, 1963, p. 2) avers that groups will maximize the satisfaction of each individual in the group by apportioning the reward to each person based on the input expended by each member. With the background that the military is a meritocracy where hard work and loyalty are rewarded by promotions and leadership positions, a reasonable person would naturally gravitate to this type of organization. The military has been cited as a better working environment because of a purported top-down enforcement of equal-employment-opportunity policies and status based solely on rank instead of socioeconomic status or ethnic origin (Lundquist, 2008). Pay for military men and women doing the same job at the same rank is the same. If the military was a true meritocracy, why are African American and Caucasian women experiencing a lower level of satisfaction with their work environment than their male counterparts? Doll (2007) cited a DoD 2005 study as concluding that even though the military was one of the first workplaces to pay men and women the same, a lingering problem is inequity in opportunities for promotion for minorities and women. This study aimed to discern if military women believed they are receiving equitable recognition and compensation for the work they put into their jobs. Also, do military women think male members of the military are provided more positive evaluations that lead to better assignments and selection for professional military-education schools?

One of the greatest discriminators in the military officer corps is the source of commission (Hardison, Burkhauser, & Hanser, 2016). It is widely accepted in the military that people who attend service academies have an advantage for early promotion and preferable assignments, and with them, the attendant accolades needed to excel and be retained (Gilroy et al., 1999). African American cadets at the academies comprise just 5 to 6% of the student population. The overall percentage of women in the academies is approximately 21%, according to the Rand National Defense Research Institute. The percentage of that number comprising African American female cadets is not reported (Kirby, Thie, Naftel, & Adelson, 2010).

Academy graduates are given the first choice of assignments directly following graduation (Kirby et. al, 2010). African American female officers are more likely to have as a source of commission the ROTC (Gilroy et al., 1999). African American women are heavily concentrated in low technical occupations, namely administrative and support. … While their participation in the armed services is likely to bring strength to military organizations and individual success in the short term, it may also entrap them into military occupations that will soon be phased out. (Moore, 1991, p. 365)

The nontechnical category of officer personnel is the first targeted when reductions in forces are made. So the question that must be asked is, did study participants believe this was one of the factors keeping African American female commissioned officers out of the highest levels of power in the military and is this a deliberate policy?

Summary

This chapter presented documentation from literature to bring to light the discriminatory practices sanctioned in civilian and military workplaces. The current

civilian workforce evidence of inequitable opportunity is shown by the lack of women in positions of power in large corporations. The discrimination against African American men in the military rests on prejudice backed by spurious scientific findings. Even when the bravery of African American soldiers was shown on the battlefield, their actions were discounted in favor of the prevailing view that they were not fit for combat because they would display cowardice in the face of danger.

Women were initially allowed in the military only to relieve men to do combat duty. Except for nurses, women were not allowed to serve in time of peace. The avenues for women to serve in the peacetime military was established after World War II, but with many restrictions of their service. All discriminatory practices against men of color and women culminate in the current situation of the African American female military member. Even though all discriminatory practices were outlawed, this military subgroup experiences negative residuals of both types of discrimination. This chapter provided a rationale for perceptions of inequality.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of Purpose

This study reports on the current perceptions of the promotion and leadership-selection process expressed by African American female military commissioned officers. These views were evaluated to determine if the opinions expressed in the Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers (Gilroy et al., 1999) study conducted for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness by personnel of the same demographic, have changed. According to the Gilroy et al. (1999) study, African American female officers believe the promotion system is structured to their detriment. The study also reported that the perceptions of White men are that the system is exactly opposite to the views expressed by African American female commissioned officers (Gilroy et al., 1999, p. 79). The current study results were juxtaposed with available demographic information of U.S. military personnel to discern if study participants' perceptions are realistic.

Research Design

This research was based on the guidelines for qualitative research. A qualitative approach was selected to best delve into the beliefs held by African American female commissioned officers. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) partitioned qualitative research into six distinct types. The qualitative method chosen by the researcher was phenomenological research. The purpose of this study was not to develop theory but to report on the lived experiences of study participants and to solicit their interpretation of how their experiences affected their lives. Examining their experiences along with a

description of the situations that framed their insights is the goal of qualitative phenomenological research. The use of the phenomenological research method proved to be appropriate in gathering data from study participants. This method allowed a more unstructured collection of data and opened avenues of study not initially identified in the question set.

Krathwohl wrote, “interviews are the prime qualitative data-gathering tool” (2009, p. 295). Merriam and Tisdell (2015) said that a trait of all qualitative research is realizing that all persons develop their realities based on their interpretation of their situation. Because this study relied on the perceptions of study participants, qualitative research methods were best suited to gather and evaluate their stories. Despite a list of questions provided to frame the discussion, participants were not guided as to how to respond. No emphasis accrued in any area of questioning. Additionally, no information as to how other study participants responded was provided to any study members.

Phenomenological research centers on perceptions rather than rationally reasoned answers to situation in which participants find themselves. To further bound the study, the researcher used the principles of applied action research and its subset—evaluation research—as further guidelines to follow. Booth, Bizup, Colomb, Fitzgerald, and Williams (2016) defined applied action research as that which will have a practical application to a condition. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated that researchers undertake applied social science research to examine current situations and provide results to those at the top of a hierarchy in hopes of generating positive change for the focus area. Due to the far-reaching effects of military personnel policies on a large segment of the U.S.

population, optimizing human-resource-governance policies will increase the effectiveness of the DoD.

Qualitative research was used to ascertain the perceptions of the subset of military personnel: African American female commissioned officers who are the focus of the study on the equity of the officer-promotion system in the U.S. military. Structured questions guided the interviews with the opportunity for participants to provide amplifying information to each question. Allowing them to give their impressions of the situation from a structured standpoint laid the foundation for further quantitative research, based on insights gleaned from participants' answers. The use of structured questions allowed topics to be discussed following the outline of the Gilroy et al. (1999) study and facilitated coding and comparisons of the answers provided. Using available data, the study also examined if all members of the commissioned-officer cohort advanced at the same rate as White males in the U.S. military. Role-occupancy data was examined to determine if Caucasian male commissioned officer promotion and appointment data is on par with African American female commissioned officers. Consolidated information gathered was evaluated against the baseline of the 1999 Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers study (Gilroy et al., 1999) conducted for the DoD to determine if perceptions have changed.

Research Setting

The research setting for the study was primarily by virtual contact through the Internet and telephone. The initial solicitation outreach was to African American female officers personally known to the researcher. Each of the initial cadre of study members was asked to share the electronic invitation to participate in the study to their friend

network who fit the studied demographic. This modified form of convenience sampling was defined by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) as network sampling. This method can be described as beginning with a group of readily accessible study participants and asking them to connect the researcher to others in the demographics of the study.

The interviews were conducted by telephone with a lone exception of one interview conducted in person. Because study members were located around the world, the use of technology to facilitate the interview was the most expedient method of data collection. In explaining the need for the usefulness of expanding participation beyond the convenience sample, Patton (2015) said that increasing the number of people involved in the study results in greater diversity of participants, thereby increasing the validity of answers provided. To increase the validity of study results, participants outside the researcher's first-level networks were solicited.

The first- and second-level network contacts yielded six interviewees who graduated from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and six who graduated from primarily White institutions. The initial research plan called for soliciting participants by contacting HBCUs. Soliciting study members from this source was expected to yield sufficient study members to achieve a wide variance in perceptions of African American female commissioned officers. The plan to go to HBCUs as the primary source of study participants was because historically, the majority of African American commissioned officers are graduates of HBCUs (Smith, 2010).

The 1999 DoD Career Progression of Women and Minority Officers report stated that HBCUs were the source of 43% of African American male officers and 52% of all African American female officers (Gilroy et al., 1999). Because the requisite 12

interviewees were gleaned from first- and second-degree contacts, contacting the ROTC departments at HBCUs to attain additional participants was unnecessary. Also not contacted but considered as a source of study participants was Alpha Gamma Xi Military Sorority, Incorporated, an international organization of military women who have served a minimum of 2 years in the U.S. Armed forces. Both HBCU ROTC units and Alpha Gamma Xi, Inc. will be contacted at the conclusion of this initial research, as the study is expanded to include additional participants and to expand on and further validate the findings of the initial study group.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was African American female commissioned officers who were on active duty or previously served in the U.S. military. The sample for this study was 12 African American female commissioned officers in the U.S. military who are currently serving, separated short of retirement, or retired from active duty, and graduated from ROTC units representing all services of the DoD. ROTC units were at HBCU and primarily White universities. Despite the possibility of including people who were graduates of any of the service academies or through specialized service-specific officer training programs, no one in either category responded to the social-media solicitation.

The researcher interviewed 13 people for the study, but one of the people interviewed did not fit into the demographic being studied, but was very insistent that she be heard. Each person interviewed self-identified their demographic as an African American female and 12 of the thirteen self-identified as a commissioned officer who had completed at least 2 years on active duty. Further, each study participant had gone

through at least one round of promotion evaluations. The data gathered from the lone person who was not in the demographic was not included in the study evaluation or used in comparisons with other data received.

Protection of Human Subjects

In line with the requirements for research conducted under the auspices of the University of San Francisco, the researcher submitted an application for approval of research involving human subjects to the Institutional Review Board. According to the guidelines of the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) the researcher did not attempt to contact participants or collect any data prior to obtaining approval to proceed. In accordance with regulations established by IRBPHS, the initial contact letter requested permission from human participants to proceed with the next phase of the study. It was projected that all persons involved in the research except the researcher would have no affiliation with the University of San Francisco. The initiation of Phase 1, the online solicitation, began after the researcher was approved to proceed by the IRBPHS. The identity of all participants was assured by assigning a unique identification code to the participant which was not associated with any identifiable demographic information. Until the data were analyzed, they were kept in a locked storage container. Upon completion of the study and approved by the dissertation committee, all source documentation was destroyed.

Instrumentation

Because this was a qualitative study, statistical analysis of the data was not performed. The primary instrumentation was the creation of a database of responses evaluated for emerging themes. The source of information for the database was

interviews conducted by the researcher. It was initially posited that each interview would last from 60 to 90 minutes. In actuality, the interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 2 hours. The 2-hour interview was with the person whose information could not be used because she did not meet the demographic requirement of the study.

The interview questions (see Appendix A) were structured to elicit similar results to the Gilroy et al. (1999) study and were provided to the study participants before the interview, allowing them time to review and formulate some high-level responses. At the commencement of the interview, the researcher provided a biographical overview of her background, including the nature of her military service, to those who were not personally known to her. To those personally known, the interviewer provided updates on her service and subsequent experiences since leaving the military. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) wrote that, when working with marginalized groups, researchers should be wary about interacting with someone not from their cultural background. Providing personal information to the interviewees diminished some initial hesitancy heard in the voice of study participants who were known and unknown to the researcher.

Also included at the commencement of the interview was a verbal reassurance that no distinguishing identifiable data would be included in the study and the interviewee could elect not to answer any question. Of the people interviewed, only one made a declaration at the beginning of the interview that she would not be answering all of the questions. At the end of the interview, she realized she had answered all of the questions without guiding or coaching from the interviewer. The expectation that by establishing a connection from the beginning, the interviewees would be more unguarded

in response to interview questions, especially personal questions, proved to be true in this research.

The interviewer believed that some questions asked in the interviews were potentially highly personal, so the discussion began with demographic questions. The demographic data included gender, age, source of commission, dates of military service, and branch of service. These questions determined if the participant information could be used as part of the research database. Questions then proceeded to ascertain the current status of service: still on active duty or, if no longer active, did they retire or separate short of retirement? To further probe into the status of their service, each person who separated short of retirement was queried on the reason the participant separated short of retirement. This information was cross-referenced with the rank attained for another data point when evaluating the combined perceptions of the group.

A condition of employment that most civilian employees do not face but military personnel must contend with is maintaining a specified maximum weight to continue their employment. One of the potentially highly sensitive questions included in the study asked study members if they had ever had been disciplined for being overweight by military standards, being on the "fat girl program." The "fat girl program" consists of a mandatory physical-exercise regime and recommended restricted diet until the military member is back within weight standards. People who retired short of retirement were especially asked if weight-related issues were a factor in their separation.

A study by Ettinger et al. (1997) reported that bone density is greater among African American women than in their Caucasian female counterparts. Greater density equates to a higher baseline weight before accounting for other factors such as muscle

and fat. This fact puts African American women at a disadvantage when compared against other ethnic groups when evaluating adherence to weight standards. The differences in bone density of African Americans are not considered in setting weight standards and acknowledging an inability to meet the standards are a particularly sensitive topic for some people.

In 1988, a survey by the National Institute of Health (Dawson, 1988) reported that, African American women must weigh more than Caucasian or Hispanic women. Despite this scientific data, military members are all evaluated on a singular standard that does not consider ethnic differences. The Atkinson et al. (2003) study on Army basic trainees concluded that female participants who exceeded the military body-fat standard did much better on physical-fitness testing. A report by Tanofsky-Kraft et al. (2008, p. 2006) reported that in 2008, the military discharged more than 4,500 service members for being overweight. The cost to replace these service members is estimated to be more than $183 million to the DoD.

After answering the demographic questions, the interview moved to more a sensitive line of questioning, asking about discriminatory practices that may have been encountered while serving on active duty. The questions were couched as either direct or indirect questions by asking if the members had been the victim of or witnessed discriminatory practices based on race or gender. By providing the option to discuss a discriminatory practice in the third person, it was anticipated that the respondents would be more willing to answer in a more expansive way; this proved to be correct. The final question of the interview was an open-ended question about the interviewees' perceptions of a statement about the equality of evaluation and promotion in the U.S. military. This

question gave respondents the opportunity to provide insight into any topic area not covered by the more structured questions.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2013) stated that qualitative data analysis comprises six steps that can be consolidated into three main themes: (a) interviewing and cataloging responses, (b) sorting for comparison, and (c) providing an explanation of the consolidated data collected. The use of semistructured questions aided in the cataloging of answers vital in this study. By controlling the topic areas in this study, emerging trends were identified across the spectrum of respondents. To allow for further evaluation and parsing, responses were grouped without any initial weight given to any response. The organization of the initial groups provided an application of weight to the individual responses, based on frequency in topical areas.

The themes were evaluated in line with the information gathered from earlier research of relevant literature and for explanation of topics raised by participant responses and weights applied, based on the prevalence of the response. It was projected that coding of the responses would lead to the need for further interviews with selected study participants for clarification, but this step was not needed. The answers provided were of such clarity that no follow up with study participants was required. The interviews were conducted using the following questions areas:

Research Question 1: What work or life experiences contribute to African American female commissioned officers' success in the military?

- What was the source of your commission?
- What was your branch of service?

- What was the highest rank you achieved?
- What was your undergraduate degree?
- Was your initial assignment your first choice of career specialties?

Research Question 2: Do African American female officers perceive that race and gender play a negative role in selection for promotions and leadership positions?

- Did you have a mentor at any time in your military service time?
- Do you believe there is a stratification or pecking order in assignments, professional military education in-residence selection and promotion recommendations and awards?
- What are the factors that determine the stratification?

Research Question 3: Is race and/or gender a factor in African American female commissioned officers promotions, professional military education in-residence selection and appointments to leadership positions?

- Have you or anyone you know been the target of overt or covert racial- or gender-based discrimination while in the military?
- In a male-dominated organization such as the military, have you had to go go out of your way to ensure you are perceived by subordinates, peers, and superior officers as a military officer and not as a woman?

Research Question 4: What are some of the challenges African American female commissioned officers have had to overcome in their military career?

- Have you, or any one you know, been the focus of unwanted sexual attention anywhere on the spectrum from subtle verbal sexual harassment through sexual assault?
- If you, or someone you know, has experienced uncomfortable situations based on your race or gender, did you have a support system to help you?

Research Question 5: What recommendations would interviewees offer to African American female commissioned officers aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military?

- Do you believe that women of color, whether Black or Brown, are evaluated and provided opportunities for leadership and promotion on par with their White male counterparts?

Validity and Reliability

The validation panel consisted of a retired high-ranking African American female commissioned officer and a current college professor who instructs in the area of social sciences. The military officer was solicited to evaluate the questions from a military point of view. The college professor was asked to evaluate for sensitivity effectiveness in eliciting answering in an unthreatening manner. Each person was asked to review the research questions to ensure they would elicit the answers in line with the research topic areas and with the purposes of the study. The queries were captured through two separate recording devices to ensure redundancy and accurate capture of responses. Transcripts and verbal copies of all interviews were offered to participants to ensure responses are as the respondent intended. The final step in the process was providing an explanation of differences, based on the theoretical framework used to view the answers.

Data Collection

Fink (2012) provided the template for conducting studies used by the interviewer. Upon approval by the IRBPHS, the researcher disseminated an introductory letter to the initial convenience sample of possible study participants, explaining the purpose of the study and formally asking them to participate in the research. The letter was sent through e-mail with the request that they forward it on to as many people in the targeted group—African American female commissioned officers with at least 2 years on active duty—as they believed would be willing to participate. The researcher did not have to place classified advertisements in the military-targeted magazines (*Air Force Times, Army Times, Navy Times,* and *Stars and Stripes*) requesting study participants because the social-network group provided sufficient participants to conduct the research. Additional overtures to the ROTC cadre at HBCUs, asking them to forward the electronic introductory letter to their alumnae, was also unneeded, as a good representation of this demographic was gleaned from the convenience sample.

The researcher sent a follow-up e-mail with a link to schedule an interview as soon as responses were received. Included in the scheduling link was a consent form indicating their agreement to participate in the study. The projected time for scheduling and conducting interviews was 45 days, with acceptances to participate up to 60 days from initial contact. All interviews were conducted within 30 days of initial contact. The researcher called each participant at the appointed time and discussed the study questions in detail. These interactions were primarily by telephone and one in-person interview. The researcher informed participants that all audio recordings and written transcripts would be either electronically erased or shredded upon completion of the research study.

At the conclusion of data collection, the researcher analyzed the results of the solicitation of information. The final step of the process was to interpret the findings and provide a written assessment of the data collected.

Researcher's Background

The researcher earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Management from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. While at VA, the researcher was a member of the Corps of Cadets, modeled after the U.S. military service academies. The researcher had the distinction of being the first African American woman to go through the entire Corps of Cadet program from the 'Rat' or freshman-year system through graduation and subsequent commissioning into the U.S. Air Force. She was selected for training in the highly selective Communications-Electronics career field and subsequently completed training, specializing in the contingency-planning area.

Her assignments included being the Chief of Communications-Electronics Maintenance at two locations. The maintenance career field is a male-dominated area so it was expected that of the 56 people assigned under her command at her first assignment, 53 were men. This first assignment was in a high-tempo organization that supported two tactical fighting wings and a numbered Air Force that was responsible for all Air Force personnel in the Middle East. After a subsequent assignment to Shemya, Alaska, at the tip of the Aleutian Chain of islands where she was responsible for 82 people of whom 79 were men. After her initial assignments at base level, she was posted to headquarters-level jobs and two special-duty assignments outside of her career field.

While stationed at the headquarters assignments, she acquired an additional specialization in another male-dominated career area: War Contingency Planning.

Between duties in her primary career field, she was assigned to duties completely unlike her technical training and experience. The researcher was selected for special duty as an Assistant Professor of Aerospace Science at Fayetteville State University for 2 years. She further was requested by name to assume duty as the head of Military Equal Opportunity for an 11,000-person organization with units deployed around the world. This assignment outside of her career field was most unusual because the military is reluctant to allow persons in highly technical career fields to serve in nontechnical assignments. The rationale for keeping such a tight rein on technical personnel is that the military attempts to achieve the maximum return on training resources. Assignment to more than one nontechnical assignments is not considered a good return of the time and money spent to train people in their primary career field. She was only allowed to perform this duty for 1 year before being reassigned to another headquarters-level assignment in her technical career field.

While in the military, she completed the requirements for a Master of Arts in Management from Incarnate Word University with a specialization in Management of Information Systems. This degree was obtained during her off-duty hours because she did not have a mentor early in her career to counsel her to accept the Air Force's offer to fully fund her master's work and complete a follow-up assignment as an instructor at the Air Force Academy early in her career because she does not like cold weather. Upon retirement, the researcher was employed by the Software Engineering Institute of Carnegie Mellon University in the Software Acquisition Support area as a consultant to military and governmental organizations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of African American female officers in the U.S. military concerning the equity of the promotion-and-selection-for-leadership system. A qualitative approach was selected to best delve into the beliefs held by African American female commissioned officers in the study. This method allowed a more unstructured collection of data and opened avenues of study not initially identified in the interview questions. The data accrued and were evaluated based on the methodology stated in the previous chapter.

Participant Profiles

The 12 participants in the study ranged in age from 23 to 63 years old with ranks ranging from the lowest officer grade to the highest field-grade officer that is below the ranks of general. Participants were active duty, retired, and separated short of retirement. Nine of the 12 study participants are married and 10 have children. Three of the four military services in the DoD were represented in this research. Five of the 12 members of the study attended HBCUs. Of the study members, 10 work outside of the home either as military- or civilian-sector workers. The two participants who do not work outside of the home are retired, receiving military pensions, and have husbands who work full time outside of the home. Due to factors noted earlier in this research paper, disaggregated demographics of participants will not be provided to protect their identities. Additional demographic information is provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Participant Demographic Information

	HBCU	Degree	Retired	Married	Children
1	X	BS			X
2		BS		X	X
3		BS	X	X	X
4		BA		X	X
5	X	BS		X	X
6		BS	X	X	
7		BS			X
8		BS			
9	X	BS		X	X
10	X	BS	X	X	X
11		BS	X	X	X
12	X	BS	X	X	X

The five research questions were answered through 18 interview questions. To answer the five research questions, 16 African American female commissioned officers were directly solicited with 12 responding in the affirmative to the request and allowing themselves to be interviewed. All responders provided answers to the questions asked but career military people provided more unreservedly honest unfiltered assessments. Two participants who were being considered for promotion to general provided a unique perspective. Each participant asked that their name be removed from consideration.

Findings

Research Question 1: What work or life experiences have contributed to your success in the military?

Members of the study who are graduates of an HBCU attributed their initial success to support and guidance they received while cadets in undergraduate ROTC

programs. When queried about how the ROTC at the HBCU helped, one participant stated, “it gave a strong foundation for preparation for military life.” The remaining four HBCU graduates were similarly complimentary of their HBCU ROTC cadre. This was in stark contrast to the responses of study members who offered few or no comments about how their ROTC cadre prepared them for military success. Even HBCU graduates who had not had direct interaction with the military in over 10 years provided more praise of their ROTC than participants who are less removed from military life.

When the area of questioning moved to the choice of assignments immediately after graduation, four of the 12 study participants received their requested career fields (see Table 6) but the other participants could fathom no reason why they did not get their requested assignments. All but one participant completed the undergraduate fields of study to be assigned in their requested career fields but were detailed elsewhere. The reasons for not being assigned to the career fields, if given, were varied. One person, who wanted to be a navigator, was told she could not be assigned to that career because of her eyesight. She wore glasses. When she questioned the fact that she saw many White male navigators who wore glasses she was told, “it’s okay to wear glasses after you get into the career field but not before you are assigned.” She said she saw no written documentation to that effect in any regulations. Military guidelines state that eyesight must be no worse than 20/200 in each eye and correctable to 20/20. The interviewee believed this was another incidence of blatant sexism and racism against African American women.

Table 6

Participant Degree/Initial Assignments

	Degree	Category	Assigned	Requested
1	BS	Engineering	Weapons	No
2	BS	Biology	IT	No
3	BS	Compliance Engineering	Comp Eng	Yes
4	BA	Political Science	IT	Yes
5	BS	Biology/Chemistry	Airspace Management	No
6	BS	Marketing/Management	Transportation	No
7	BS	Social work	Chaplain	No
8	BA	Elementary education	Weapons control	No
9	BS	Biology	Transportation	No
10	BS	Finance/Economics	Finance	Yes
11	BSN	Nursing	Nursing	Yes
12	BS	Social work	Administration	No

All of the biology majors requested assignment to medical-career areas. None of them were assigned to medical areas. The most obvious job mismatch of the biology majors was the one who was assigned to the transportation career field. When queried as to why she was not assigned she said, “I don’t think that the detail (assignment officer) thought that a biology degree from an HBCU is as good as one from a White school.” The biology graduate from a primarily White institution was assigned to the information technology career field. This was not at all in line with her area of interest but she attempted to make the most of the assignment and leveraged it for employment upon separating from the military.

Overall, 80% of the HBCU graduates said their assigned career field was not at all related to their academic discipline. The fifth HBCU graduate said, “if you squint your eyes just so, you can almost see how (her) undergraduate degree was related to (her)

career field." Evaluating the responses on the same topic area from the aggregated participants, both HBCU and primarily White-institution graduates, revealed that nine of the 12 or 75% said their initial and subsequent assignments were unrelated to their undergraduate area of study.

One of the eight who said her initial assignment/career field was unrelated to her undergraduate field of study shared that though it was unrelated, it was the career field she wanted. She made this decision based on the advice of a friend who was already in the military who advised her that the unrelated career field provided a more marketable skill than her undergraduate-degree area. The only study member who was assigned to an operational career field, the weapons officer, did not understand why she was assigned to the career field but tried to make the most of the assignment. This sentiment was echoed by all participants who did not get their requested career field.

Research Question 2: Do you believe that race and gender of African American female commissioned officer plays a role in their selection for promotions and leadership positions?

This question was designed to elicit responses on the development of a mentorship relationship. Mentors acted as an informal sounding board and provided advice on situations and people to avoid and opportunities to pursue. The advice given to all who stayed in the military was similar from all the mentors and followed the same thematic topics. Each of the people who had full military careers believed that having a mentor had a positive impact on her selection for promotion and leadership. The women in this study who had mentors indicated they had both male and female mentors of their own and other ethnic backgrounds.

Dreher and Cox (1996) stated that mentorship is a vital factor in career success. Further, a positive mentoring relationship directly relates to promotion and with it the attendant increase in salary and influence. Smith (2010) reported that junior Black officers who did not attend one of the service academies are not the generally the recipients of mentorship from a senior military or civilian DoD person, needed to reach the highest levels. To address these concerns, organizations are in place in the Air Force, Army, and Navy to fill this gap.

All of the military services—Air Force, Army, Marines, and Navy—have had a formal mentoring program designed to mentor students, primarily from HBCUs, through the wickets of a military career. The Army program ROCKS, which is not an acronym, has as its goal to provide developmental guidance for Army cadets from "selected" colleges and universities. The program seeks to guide cadets as they transition into military life and take up the dearth in mentorship needed to be successful in areas highlighted by Smith (2010) as reasons why African American officers do not succeed in the military. The areas of socialization, financial management, professional development, and pitfalls to avoid are covered by the volunteer active-duty ROCKs as they work one-on-one with cadets.

The Air Force program entitled Air Force Cadet Office Mentor Action Program (AFCOMAP) began with the same goals as the Army ROCKs program but the focus changed. The mentoring provided to minority cadets to bring them on par with their White cadet counterparts was tempered by White Air Force officers who insisted that the mentoring programs be expanded beyond a focus on HBCUs and opened to White cadets. Objection was raised that by allowing African American active-duty officers permissive

temporary-duty time off without charging it to their personal vacation time, the Air Force was endorsing a form of reverse racism. To quell these assertions, the Air Force expanded the program beyond HBCUs and the focus on African American cadets. This change in direction diluted the equalization focus that was intended for African American ROTC cadets. The Air Force AFCOMAP program has ceased to be a worthwhile program.

The Naval mentoring program, National Naval Officers' Association (NNOA), includes Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard minority officers and has as its' purpose the same basic goals as the ROCKs and AFCOMAP. The Army and Naval HBCU focused ROCKs and NNOA program are still in existence and serve as a viable resource for young African American commissioned officers. Mentoring guidance is vital for success and lack of positive interaction with senior persons of influence outside of direct job-related scenarios, whether military or senior DoD civilian, puts minority officers at a disadvantage. This boon is especially noted in preparation for promotion and selection for command and is needed from the lowest ranks through flag-officer rank.

Without an advocate, chances are very slim that minority officers will achieve the highest ranks. To determine if study participants have been part of a mentoring relationship, the researcher asked about their involvement in any mentorship program at any time while in the military. The youngest responder was surprised that her first mentor was a White female officer and that the mentor sought her out to assist her. The mentoring relationship developed because they were both in a heavily male-dominated career field and the mentor wanted women coming behind her to be successful. The study member said she has another mentor, an African American man who is three ranks above

her who she met through an affinity group associated with her military branch. She has divided her mentorship needs between the two people. She discusses duty-related issues with her White female mentor, who is collocated with her duty station, but she saves her race- and gender-related issues for discussions with her African American male mentor, who is located at a distant duty section.

An Army senior officer in this study stated that her initial mentorship from a ROCKs officer was key to her military success. This officer stated that once she came on active duty, her initial mentor was an African American female commissioned officer. As she went up the ranks, her relationship with the African American female become more of friendship about the time she began to be mentored by a White man in her new career field. The new career field was mostly populated by White men, so she was a trailblazer in gender and race.

The Air Force officer who identified AFCOMAP as a vital part of her success had the same sentiment, but to a slightly lesser extent. She has maintained an ongoing mentor relationship with an African American man but has had other mentor relationships with people of both genders and differing ethnic backgrounds. Some advice given her by one mentor stood out in her memory. Her mentor, a White woman, told her, “if you want to be successful, get a nanny to care for your children’s needs so you can focus on the job 110%.” Even though she followed most of the guidance received from her mentors, she did not take that advice. She believed that the mentoring relationships and a strong family support structure were the reasons for her success.

One participant recounted that she had three categories of mentors, one of which was not mentioned by any other member of the study. Her mentors, of which she had

many over the course of her career, included White male and female officers but also included an enlisted person who worked for her. She recounted that one of the keys to her later success was being "adopted" early in her career by an African American man who taught her how to be the best at her job and how to identify and avoid potential career pitfalls. Even though this early mentor was an enlisted person, he had seen enough young officers fail due to easily avoidable errors and he did not want to see her replicate the errors. The recipient of the aid believed the broad-spectrum support she received from mentors above and below poised her for later success.

Two study participants had nonmilitary mentors. One participant, who stayed until retirement, had a DoD civilian mentor. The mentor provided insight into mostly job-related advice, but also guidance on what the she had observed from years of watching young officers pass through her department. When the question of how the mentor relationships came into existence, all who had a mentor and remained in the military responded that the mentorship developed organically. In sharp contrast, all six participants who did not have mentors separated short of retirement.

When queried as to what the mentor did for them, all participants said that their mentors pushed them to do things they did not want to do. The women were told to take undesirable assignments at less than stellar locations to prepare them for the subsequent assignment that would put them in line for promotion. Though they were not explicitly told to avoid having children by their mentors, they were universally told to put quality-of-life issues second to focusing on the job.

In contrast to the advice and guidance provided to officers who stayed to retirement, study participants who left the military short of retirement said they had to try

to figure out what it took to be successful on their own. Responses to a question about who they talked with when things were not going well in their military job encapsulated sentiments mentioned by officers without mentors as they coped with the challenges they faced. When asked who helped them get through difficult times was, one answered, "nobody but God."

Research Question 3: Has race and/or gender been a factor in your military career? This question was asked to allow study participants to share insights about areas of work-related discrimination they may have encountered while on active duty and was met with a deluge of data points to evaluate. Due to the vast amount of information provided in each area, they are reported as separate areas of research. The first area of discrimination discussed was that of race discrimination.

When queried as to whether they had been the recipient of discriminatory practices based on race, 10 of the 12 initially gave a definite yes. The two who answered in the negative, after further discussion, provided examples of racial distinctions they said they saw in the treatment of others. The effects of racial discrimination disclosed themselves in numerous ways that affected every part of the military experience of the women in the study. The most blatant evidence of racial insensitivity/discrimination was a response by a White male superior officer to an African American female junior officer who complained about the racial bias of another junior person in the unit. The section lead said to the junior officer "Blacks aren't normally officers in the military so you should be grateful for whatever you get." The blatant nature of the remark was grounds for removal of the higher ranking officer from his position.

One participant did not find out about race-based discrimination until after she was forced out of the military due not being selected for promotion. She recounted that her career was deliberately derailed because people in her unit responsible for forwarding paperwork relating to her ongoing training success retained it at the unit level and did not transmit it to the promotions board. When the time for promotion came, she appeared to not warrant selection due to not completing the necessary steps needed for advancement. She was the only person in her unit who was not promoted. She found out about the sabotage when asking for a copy of her military records upon separation; her training reports were not in her official record. When an investigation was conducted to find out where her records were, they were found in the desk drawer of someone who had left the unit and left the documents behind for discovery by whoever replaced them. The person who retained the records had a history of covert racial discrimination but it had not risen to the level of being reported.

Research Question 4: Have you had challenges to overcome in your military career that are unlike persons from other demographics?

The level of insensitivity and discrimination incidents related ran the gamut from the subtle to the overt. One officer recounted a White female officer commenting that "today is a good day to be Black" as a commentary on African American hostages being released while White hostages were kept in captivity. When it was brought to the attention of the White officer that her comments were insensitive and racially provocative, the White female officer took it upon herself to '"school" the Black female officer on the advantages of being Black in America. The person who recounted this incident said she told the White female officer that the White female officer thinking she could speak to

the condition of Black Americans was the height of White privilege, as the White officer was only recounting what she had seen on network television.

An interviewee recounted what she believed was a blatant example of military White male privilege on display. She recounted a situation where the unit deployed to a remote location with limited facilities. The group had been in the field for a few days and the African American female officers' supplies were running low, but the only two Caucasian male officers seemed to have all they needed. Further examination revealed that the unit had set aside a vehicle for use by all of the junior officers in the unit. The vehicle had been commandeered by the White male officers who used it as if it was their own personal vehicle. It took intervention by the unit commander for the White male officers to relinquish the keys so others could use the vehicle. The person who recounted this incidence labeled it as par, for the course and not an unexpected occurrence.

Another incident recounted was of a White male enlisted person blatantly telling an African American female officer that he would not take orders from a Black female. The White male was surprised that not only was he reported for insubordination but was punished for his actions. This same officer, whose job involved direct customer-service interface to military and civilian customers, recounted that a retired military member came into the facility and needed service. At the time the people in charge were an African American male officer and an African American female officer and when the customer saw this he said, "I don't want no niggers taking care of me." Both officers in charge told the customer that was his choice and he could wait until the next shift of personnel came on duty. The customer complained to the unit's commander who sided

with the African American officers and barred the racist customer from receiving further service at that facility.

Study members did not believe that African American women were given credit for duty performance above the most basic level. An incident recounted was of a person stationed at the Pentagon, the supreme headquarters of all military services. She stated that upon being stationed at the Pentagon she was assigned to a work center that was not running at peak efficiency. Upon further investigation, she discovered that the roots of the problems were race-based. She instituted listening sessions, implemented changes to procedures, and soon the resultant output of the work center increased exponentially.

The turnaround was so spectacular that it came to the attention of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and her leadership was noted as the impetus. She was rewarded with a letter from the Chief of Staff for her exemplary work, placed in her personnel folder to be cited in her annual performance evaluation. Not only was the letter not mentioned in her yearly review, but the laudatory comments were used in the performance report of the White male officer who assumed leadership of the work center after she was moved to yet another problem area. She stated that she felt that she kept being moved to different problems areas because someone in her chain of command was attempting to find an area in which she would fail. It is her perception that this type of overt and covert racial discrimination was the foundation of African American officers, and especially African American female commissioned officers, bearing the brunt of reduction-in-forces actions.

A perception shared by most interviewees was the question of race being a factor in selection for PME schools. All officers above the grade of lieutenant/ensign are

expected to have military-specific training related to preparing them to carry out the leadership requirements of the next higher level of responsibility. One study member directly stated “no PME, no promotion.” There are three methods provided for the completion of this training. The training can be completed in off-duty hours at one’s home station by correspondence where the officer studies alone and tests at a proctored base-level testing center. A second method for accomplishing the training is by seminar where persons at the same rank come together after duty hours to teach each other. As with the correspondence method, upon completion of the modules, the officer takes the tests at a proctored base-level testing center.

The prized accomplishment is selection for in-residence training. In this scenario, the officer is taken away from their regular duties and sent to servicewide central training centers where their task is to concentrate solely on the professional military education course material and physical fitness. In addition to allowing participants not to have their attention divided by regular duty responsibilities, the respective services bring respected leaders in the field of study to interact with students to provide a “deep dive” into the topic areas and richer appreciation of the relationship to military leadership.

Selection for in-residence professional military education is an indication that an officer is considered in the top tier of their commissioning cohort and being set aside for further grooming for promotion and leadership. All study participants said race and gender are prime factors in who is selected to attend in-residence PME. None of the study members were chosen for in-residence PME beyond the lowest level of training. One respondent recounted that when she went to the first level PME, she was told that her being there took the slot that a “real” officer needed for promotion. All responders said

the demographic most likely to be given the opportunity to attend in-residence PME above the entry level is White male officers.

An additional factor noted by four of the interviewees is the belief that people in an operational/tactical career field were given priority for in-residence training. One interviewee, as a way of explanation for the preponderance of White men at higher level PME, pointed to the combat-exclusion rule for women. Until 1994 the combat-exclusion rule prevented women from serving in areas where they could come under active fire from enemy forces. She believed the military wanted to give PME slots to operational personnel who would most likely go into active combat.

This section addresses the second half of the question, "has race or gender been a factor in your military career?" as it relates to perceptions of gender. The segment is further partitioned into two sections. The first segment reports on responses that are indications of gender-related disrespect and the second segment focuses more on sexual harassment/assault. A military woman can be the victim of gender harassment in more ways than in the civilian sector. The instances recounted varied from the imprudent to the bizarre.

Instances of the imprudent recounted included a very junior enlisted White male who, when passing a group of officers outside, saluted the men in the group and winked at the only African American female, even though she was the most senior ranking person in the group. A salute is not an option when a person junior in rank, either enlisted or officer, approaches a person senior in rank out of doors and is one of the first military customs and courtesies taught upon entering military service at any rank. Winking at a superior officer of another gender is a flagrant flaunting of the most fundamental military

rule. The officer reported she perceived that the junior person winking at her was attempting to negate the respect due her based on her rank and to reduce her to a sexual being not worthy to be obeyed. The enlisted person was dealt with by escorting him back to his unit, and ensuring those in his chain of command were made aware of the infraction, and took formal action to punish the offender.

Another incident recounted was that of an African American female officer who had been fully trained to go into a lateral career field. She had completed all the required prerequisites to be reassigned, but her new assignment was inexplicably delayed. When she asked what was holding up her transfer and reassignment she was told she was too pretty to be in the desired career; she would be a distraction to the men around her; therefore, she would not be reassigned. All respondents provided at least one instance of having to endure borderline or blatant sexist innuendos. The comments did not rise to the level of reportable offenses but were sufficient to make their performance of their duties harder.

It was expected that the study participants would be reticent to admit to being the victims of unwanted sexual attention anywhere on the spectrum from verbal harassment to physical assault, so the option was provided to discuss instances that happened to them or "someone they know." Two participants told of personally being the target of what a superior officer thought was "good-natured fun," but they disagreed. Both women spoke of being physically chased around the work center by the ranking person in the organization in view of others who did nothing to intervene or halt the inappropriate behavior. One of the women labeled the behavior as sexual harassment whereas the other, who had the same thing happen to her, labeled it sexual assault. One of the recipients of

the unwanted attention did not report the assault because she did not want to be stigmatized with negative appraisals as she had just joined the unit.

The recipient who reported the inappropriate behavior refused to work for the offending White male superior officer any further and went home without authorization; an action that could potentially subject her to court-martial. Actions taken by the chain of command following the reporting of the inappropriate behavior led to the rapid retirement of the offender without the full military honors associated with someone at his rank. The lower ranking person made the decision chose to suffer in silence. The lower ranking officer did not believe she had an advocate to support her nor did she expect to receive support from her chain of command if she reported the offensive behavior.

Other incidents recounted involved reports about which respondents heard of about the female victims of sexual assault, Caucasian and African American, officer and enlisted, stationed stateside and on overseas tours. If the assault resulted in a pregnancy in a country that did not allow abortions, the victim was allowed to use scheduled military transport flights to an area where the procedures could be acquired. Even though the women were allowed to use the transport, they were required to use their accumulated leave, or vacation time, to have the abortion and to pay for it themselves, as military health care does not cover this procedure. The interviewee said that the perpetrator of the rape was rarely given much more than a cursory reprimand, due to the low staffing levels and the need to maintain a force strength in critical overseas locations.

One participant said she was warned not to become involved in what was known on one military base as “The Sunshine Club.” She was told that being a member of the Sunshine Club was to be a young female officer or enlisted person who was seduced by

senior ranking officers on the base into having a sexual relationship and then ignored when they were no longer interesting. She said the existence of the senior White male-officer club was an open secret and involved many members in high-ranking positions. The club, according to the interviewee, was so powerful that when targets of club members became pregnant, the military commander of the hospital arranged for the pregnancy to be terminated.

Facing discrimination on both the gender and racial front was mentally taxing to the military women in this study. The members of the research who had mentors were able to discuss some issues with them, but some people of the majority race may be uncomfortable addressing race-specific injustices and cross-gender discussions were even more rarely discussed. The sentiment of the majority of the women in the group was summed up by one person who said, “it happens to us a lot but Black women just don’t report it; they just go on.”

Addressing the question of the effect of race and gender from a different point, interviewees talked about their perceptions as to whether personnel are stratified and if so, what is the basis of the stratification. This question was asked to validate perceptions among many service members that graduates of the service academies are given the first choice of careers, assignments, and selections to in-residence PME. Universally, answers to the question of whether there is a hierarchy or favoritism shown to a segment of the military, the answer was a resounding “yes.” Beyond this high level of affirmative responses, each participant said the most favored category was non-Hispanic White men (see Table 7).

Table 7

Participant Demographic Hierarchy Rankings

Participant	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
2	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
3	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
4	White man	Black man	White woman	Black woman
5	White man	Black man	White woman	Black woman
6	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
7	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
8	White man	Black man	White woman	Black woman
9	White man	Black man	White woman	Black woman
10	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
11	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman
12	White man	White woman	Black man	Black woman

Three of the 12 study participants had the opportunity to see the inner workings of promotion boards close up as either a member or a proceedings recorder. Even though race is not supposed to be a consideration for evaluations at the unit or promotion-board level, it remains a critical component of evaluations. Four people observed that rather than looking at the actual past performance of male and female African Americans, the boards actively look at factors to disqualify minority service members. Officer records that meet promotion boards contain an official photograph. Boards discuss physical appearance even though it is strictly prohibited. One study participant, not privy to promotion-board deliberations, said when it comes to African American women at all ranks, the lighter the skin, the straighter the hair, and the closer to Anglo Saxon features a woman has, the more opportunities she will be given and the greater the chance of

promotion. Another study member said, “cute girls get more breaks and more help to get ahead. If you are just average or ugly, you don’t stand a chance.”

An example was given of two male officers, both up for promotion. The White male, though he did an adequate job, was overweight and did not attempt to maintain the weight and physical-fitness standards. He had been given relatively easy assignments throughout his career and maintained the status quo in all positions. The African American male, up for the same promotion recommendation, had excelled at difficult postings and exceeded the physical-fitness and weight standards. When the unit level organization was doing a local ranking of both officers, the stellar African American male was rated below the mediocre Caucasian man. The rationale given by the head of the local board was that the African American man will make it on his own but the Caucasian man needs a boost to be promoted, so we give the top rating to the one who needs it the most.

A topic mentioned by those who had been privy to board deliberations raised at servicewide promotion boards and at local levels is the issue of African American women’s hair. The highest-ranking officers in the study had all been told that “braids are not professional looking.” This thinking is blatant at promotion boards and across the services. Grooming and appearance standards across all of the services and the Coast Guard specifically allow braids to the detail level of saying how wide they can be and how many can be worn in twists. The regulations from each military service and the Coast Guard are included as Appendices D–H.

Another comment made at promotion boards is that African American women’s hair is too puffy. The European standard of slicked down hair is the standard, regardless

of what the regulations state. This situation is in line with a comment by another study member: “those in a position to do evaluations and select for promotions didn’t let us know how to get ahead so why even try?” The unwritten guidelines to being considered professional and promotable are not provided to junior ranking officers unless they have a mentor to relate them. Another responder said, “regardless of the regulations, the military is purely political, and if you don’t know the rules you will never get ahead.”

Research Question 5: What recommendations would interviewees offer to African American female commissioned officers aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military?

The last research question combined Questions 17 and 18. The items were, “Do you believe that women of color: whether Black or Brown, were evaluated and provided opportunities for leadership and promotion on par with their White male counterparts? and “The U.S. military is a true gender and color-blind organization and anyone who works hard, regardless of color or gender, has an equal opportunity to be promoted and assume leadership.” Responses were a resounding, emphatic “no.” Once again, the overwhelming negative responses by the women, active duty and retired, was astonishing. Those separated short of retirement also provided negative responses but not to the same level of intensity as those in other categories. Answers from those retired short of retirement were almost resigned to their truth; they did not stand a chance of success in the environment of the military.

The comments ranged from statements that are completely invalid then (when they were active duty) and now. Another commentator said the image the military portrays of being equal is just an image and has not been the truth. Reasons given for the

statements being untrue included the military is a “good ol’ boys club, and the men have a tight rein on who gets promoted, and it’s not us” and “it’s a White man’s [military].” Half of the responders’ initial comments on the questions was an emphatic “BULLSHIT” followed by raucous laughter.

As they continued to elaborate on their answers, they again highlighted the importance of graduating from one of the service academies, being a rated (Air Force) or tactical (Army) officer but most importantly, being a White male. Even the most senior ranking officers said that even though African Americans may get something, they have to be on the lookout constantly to see who is trying to take it away. Rank is no guarantee that one will not be a target. It all comes down to who is one’s mentor and who is looking out for a person.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers in the U.S. military concerning the equity of the system that determines promotion and selection for leadership. This study solicited opinions from current, retired, and separated short of retirement female African American military officers to determine if study participants believe disparate opportunities exist for promotion and leadership in the United States based on gender and race. Previous studies indicated that even though the military has made strides toward the implementation of programs and practices to ensure selection for advancement was strictly merit based, African American female officers have the least trust in this being true. Chapter 4 presented the perceptions of 12 African American women who are or have been commissioned officers in the military. This chapter presents a discussion of findings and conclusions of this study. Based on the themes developed in this research, this chapter includes recommendations for future study and actions on this topic.

Discussion

Chapter 4 gave the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers in the U.S. military as to the equity of opportunities for promotion and appointment to relevant leadership positions in the military. The perceptions were given in line with the five research questions. The prevailing sentiments noted in the 20-year-old Gilroy et al. (1999) report are replicated in the sample of this research. The intensity of the verbalization of the perceptions of the inequities was partitioned along two distinct lines: interviewees who separated before retirement were more resigned about the

situation of lack of opportunity in the military and did not see a way to challenge the situation; people who made or are making the military a career are more resolute in their declarations of the factors that lead them to believe that African American female commissioned officers are not evaluated and rewarded on an equitable basis.

The circumstances of both categories—the careerist and those who made a life outside the military—are reflections of three of the four propositions of equity theory (Walster et al., 1978). Careerists have maximized their outcomes in the military structure and with it, their rewards, embodied in Proposition I of equity theory. They have discovered the balance they believe somewhat equalizes effort exerted with rewards received with a caveat: they recognize they will only be able to attain a certain level of success because of the invisible military "Black Ceiling" that will only allow African Americans of either gender to attain a certain level and no higher in the military. Military careerists are also adherents to Proposition IIA of equity theory in that they have been the recipients of the collective efforts exerted by mentors to maximize the collective returns offered by membership in the "brotherhood of arms." They also seek to help others who come behind them to ensure the greatest number of people possible in the group they identify as worthy of assistance share the rewards of a military career. The support offered does not always follow gender and race lines but the goal is always to help lower ranking members and to apply equitable distribution of rewards based on efforts exerted by mentees.

Participants in the research study who separated short of retirement had a completely different application of equity-theory propositions. As noted in Chapter 4, one participant specifically stated that rather than stay and be "unjustly scrutinized" again for

doing her job, she just quit the military and decided to make a life outside of the armed forces. This is the classic "fight or flight" scenario exemplified in Proposition IV of equity theory. This group left the military, either under their own volition or by reduction in forces, as a way to alleviate the stress they experienced while in the military.

Even though the groups have an apparent divide, both have experienced all of the issues noted in the research questions. A deeper review of the responses to the questions yielded three distinct categories:

Category 1: Strong ROTC cadre support as undergraduates for those who had attended HBCUs produced respondents who were more assertive in standing up for their rights than those who had attended primarily White institutions. These military members were more willing to challenge the power structure to achieve an equitable result.

Category 2: Continuing mentorship or lack thereof was the most defining factor for a successful military career, defined by continued promotions and staying on active duty until retirement.

Category 3: All participants had witnessed or been the target of some type of discriminatory practice.

In a male-dominated organization such as the military, the way a woman is perceived by male peers and superiors of either gender is a vital determinant in the opportunities offered. To address this situation in line with the first research question—what work or life experiences have contributed to success in the military—two key factors stood out: (a) nurturing received while cadets in their respective ROTC programs, and (b) mentors in college and on the job guided them at every step of their military

careers. Demographic-information evaluation provided insight into the delineation that became apparent through the interviews. Study members who had a support system, starting as ROTC cadets, were better able to navigate the oftentimes highly political world of the U.S. military. Butler and Moskos (1996) said that HBCUs produce more leaders than any other group in U.S. society. Despite this acknowledgment, the quality of cadet produced by these ROTC programs that produce approximately 50% of the African American commissioned officers ascending into the military each year is suspect at all levels of command.

General Fogleman (1995), the then Air Force Chief of Staff, stated, "Mentoring is a process that's good for all of us. It can open up communications (and) … break down barriers and foster cultural change" (p. 4). Dreher and Cox (1996) spoke to the importance of having not only a mentor but also the right kind of mentor. They added that White men have an advantage over other ethnic groups and women in that they have more ready access to people who occupy positions of power and are of assistance in placing officers into positions of upward mobility. The problem with this fact is that White men are likely to mentor those who are most like them, leaving less of a chance that people who are not of the same demographic, such are African American female commissioned officers, will be mentored (Dreher & Cox, 1996).

Ragins (1989) stated that women are "less likely than men to obtain mentoring relationships" (p. 2). Even though having a mentor is good for men, for women it is essential for career success. Having learned to develop a good rapport with someone at a higher rank than herself, whether ROTC cadre or one of the service-specific mentoring organizations, as cadets, was a key factor in developing women with a similar

relationship when on active duty. Building early mentorship connections is a common factor to all who had successful military careers. This finding reinforces Categories 1 and 2 of these findings.

Research Question 2: Do African American female officers perceive that race and gender play a negative role in selection for promotions and leadership positions? The response to the questions surrounding this research area was a resounding "yes" by military careerists and those who separated short of retirement. That gender and especially race is a deciding factor in who gets promoted and the plum assignments was a unanimous sentiment. Study participants were expansive beyond gender lines when answering the questions associated with this topic. They all believed that racial and gender discrimination is alive and well and widespread in the DoD up to the top of the civilian hierarchy and spoke of it as being a normal fact of life in the military. Discrimination is so prevalent that it is discussed in a conversational tone. An example cited by one interviewee of public silencing by the military hierarchy is the case of General "Kip" Ward, former commander of Africa Command. General Ward was a warning so no other African Americans would aspire to leadership or "rise above their station."

General Ward, after having been in his position for 3½ years, was removed from duty and investigated and tried for misallocation of resources (Associated Press, 2012). The normal tour length for an overseas tour is 3 years. The participant who raised this example of racial discrimination faced by African Americans in the military believed that forcing him out of command under a cloud of suspicion rather than allowing him to quietly return stateside was a signal akin to the rationale used to publicly lynch and

display Colored people in the U.S. South. According to an article on the NAACP (2015) website, a reason given for lynching economically successful Colored people in the South following Reconstruction was because the White populace "felt that the freed blacks were getting away with too much freedom and felt they needed to be controlled" (para 3). Murphey (1995) further defined lynching as a "response to a perceived outrage, [and] is motivated by a desire to vindicate the moral sense of the community, [lynching] enjoys general public approval in the local community, and has as its target a specific person or persons" (p. 8).

Ackerman (2012) pointed out that, at no time during the investigation was General Ward's performance of duty called into question. The article questions why General Ward, whose greatest faux pas was extending military travel time and his wife asking a military aide to purchase candy for her, was punished more harshly than generals who have essentially lost battles due to their incompetence and "spent billions of dollars on unsuccessful (campaigns and weapons systems) and have not faced any similar disciplinary measures" (Ackerman, 2012, para 10). Another General in Africa Command who was removed from duty for cause around the same approximate time for harassment, inappropriate contact, and alcohol abuse was given a fine for his misconduct. This general was a White man.

A person involved in the study questioned why what General Ward did was so different from that done by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Charles Gabriel who, on a fact finding tour of the Far East, took his wife with him as well as senior members of his staff and their wives on a large cargo plane. Customs regulations stated that a declaration must be made at the first place a plane touches down off U.S. soil. This

plane, loaded with furniture and all manner of household goods purchased by the entourage in the Far East, touched down at Shemya AFB, Alaska. The island, with a landmass of 1 mile wide by 2 miles long, had only a part-time, low-level military customs inspector, who was told he must inspect a 91,000-pound cargo space in 1 hour so the general would not be delayed returning to Washington, DC. The person recounting this information believed the only obvious difference between this illustration and General Ward is the color of the skin of the people involved.

Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, regular officers, which includes all generals, can be called back to active duty and punished for egregious acts that bring discredit upon themselves and the military. Another participant pointed to the disparity in treatment of other generals who were caught in verifiably criminal offenses. The participant questioned why General David Petraeus, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, was forced to leave his post because of his improper association with a woman, not his wife, who later recounted their assignation and borderline classified discussions in a book. General Petraeus was embarrassed and lost his job as the Director of the CIA but was not sanctioned and was not recalled to active duty to be tried and punished. The Ackerman (2012) article highlights that Marine General John Allen was investigated at the same time for "improper communications" with a woman, not his wife, and was not sanctioned or reduced in pay for his offenses. General Michael Flynn is under investigation for possible treason but he has not been called back to active duty and had his rank and retirement pay reduced. When the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff asked then Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, to allow General Ward to retire with his full earned four stars, the request was denied. Secretary Panetta wanted to make an

example of General Ward. In addition to the $82,000 General Ward had to reimburse the government, the denial to allow him to retire at the four-star level continues to cost General Ward $50,000 per year in retirement pay.

The majority of people who hold wide-reaching decision-making authority come from the operational career fields. The Military Leadership Diversity Commission report (Bohon, 2011, p. 3) acknowledges that the majority of people in operational career fields are non-Hispanic White men, but explained that by saying that minorities do not request assignment to the war-fighting career fields. Bohon continued that all ethnic groups receive their occupational preferences at the equivalent rates "despite the tendency of minority officer candidates to have lower average merit rankings than the white officer candidates" Roithmayr (1998) summarized work done by Farber and Sherry (1997) who concluded, "merit is arbitrary and designed to reinforce white male power".

The persons who decide the merit of which officer to be assigned to which career field is done by classification officers at the personnel centers of each respective service. Their task is to evaluate all candidates in a completely unbiased manner and assign them without bias. The unbalanced assignment of non-Hispanic White men to operational careers with greater opportunities for promotion is example of the arbitrary nature of the assignment process.

Despite work done by Butler and Moskos (1996), showing that the majority of African American military leaders in the United States come from HBCUs, cadets from these institutions are not assigned to operational career fields on par with cadets from primarily White institutions and service academies. Roithmayr (1998) referenced work by scholars that argue the "merit standards are simply socially acceptable subjective

preferences, developed by members of social groups who were in power at the relevant time and place in history, and whose descendants continue to disproportionately benefit from decisions made under those standards". By not assigning minority officers, female and male, the assignment officers are perpetuating homosocial reproduction at the highest levels of the U.S. military. Failing to assign minorities at the lowest levels to operational career fields is a guarantee that they will not rise to the rank of authority. Those who do slip through and show proficiency, like General Ward, are summarily sanctioned to ensure they do not get all the way to the top and have too wide a span of control.

General Ward had the operational experience to lead but was thwarted on his way to the top. In contrast is the experience of Dwight Eisenhower. It is the perception of the military that unless an officer has operational experience, they cannot be an effective military leader. This hypothesis was belied in a 1990 brochure produced by the U.S. Army on General Dwight Eisenhower (Vuono & Stone, 1990). According to the brochure, when General Eisenhower was appointed as commanding general of the European Theater in 1942, he had "never served in combat, had small experience with troops, and little background in directing the efforts of large units of men and equipment." The expertise needed to win World War II was determined to be that of a non-combat-tested logician with a strong background in administrative positions.

These are the areas that have the most representation of minority officers (Figure 1.3). The thing that Eisenhower had in his favor were strong mentors who nurtured him and sent him to PME that provided a broad view of the military. This point reiterates the importance of having a strong mentor. Responses to this research question fell strongly in

the area of Category 3 in that study members felt a very real invisible ceiling is imposed by gender and especially racial discriminatory factors.

Research Question 3: To what extent has race or gender been a factor in African American female commissioned officers' promotions, PME, and appointments to leadership positions?

Every participant acknowledged having to account for these biases as they performed their assigned duties. Addressing covert and overt lack of respect due to rank and lack of acknowledgment of a job well done are persistent difficulties they all have faced. A study by Ashley, Tapia, Constantine Brown and Block (2017) showed that when veteran military men were asked who they would choosing to follow, they chose White, male, combat-tested men instead of any other demographic, despite the job at hand. To extrapolate this thinking, these people would prefer an operational person to head such specialized areas as finance and computer systems over a person with specialized training and experience.

This perception of veteran men demonstrates that 23 years after the lifting of the combat-exclusion ban, the perception that women do not make good leaders remains. This sentiment is in line with a 2003 study conducted at the Air Force Academy. The research disclosed that rather than becoming more accepting of women in leadership, the masculine stereotyping of what a leader looks like was only reinforced. The accepted concept of a military leader by cadets is that they are men.

Even though more women are assuming higher positions of leadership and authority, role occupancy at the top of the military structure shows that cadet thinking is carried through to active-duty forces. The established military rationale for why female

officers were not appointed to top positions of responsibility and authority was that because women had not seen combat, they would not be equipped to adequately command men who had. The removal of the combat exclusion rule in 1994 allowed women to be on the frontlines of the battle. This removal allowed women to be more than support or administrative officers and theoretically eligible to be assigned to combat and operational positions; however, the respect that should be attendant with serving in traditionally male-associated areas is not the norm. Under the guidelines of career field assignments put in place after the removal of the combat-exclusion rule, women who entered the military in 1994 and after should reach the time when they should be considered for promotion to general officer. Table 8 shows the most current demographics of female commissioned officers in the military as of May, 2017. The role occupancy at the level of O-7 and above is not reflective of the makeup of the female officer ranks in the military.

Table 8

Active Duty Female Officers by Rank/Grade and Service

Rank/Grade	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Total	DoD Total	% Women
010	0	1	0	2	3	37	8.1
009	4	4	0	6	14	147	9.5
008	5	3	1	7	16	325	4.9
007	9	13	0	8	30	425	7.1
006	484	366	18	478	1,346	11,795	11.4
005	1,239	768	76	1,536	3,639	28,161	12.9
004	2,867	1,682	230	2,664	7,443	44,238	16.8
003	5,750	3,757	460	4,687	14,654	76,912	19.1
002	2,331	1,433	388	1,693	5,845	29,015	20.1
001	1,441	1,901	272	1,643	5,257	26,016	20.2

Note. Data as of May 2017, from Active Duty Master Personnel File, Military Academies.

Further inspection of Table 8 shows a drop in rank occupancy by women as grades increase. The first drastic drop is at the lack of promotion between officer rank O-3 and O-4, where the percentage of representation by female commissioned officers drops 22%. The O-4 rank demarcation is critical in two ways. The first is that, as the officer moves from the company grade level (O-1 to O-3), they theoretically are subject to less scrutiny of their work. The more important issue is that attainment of the rank of O-4 assures that the member, barring gross misconduct, will be allowed to remain in the military long enough to collect a military retirement immediately upon separation from the service. People of this rank are also generally given a broader span of control of people and equipment.

The next sharp drop off in rank occupancy occurs between O-6, the highest field-grade rank, and O-7, the lowest flag or general/admiral rank. The difference between these two ranks is a precipitous 37% drop. As mentioned in Chapter 4, two participants in this study stated they were on track for consideration to flag-level promotion but both chose to have their names removed from consideration. These women stopped believing in the espoused promotion and decided to just leave, in line with Proposition IV of equity theory. They tired of trying to fix an inequitable system and they just wanted to take flight instead of continuing to fight.

When the question was asked if attending a service academy added to the favoritism factors made in selection for promotion and appointment to leadership positions, the answer was “yes” from all study participants. This perception is troubling. . A study conducted by Boyce and Herd (2003) at the Air Force Academy showed that, rather than accepting women as equal with increased proximity, the longer the male

cadets were at the academy, the more misogynistic they became. They left college with a bias against women as leaders.

A Rand report (Kirby et al., 2010) indicated that as of 2010, the percentage of women at the U.S. service academies ranged from 16 to 21%, but the percentage of African Americans ranged from 5 to 6%. The aggregation of the data does not allow insight into the actual number of potential African American female cadets but it is far below the overall 16 to 21% of women if the male and female African American service-academy population is only 5 to 6%. Table 9 shows the number of female cadets/midshipmen at the respective service academies. In light of the small representation of women and African Americans at the service academies, the position of Cadet Simone Askew is more extraordinary.

Table 9

Cadets/Midshipmen at Service Academies

Rank/Grade	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Total	DoD Total	% Women
Military Academy Cadets and Midshipmen	734	892	N/A	796	2,422	9,864	24.55

Note. Data as of May 2017, from Active Duty Master Personnel File, Military Academies

Simone Askew, a female African American cadet at West Point, the U.S. Army service academy, is the first captain and head of the Corps of Cadets (Cochran, 2017). Is her appointment a fluke or an indicator of a changing trend? The answer may lie in the examination of the career of General Edward Rice, Jr., U.S. Air Force. General Rice was the first Black cadet wing commander at the Air Force Academy, graduating in 1978. He was a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Academy, undergraduate pilot training, and Squadron Officer School (in-residence). General Rice's record led Thompson (2016) to dub him "the Air Force's shiniest black penny." General Rice seemed to be on track to

rise all the way to Chief of Staff of the Air Force, but something derailed that trajectory along the way.

Thompson (2016) paralleled General Rice's career with General David Goldfein, the current Chief of Staff of the Air Force. General Goldfein's biography does not list that he was a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Academy, pilot training, or any professional military training. Despite being a consistent distinguished graduate of all types of Air Force training, General Rice was never selected for an intermediate or higher in-residence Air Force PME class. He completed the intermediate level of professional military training by correspondence and was an in-residence distinguished graduate of the Naval War College.

The difference, according to Thompson (2016) is that General Goldfein's pilot training was in fighter jets whereas General Rice was assigned to bomber jets. General Rice was a bomber pilot with all the requisite joint assignments and over 4,000 flying hours. Despite his impressive experience, rather than being placed in charge of an operational unit, his final assignment was as commander of the Air Education and Training Command: a support organization. If an African American male officer with General Rice's credentials could not be selected for operational command, does Cadet Askew really stand a chance of being elevated to top operational roles?

In physics, the definition of critical mass is the amount of material (or people) necessary to sustain a chain reaction at a constant rate (Dictionary.com, 2018.) Extrapolated to military personnel, the question is how many African American female commissioned officers are needed to activate and maintain an unbiased assessment of their demographic? This concept is especially vital when it comes to appointment to

promotion boards. Successful African American women on these boards will be key to informing their fellow selection members why people do not all look alike and why African American hair must be styled differently from western European hair styles.

Research Question 3 responses fell in themes cited in Categories 1, 2, and 3. African American female commissioned officers would not be at the rank to be selected for a promotion board if they had not been mentored. Because more than 50% of African American commissioned officers of both genders are products of HBCUs, they began to understand the importance of a mentor early in their interactions with the ROTC cadre at their schools. Most importantly for this topic, however, is that they need to be forceful in vocalizing objections when their fellow board members voice their opinions about the appearance of a fellow African American female officer based on Anglo-Saxon standards. Last, these members of the board must encourage others to recognize that discrimination and bias exists and proactively work to end it.

Research Question 4: What are some of the challenges African American female commissioned officers have had to overcome in their military career?

This question was used as a prelude to eliciting comments on instances of gender- and race-based discrimination. All military women in this study—those currently serving, separated short of retirement, and retired—proved the initial premise forwarded by the researcher that none wanted to present themselves as less than capable of handling any situation in which they found themselves. This included instances of harassment. The decision was made to discuss the area of race-based discrimination aimed at them first to prevent participants from shutting down before the more personal area of sexual harassment was broached.

Settles, Harrell, Buchanan, and Yap (2011, p. 600) defined gender harassment as "behaviors that disparage an individual on the basis of her or his gender." Two instances cited in Chapter 4 of junior male enlisted people thinking they could flaunt mandatory military customs and courtesies is an indication that even in the current military, some men still consider women to be an auxiliary to the main military organization. To so flagrantly disregards the military rule on saluting, especially when witnesses are present, and to blatantly say they would not take orders from a Black woman are attempts to deny the respect implicit in the rank and are direct affronts to the authority of African American female commissioned officers. Though women are still experiencing these overt manifestations of gender-and race-based discrimination, the more harmful are the covert actions perpetrated.

As mentioned previously, selection for in-residence PME is an indicator for all to see that this officer is being groomed for higher level positions. Every participant felt the effect of being left out of the opportunity to go to in-residence PME and believed that race was a factor in their lack of selection. To those who were promoted to the highest field grade, it was truly a manifestation of the adage that they had to work twice as hard to be considered half as good as their White male cohorts. They addressed overt and subtle indicators that their contributions to the overall mission were not as valued as that of their White male cohorts.

During the second half of the questioning, centered on sexual harassment or assault, all participants were more guarded in answering. Military sexual trauma is defined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as "experiences of sexual assault or

repeated, threatening acts of sexual harassment" that, according to U.S. Code (1720D of Title 38),

> involves psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a VA mental health professional, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the Veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training. (Caplan, 2013, p. 1)

On its face, this definition appears to give the impression that verbal harassment is not included in this category, but Caplan (2013) further included the definition of sexual harassment as "repeated, unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening in character", .

Even though the particulars of the victimization may be identical, the interviews highlighted a conundrum: Why, when facing identical circumstances, would one person take action to stop sexual-harassment actions and the other chose to do nothing? Wright and Fitzgerald (2009) reported that the decision to litigate by reporting or simply accepting the situation depends on the assessment of the perception of the extent of the sexual harassment and the level of trauma associated with it by each individual. Buchanan et al. (2008) stated that lower ranking persons are more often the targets of military sexual harassers. Lower ranking people, unless they have had the benefit of a mentor from the earliest association with the military, would not have a person to advise them on how to react to an inappropriate behavior or what actions to take. Having to handle the harassment and being forced to keep silent at risk of one's career is another consideration to add to the double tribulation they face of being African American women in the military. With this issue, however, they share the problem with women of

other ethnic groups who must face the attempted diminishment of their worth and the sexualization of them rather acceptance as an integral part of the team.

The extent of the sexual harassment that military women members of the Sunshine Club (Chapter 4) endured is exemplified in the recounting of incidents that occurred at a military installation. The particular aspects of the extent of the sexual assault would be hard to believe if it were not documented by civilian sources: the two highest ranking people of the command structure of this base were removed from their position for "bad judgment" (United Press International [UPI], 1982). Grossly inappropriate behavior was normalized by the highest ranking people on the installation who were involved in or had knowledge of people using their rank to coerce young women into sexual relationships. The reason given for removing both officers was "bad judgment" and "loss in confidence in their ability to lead." These are reasons often cited when a military commander is relieved of duty for cause and the military does not want to elaborate on the specifics to the general public.

The United Press International article said the charges of "widespread rumors of improper involvement among the base commanders and various female members" (para 8) were not proven. The person who assumed command after the completion of the headquarters Air Force investigation confirmed the rumor that the two high-ranking officers made it a habit of having "pretty women students assigned to their offices" (para 9). These officers were removed from duty and forced to retire at their highest rank, unlike General Ward. As a result of the probe, they were removed from duty, but the consensus among study members is that others who commit sexual aggression who do not have high-profile duties are allowed to remain in the service to reoffend, according to

two other responders. The women speculated they are merely reassigned to other locations.

In comparing the types of sexual harassment experienced by military women of differing ethnic backgrounds, Buchanan et al. (2008, p. 350) spoke of the paradox of the sexual attention paid to African American women. The Buchanan et al. article named this attention "the Jezebel syndrome." The concept is that African American women should be flattered that a White man of any rank found them attractive. According to the article, the belief is that "Black women are sexually insatiable, promiscuous and morally corrupt" (Buchanan et al., 2008, p. 350). Buchanan (2005) named this type of situation racialized sexual harassment because it incorporates gender and race into the projected actions.

Study participants did not believe they were targeted for increased attention because of race. This is in line with Buchanan et al. (2008) work that stated that the higher in rank, the less chance of military women of any ethnic group being harassed or assaulted. This research area could be filed into Categories 2 and 3. Discrimination, racial and gender based, is a recurring issue in the military. The situation is more manageable if women have a mentor to advise and guide them through the process of reporting and getting out of the situation.

Research Question 5: What recommendations would interviewees offer to African American female commissioned officers aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military?

The final research area was what recommendations participants would make to African American female commissioned officers aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military. Each participant had their own notions but themes that emerged

fit into a narrow area. The most common recommendation was that young women must recognize that the U.S. military is still an organization that is tightly controlled by White men. The successful officer will know that the platitudes of equal opportunity for advancement and promotion based on merit are not the case. They must know how to play the political game and have a mentor to run interference.

Finding a powerful mentor will be hard for African American female commissioned officers because they will have to navigate certain issues. A study participant said, when looking for a mentor, they need to be careful young African American female commissioned officers find someone who wants to help them and not hump them. This distinction may initially be hard to discern because many mentor interactions occur outside of duty hours. Because most powerful mentors in the military would likely be men, the perception of an improper relationship is a realistic problem when trying to avoid perceptions of any impropriety.

Other advice given included highlighting that today's military still holds a misogynistic view of women. Women of all ethnic backgrounds must work harder, smarter, and not make mistakes along the way; this is especially true of African American female commissioned officers. Advice proffered by a former enlisted person who retired at the top of the enlisted ranks and then rose up the levels of DoD civilian hierarchy to the highest level below Senior Executive Service (or the civilian equivalent of general officer) provided sage advice to all junior officers. He advised that "One 'aw shit' wipes out a hundred 'at a boys.'" There is no room for error of any kind, especially for African American female commissioned officers.

The potential successful female commissioned officer must recognize that she is not allowed to let her intimate relationships be known or she will be considered a sexual object. She must, at all times, maintain a personal space that she does not allow anyone to violate so no interaction can be misconstrued.

Conclusions

As of 2013, military women were allowed forward deployment in frontline-combat areas and not constrained to rear support locations. Women could formally be in the fight. With the removal of the exclusion of women from elite special-forces positions in 2015, the last vestige of formalized rationales for excluding women from top levels of command were removed. Although the number of women who will be able to complete the arduous physical and mental requirements to complete the training will be few, the barriers should theoretically be coming down. Will these women who have stayed the course, taken all the right jobs, often in the worst places, and given all of themselves to their jobs decide the sacrifice is too great to go further in the military? Will the U.S. military find itself facing a "brain drain" as women, like the two study participants, decide that going beyond O-6 is not worth the fight?

Will African American female commissioned officers, seeing persistent discrimination based on gender and especially race, reevaluate the merits of staying in the military? Even though all study participants acknowledged that the military is better at promoting equal opportunity, it is still the only place where they can be put in jail for disobeying an order from a person appointed to be a superior. Like the Gilroy et al. (1999) study, African American female commissioned officers still believe that their demographic has the least chance of being fairly evaluated for their contributions to the

military and with it, the attendant promotions and appointments to positions of responsibility. Perceptions by African American female commissioned officer of systemic discrimination are still prevalent and affect how they interact with their colleagues on and off duty. They believe their performance reviews have a racial and gender bias included in the assessments.

Women in the military face challenges their male cohorts do not. The majority of the women in this study had to balance the demands of family, need for stellar job performance, and the requirement to be a part of the military social scene. Many were also required to provide supervisory oversight to every facet of people who are beneath them in the chain of command, adding an additional parental oversight outside of evaluating their on-the-job performance. All these nurturing activities are expected of them at a greater level than their male cohorts because the stereotype of female equates to maternal.

Recommendations to Practice

The most important action that needs to be taken is to broaden the mentorship program. Even though AFCOMAP, ROCKs, and NNOA are reaching some African American female cadets, minority cadets of both genders, especially at primarily White institutions, do not have the benefit of a formalized mentorship program. Institutions should add an additional duty to each ROTC detachment to establish the ongoing task of a first-level mentorship program to give each cadet a network to call upon as they enter military life. Alumni of the individual detachment should be recruited to partner with each graduating cadet with a commitment to be their mentor for a minimum of the first 2 years of active duty.

Beyond the cadet-alumni partnership, each ROTC unit cadre should be informed that their job of preparing cadets for active duty does not stop at commissioning. The cadre should be tasked to be proactive in reaching out to the newly minted second lieutenants to provide a second-level mentoring network to prepare them for success in the military.

The aggregation of demographic data masks the specifics of who is occupying leadership positions. It is not suggested that unqualified persons be assigned to positions of authority but rather the disaggregated data on the demographic breakdown of people in key positions should be easily available. As long as the same demographic of White male with a majority Anglo-Saxon background is the only voice being heard at the highest levels of power, the answers will always be the same. Providing a diversity of viewpoints will result in a more broad-spectrum assessment of issues.

Remove all pictures from promotion and leadership selection boards. Even though regulations specifically prohibit considering demographic information when making selections, it is still a factor. Additionally, all names and other identifying information should be removed from promotion and leadership selection boards. Allowing the duty performance to stand on its own is the sole foundation for selection.

Assignment officers at military personnel centers have a history of giving less weight to the credentials of minority commissioned officers. This category of officers are deemed less meritorious of being assigned to operational career fields by assignment officers who put them further back in the competition for the same recommendations to promotion and leadership selection boards. Masking demographic information from

assignment officers would assist in alleviating unintended and intentional bias in assignments.

Implement an in-depth segment at each senior PME course—in-residence and by distant methods—that directly addresses intentional and unintentional bias and follows through to show how it affects the people involved. Because most people want to be fair, if they are confronted with their biases and realize how discriminatory actions affect their brothers and sisters in arms, they will realize the cost to the military in personnel lost and in reduced productivity.

Ensure that every person who is accused of any infraction anywhere on the spectrum from sexual harassment to sexual assault is thoroughly investigated. Currently, some sexual harassers and assaulters are allowed to leave the military in lieu of punishment without a notation in their record as to the reason. It is easier to have the service member leave than to prosecute, especially if they are at the end of their enlistment time. If the service member had gone through the military judicial system and adjudicated guilty, they would have, at a minimum, the requirement to self-register as a sex offender with whatever state they find domicile under the provisions of the Jacob Wetterling Act of 1994. As not all separated persons want to identify themselves as sexual offenders in the new life they attempt to carve for themselves, automatic entry into the national sexual-abuse database would go far in preventing them from victimizing others.

Cross-demographic cultural awareness is key in equitable assessment. As noted in Chapter 2, the importance of understanding the cultural capital of minority groups is vital. For example, how and why African American female commissioned officers' hair care is

different from Western European women should be better explained. The difference needs to explicitly presented to people in higher enlisted and officer ranks at PME. If the factors are explained, leadership may understand why there is a need to wear certain styles of braids, especially in battlefield locations. Braids are a cultural and practical attempt to provide a neat appearance. The curriculum should also include a primer on how an African American woman style their hair so the realization will be engrained that it is different from western European standards without either being better.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further study should be centered on how the military can best increase the retention of its most valued resource—personnel—by routing out vestiges of systematic discriminatory practices. Much potential is wasted each time a junior officer leaves the military because they have been shunted to the side because they did not fit some preconceived notion of what a leader looks like. A starting place for this study is looking at the sharp drop off of female commissioned officers between the ranks of O-3 to O-4 but especially the precipitous drop between O-6 to O-7.

Another question that needs to be explored is whether all women are considered capable of assignment to operational career fields. Do homosocial reproduction-based assessments of merit impose themselves itself much like they do for male minority officers? With the removal of the combat exclusion, are women being assigned to the operational career fields needed for promotion? To extrapolate the question further, are African American female commissioned officers given the same chances as women of other ethnic backgrounds and especially non-Hispanic White men to be assigned to combat roles and with it the possibility of promotion to the highest ranks? A final

question that must be considered is, are African American female commissioned officers concerned that if they reach the highest levels they will suffer the same fate as General Ward, bringing dishonor to their families?

Concluding Thoughts

The opportunity to talk with so many wonderful women who have been on the journey of navigating service in the U.S. military has been enlightening. Each person with whom I was honored to talk was eager to help others who come behind them to make military life as successful as possible. Even though they may, on the face of it, have appeared to be negative about portions of their service time, on the whole, they saw the military as not only a wonderful way to serve their country, but to hone their skills. As one participant said, "where else will a young person of 22 to 23 years old have the opportunity to be responsible for literally millions of dollars worth of equipment and have numerous people under their direct control."

They, like me, are appreciative of the opportunity to lead from an early age, but all agreed that the military has a blind spot in recognizing that the goal of going from a diverse workforce to a genuinely inclusive one will not be achieved if the cultural capital of all service members is not valued. People are not uniform and application of a strictly western Eurocentric viewpoint will not win global wars. A global enemy requires that a full spectrum global view of the world be applied. Drawing from only one demographic/ethnic outlook will not us enable the U.S. military to remain the best fighting force in the world.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was the source of your commission?
2. If the source of your commission was ROTC, was your school a HBCU?
3. What was your branch of service?
    a. Air Force
    b. Army
    c. Marine Corps
    d. Navy
    e. Coast Guard
4. What is your current military status?
    a. Active Duty
    b. Retired
    c. Separated short of retirement
5. What was your undergraduate degree area?
6. Was your degree a
    a. BS
    b. BA
    c. BFA
    d. Other _____
7. In your estimation, was your initial assignment related to your undergraduate degree?
8. Was your initial assignment your first choice of career specialties?

9. Did you have a mentor at any time during your military service time?

   If no skip to question 10.

   9a. If yes, was your mentor a person of your own racial background?

   9b. Was your mentor assigned or did you come to find each other via other means?

   9c. How long did your mentor relationship last?

   0–3 years

   4–7 years

   10–15 years

   16 years and more

   9d. How did your mentor aid you?

   1. Aided in assignments
   2. Aided in selection to Professional Military Schools
   3. Help you prepare for promotion

10. If not currently active duty, what where the factors that led to your separation?

    Check all that apply

    a. Reduction in Forces
    b. Retirement
    c. Weight/physical fitness standards
    d. Projected next assignment
    e. Uncomfortable workplace (physical/sexual/mental harassment)
    f. Health
    g. Family responsibilities

h. Didn't want to move again

i. Civilian job potential

11. Have you or anyone you know experienced overt or covert racial discrimination while in the military?

11a. If the answer to question 11 was yes, was the discrimination:

a. Overt

b. Covert

11b. Select all that apply. If the answer to question 11 was yes, did it affect your/their

a. Job performance

b. Promotion

c. Assignment

d. Health

11c. Was the discrimination reported or known by higher ranking persons in your chain of command?

11d. If yes, was/were the perpetrators of the discrimination brought to account for their action(s)?

11e. Did you or the person you know suffer from retribution/retaliation as a result of the discriminatory practices being made known to superiors or the EEO office?

11f. If the answer to question 11e was yes, what form did the retribution/ retaliation take?

1. Increased unwanted attention

2. Verbal defamation/libel
3. Blocking opportunities for promotion/PME/assignment

12. Have you or anyone you know been the focus of unwanted sexual attention anywhere on the spectrum from subtle verbal sexual harassment through the spectrum of sexual assault? Please select all that apply.

a. Subtle verbal sexual innuendos
b. Overt sexual innuendos
c. Subtle verbal sexual harassment
d. Overt verbal sexual harassment
e. Intimation of suggestions of favorable assignments/performance reports/selection for PME in exchange for sexual intimacies
f. Unwanted touch that you construed as sexually based
g. Sexual assault

12a. Select all that apply. If the answer to question 12 was yes, did it affect your/their

1. Job performance
2. Promotion
3. Assignment
4. Health

12b. Was the harassment reported to or known by higher ranking persons in your chain of command?

12c. If the answer to 12b is yes, was/were the perpetrators of the harassment brought to account for their action(s)?

12d. Did you or the person you know suffer from retribution/retaliation as a result of the harassment being made known to superiors or the EEO office?

12e. If the answer to question 12d was yes, what form did the retribution/ retaliation take?

1. Increased unwanted attention
2. Verbal defamation/libel
3. Blocking opportunities for promotion/PME/assignment

12f. Was the perpetrator of the offenses of your own or another ethnic/racial group?

13. If you or someone you know experienced uncomfortable situations based on your race and gender did you have a support system to help you through.
14. Regardless of whether you experienced discrimination or any form of harassment, did you have an extended support system such as: (Select all that apply)
    a. ROTC staff
    b. Informal social group of military personnel
    c. Family
    d. Faith community
15. Do you believe there was a stratification (pecking order) of assignments, PME or promotion recommendations and awards? Yes/No
16. If you chose yes for question 15, what are the factors that determined the stratification (select all the apply)?

a. Source of commission
b. Gender
c. Race
d. Socialization with superiors
e. Residence of Distance PME
f. Job performance
g. Physical fitness performance
h. Appearance

17. Do believe that women of color; whether Black or Brown, were evaluated and provided opportunities for leadership and promotion on par with their White male counterparts?
18. Please provide your assessment of this statement. “The US military is a true gender and color blind organization and anyone who works hard, regardless of color or gender, has an equal opportunity to be promoted and assume leadership.”

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Perspective Participant
Perception of African American Female
Commissioned Officer Study

Dear Perspective Participant,

By way of introduction I am Beverly Henderson Davis, USAF (retired) and I am a doctoral student at the University of San Francisco. For my dissertation research area I have chosen an area of concern I have had since I was an active member of the U.S. military, is there a different evaluation used for African American female commissioned officers than that which is used for other groups. As I have done research on this topic I find that there have not been recent studies conducted by persons or organizations outside of the military. For this reason, and also to highlight concerns of this demographic, I am conducting this study to look into this topic.

I ask that you would consent to be a part of my study. Your participation would consist of allowing me to interview you about your perceptions of your military experiences. There are no right or wrong answers and the interview is projected to take approximately 60 – 90 minutes. The interviews would be conducted either via telephone or videoconference at your discretion. I would need to conduct the interviews in the December, 2017 through February, 2018 timeframe to allow me sufficient time to compile all the answers collected and analyze the data for a final report.

I would like to assure you that your anonymity throughout this process will be protected. A unique identification code will be assigned to each participant that will not be associated with any identifiable demographic information to mask your identity. Until the data is analyzed it will be kept in a locked storage container under my control at all times and once the study is complete all source documentation will be destroyed.

Because the larger the number of persons who are in the study the greater will be the validity and strength of the study, I ask that in addition to your participation you would solicit persons in the demographic known by you to also participate. I ask that you would forward this letter to persons known to you and ask them to respond to the e-mail address established for this study, aafcoresearch@gmail.com as soon as possible so that I may reach out to them to schedule an interview. Please feel free to contact me at this e-mail address at any time with your questions or concerns about this research. It is hoped that this study will be the foundation for further work to be used in improving opportunities for current and future African American female commissioned officer in the U.S. military.

Thanking you in advance,

Beverly Henderson Davis

APPENDIX C

VALIDATION PANEL REQUEST

November 7, 2017

Perspective Panel Member
Perception of African American Female Commissioned Officer Study

Dear Perspective Participant,

This letter serves to confirm your agreement to serve on the Validation Panel for the interview questions I have created for my dissertation research in the area of African American commissioned officers in the United States military. This research is especially needed as the statistical data shows that despite African American women being the largest proportionate ethnic group to join the military, this demographic is not reflective of the occupancy of leadership positions at the top of the rank structure in the military.

Attached are the topic areas/interview validation rubric that you can use in your evaluation of the questions I have designed. As we discussed, the questions have been structured in a way that will most likely elicit honest answers from the participants in the research study. African American female commissioned officers have a double burden of always being strong and not showing vulnerability in order to survive and flourish in the male dominated environment of the military and for this reason will be overly cautious in answering direct questions.

I would truly appreciate if you would return the attached Interview Validation Rubric to me by Monday, November 20, 2017 in the self addressed envelope or via return e-mail (aafcoresearch@gmail.com). Thank you in advance for your help in validating the questions for my research study. I value your experience and expertise in the area of perceptions of a career female commissioned officer in the U.S. military.

Sincerely,

Beverly H. Davis, USAF (Retired)

3 Attachments:
1. Purpose of the Study
2. Evaluation Rubric
3. Interview Questions

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of African American female officers in the U.S. military concerning the equity of the promotion and selection for leadership system. This study will solicit perceptions from current, retired and separated short of retirement female African American commissioned military officers to determine if the study participants believe there are disparate opportunities for promotion and leadership within the U.S. military based on gender and race. Previous studies have indicated that even though the military has made strides toward the implementation of programs and practices to ensure selection for advancement was strictly merit-based, African American female officers have the least trust in this being true. This research will assess the current perceptions of equity regardless of gender and ethnic background.

A Public Broadcasting Service report (Sagalyn, D., 2011) surmises that even though the overall military officer corps is far more representational of the ethnic makeup of the U.S. than private sector corporations, this becomes much less the case as you look at who occupies the highest ranks. There is an inverse minority representation as rank increases. This study will research the perceptions of African American female commissioned officers as to whether the U.S. military is achieving their goal. The officers will be asked to share their insight into where the military is currently on this continuum and the factors that support their opinion.

ATTACHMENT 1

Research question	Interview question	Rationale for asking question
What work or life experiences have contributed to your success in the military?	1)What was the source of your commission?	The choice of career fields and assignment location is often based on the source of commission
	2)If the source of your commission was ROTC, was your school a HBCU?	Officers commissioned from HBCUs are considered deficit (Smith, 2010) in leadership and officership skills.
	3)What was your branch of service?	The Army has the highest representation of minority officers followed by the Navy, then the Air Force and lastly Marine Corps.
	4)What is your current military status?	Will determine their outlook on the military and may how willing they are to be honest
	5)What was your undergraduate degree area?	Minority women are heavily concentrated in non-technical career fields. As the services become more technologically based, the non-technical officers are more susceptible to reduction in forces
	6)Was your degree a BS/BA/BFA/Other?	The degree will determine the career assignment
	7) In your estimation, was your initial assignment related to your undergraduate degree?	This can determine a satisfaction with the career field assigned
	10) If not currently active duty, what where the factors that led to your separation? Check all that apply	Women and minorities leave at a higher rate than white men.
Do you believe that race and/or gender of African American female officers has played a role in their selection for promotions and leadership positions?	9) Did you have a mentor at any time during your military service time?	Research has shown that having a mentor has a positive effect on selection for promotion and leadership. Cross gender race mentorships are not the norm so in a male dominated arena like the military it is more difficult for a woman to have a mentor
	15) Do you believe there was a stratification (pecking order) of assignments, PME or promotion recommendations and awards?	Historically, the best perks of being an officer went to graduates of the service academies. African American women are poorly represented as cadets at the service academies and less likely to get the perks.

Table continues

Research question	Interview question	Rationale for asking question
	16) If you chose yes for question 15, what are the factors that determined the stratification?	
Has race and/or gender been a factor in your military career?	11) Have you or anyone you know experienced overt or covert racial discrimination while in the military?	In a male dominated organization, the way a woman is perceived by her peers and superiors is a determinant to the opportunities given to lead
Have you had challenges to overcome in your military career that were unlike persons from other demographics?	12) Have you or anyone you know been the focus of unwanted sexual attention anywhere on the spectrum from subtle verbal sexual harassment through the spectrum of sexual assault?	Another opportunity to elaborate on their situation. There is a phenomenon known as the Black Jezebel where African American women are more believed to be more promiscuous and welcoming of sexual advances than other demographics.
	13) If you or someone you know experienced uncomfortable situations based on your race and gender did you have a support system to help you through?	Provides an opportunity to discuss support systems used to weather bad times
	14) Regardless of whether you experienced discrimination or any form of harassment, did you have an extended support system?	
	17) Do believe that women of color; whether Black or Brown, are evaluated and provided opportunities for leadership and promotion on par with their White male counterparts?	The Gilroy et al. (1997) study and work by Moore (1991) says that more than any other demographic, African American female commissioned officers have the least trust in a truly equitable military promotion system.
What recommendations would you make to AA female aspiring to advance to leadership positions in the military?	18) Please provide your assessment of this statement. "The US military is a true gender and color blind organization and anyone who works hard, regardless of color or gender, has an equal opportunity to be promoted and assume leadership."	

ATTACHMENT 2

Criteria	Operational Definitions	Score
Clarity	- Questions are related to research	
Wording	- Questions are concise - Questions are posed in a positive manner	
Balance	- Questions are unbiased - Questions do not lead subject to an answer	
Use of Military Terms is Warranted	- The use of jargon is minimal	
Relationship to Problem	- The questions will allow the researcher to answer the research question - The questions will allow the researcher to achieve the purpose of the study	

Scoring Key:
1 – Somewhat Effective (some modifications needed)
2 – Effective (no modifications needed but could be improved with minor changes)
3 – Highly Effective (no modifications needed)

AIR FORCE GROOMING REGULATION
AFI 36-2903

Chapter 3

GROOMING AND APPEARANCE STANDARDS

3.1. Personal Grooming Standards. This chapter outlines personal grooming while wearing any Air Force uniform or civilian clothing in an official capacity. Commander's discretion may be used to determine if individual's personal grooming is within standards of this instruction. Commanders do *not* have authority to waive grooming and appearance standards except as identified in this instruction. The personal grooming standards listed are minimum standards that represent common appearance issues and are *not* all-inclusive. Although Airmen have the right, within established limits, to express their individuality through their appearance, the Air Force has defined what is and what is not an acceptable, professional military image for Airmen. Except for minor variations based on gender differences, all Air Force personnel must comply with the same personal grooming standards. Supervisors have the responsibility to determine compliance with the letter and intent of this AFI and to correct the obvious violations regardless of whether the situation identified is clearly written in this AFI.

3.1.1. Hair-male and female. Will be clean, well-groomed, present a professional appearance, allow proper wear of headgear, helmet or chemical mask and conform to safety requirements. Will *not* contain excessive amounts of grooming aids (e.g. gel, mousse, pomade, and moisturizer), appear lopsided, touch either eyebrow, or end below an imaginary line across the forehead at the top of the eyebrows that is parallel to the ground. If applied, dyes, tints, bleaches and frostings must result in natural hair colors. The hair color must complement the member's complexion and skin tone. Examples of natural hair colors are brown, blonde, brunette, natural red, black or grey. Prohibited examples (*not* all inclusive) are burgundy, purple, orange, fluorescent or neon colors. Commander may temporarily authorize cancer patients to wear approved caps (black/tan) or maintain baldness due to a temporary medical condition (i.e., radiation/chemotherapy).

3.1.1.1. Wigs/Hairpieces/Extensions. Are authorized and will meet the same standard required for natural hair, be of good quality, fit properly, and comply with safety, functionality and professionalism. (Note: Extensions are still prohibited for males.) Wigs/Hairpieces/Extensions will *not* be used to cover unauthorized hair styles. Synthetic hair or other materials are *not* authorized when prohibited by safety and mission requirements.

3.1.1.2. Hair-Nets. Worn as required for health or safety reasons. Made of natural or a synthetic material; must be conservative (plain and moderate, being within reasonable limits; not excessive or extreme), solid color similar to the member's hair color, also strong enough to support and control hair and contain no metal fasteners. Hair-nets are only authorized when performing related duties.

of the neck to touch the collar. Hair will not touch the ears or protrude under the front band of headgear. Cleanly shaven heads, military high-and-tight or flat-top cuts are authorized. Prohibited examples (*not* all inclusive) are Mohawk, mullet, cornrows, dreadlocks or etched design. Men are *not* authorized hair extensions. See **Figure 3.1** for sideburns, mustache and beard and for graphic examples of male hair standards.

3.1.2.1. Sideburns. If worn, sideburns will be straight and even width (not flared), and will not extend below the bottom of the orifice of the ear opening. Sideburns will end in a clean-shaven horizontal line. See **Figure 3-1,** orifice of the ear opening is at reference point A.

3.1.2.2. Mustaches. Male Airmen may have mustaches; however they will be conservative (moderate, being within reasonable limits; not excessive or extreme) and will not extend downward beyond the lip line of the upper lip or extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from both corners of the mouth. See **Figure 3-1,** reference points B, C, and D.

3.1.2.3. Beards. Beards are not authorized (exception in **paragraph 3.1.2.3.1**) unless for medical reasons, when authorized by a commander on the advice of a medical official. If commander authorizes, members will keep all facial hair trimmed not to exceed 1⁄4 inch in length. Individuals granted a shaving waiver will not shave or trim any facial hair in such a manner as to give a sculptured appearance. Commanders and supervisors will monitor progress in treatment to control these waivers. If necessary for medical reasons, facial hair will be kept neat and conservative (moderate, being within required limits (not more than 1⁄4 inch); not excessive or extreme), as defined by the local commander.

3.1.2.3.1. During tours of less than 30 days, Air Force Reserve (AFR) and Air National Guard (ANG) chaplains not on extended active duty may request a beard waiver for religious observance when consistent with their faith. For AFR waiver processing instructions see AFMAN 36-8001, *Participation and Training Procedures*. For ANG waiver process instructions contact ANG/HC.

3.1.3. Hair-Female. Minimum hair length is 1⁄4 inch, to a maximum bulk of three inches from scalp and allows proper wear of headgear. Hair will end above the bottom edge of collar and will not extend below an invisible line drawn parallel to the ground, both front to back and side to side. Bangs, or side-swiped hair will *not* touch either eyebrow, to include an invisible line drawn across eyebrows and parallel to the ground. See Figure 3.4. When in

doubt, assess correct length of hair with Airman standing in the position of attention. ***Exception:*** While wearing the Physical Training Uniform (PTU), long hair will be secured but may have loose ends and may extend below the bottom edge of the collar.

3.1.3.1. The intent is for pinned-up hair to be styled in a manner that prevents loose ends from extending upward on the head. For example, when using a clip or hairpins, hair will *not* present the appearance of a ―rooster tail. When hair is in a bun, the bun must be a single bun; no wider than the width of the head and all loose ends must be tucked in and secured. When hair is in a ponytail, it must be a single ponytail; that does not exceed bulk and length standards and does not extend below the bottom of the collar (except while in the PTU). As with all hairstyles, a neat and professional image is essential.

3.1.3.2. Hair accessories. If worn, fabric scrunchies, hairpins, combs, clips, headbands, elastic bands and barrettes must match the hair color (i.e., blonde, brunette, natural red, black, and grey). Hair must still comply with bulk and appearance standards. Headgear must fit properly. Headbands or fabric scrunchies will not exceed one-inch in width. Ornaments are *not* authorized (i.e., ribbons, beads, jeweled pins). See Figure 3.5 (photo of scrunchie)

3.1.3.3. Braids, twists, micro-braids, French braids, Dutch braids and cornrows are authorized. A braid or twist is two or more portions of interwoven hair. If adding additional hair, it must be a natural looking color, similar to the individual's hair color. It must be conservative (moderate, being within reasonable limits; not excessive or extreme) and not present a faddish appearances. Hair must not exceed bulk and length standards and must not extend below the bottom of the collar (see figure 3.6). Headgear must fit properly.

3.1.3.3.1. All braids/twists, when worn will be of uniform dimension, no wider than one inch, with natural spacing between the braids/twists and must be tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional and well-groomed appearance. When worn, multiple braids shall be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (approx. 1⁄4 inches), show no more than 1⁄4 inch of scalp between the braids and must be tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional appearance. A braid/twist must continue to the end of the hair without design and following the contour of the head, and may be worn loose or in a secured style within hair standards in paragraph 3.1.3 above. ***Exception***: Micro-braids or twists are not required to continue to the end of the hair.

3.1.3.4. Unauthorized: Locs and shaved heads. Locs are defined as portions of hair that have been intentionally or unintentionally fused together to form a loc or locs. Shaved heads are defined as complete removal of all hair to the skin on the head or portions of the head. See figure 3.7

3.1.3.5. Hair color, highlights, lowlights, and frosting will *not* be faddish or extreme and will be natural looking hair color, similar to the individual’s hair color (e.g. black, brunette, blond, natural red, and grey).

3.1.4. Body Hair. Female Airmen will remove leg hair that is visibly protruding beyond the appropriate hosiery or causes a visibly uneven texture under hosiery.

APPENDIX E
ARMY GROOMING REGULATION AR 670-1

Chapter 3
Appearance and Grooming Policies

3–1. Personal appearance policies

a. Soldiers will present a professional image at all times and will continue to set the example in military presence, both on and off duty. Pride in appearance includes Soldiers' physical fitness and adherence to acceptable weight standards in accordance with AR 600–9.

b. A vital ingredient of the Army's strength and military effectiveness is the pride and self-discipline that American Soldiers bring to their Service through a conservative military image. It is the responsibility of commanders to ensure that military personnel under their command present a neat and soldierly appearance. Therefore, in the absence of specific procedures or guidelines, commanders must determine a Soldier's compliance with standards in this regulation.

c. The Army uniform regulations for standards of personal appearance and grooming are as specific as is practicable in order to establish the parameters with which Soldiers must comply.

d. Soldiers may wear religious apparel, articles, or jewelry with the uniform, to include the physical fitness uniform, as authorized by paragraph 3–15 of this regulation. Requests for other religious accommodations related to the wear and

appearance of the uniform, personal appearance, and personal grooming practices must be submitted in accordance with, AR 600–20. Wear and appearance standards for Soldiers with approved religious accommodations for hijabs, beards, and turbans are provided in paragraph 3–16.

e. Portions of this chapter are punitive. Violation of the specific prohibitions and requirements set forth in this chapter may result in adverse administrative action and/or charges under the provision of the UCMJ.

3–2. Hair and fingernail standards and grooming policies

Note. This paragraph is punitive with regard to Soldiers. Violation by Soldiers may result in adverse administrative action and/or charges under the provisions of the UCMJ.

a. *Hair.*
(1) *General.* The requirement for hair grooming standards is necessary to maintain uniformity within a military population. Many hairstyles are acceptable, as long as they are neat and conservative. It is the responsibility of leaders at all levels to exercise good judgment when enforcing Army policy. All Soldiers will comply with hair, fingernail, and grooming policies while in any military uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty.

(a) Leaders will judge the appropriateness of a particular hairstyle by the guidance in this chapter and by the ability to wear all types of headgear (such as beret, patrol cap, or service cap/hat) and any protective equipment (such as protective mask or combat helmet) properly. Hairstyles (including bulk and length of hair) that do not allow Soldiers to wear any headgear properly, or that interfere with the proper wear of any protective equipment, are prohibited. Headgear will fit snugly and comfortably, without bulging or distortion from the intended shape of the headgear and without excessive gaps between the headgear and the head. Hairstyles that pose a health or safety hazard are not authorized.

(b) Extreme, eccentric, or faddish haircuts or hairstyles are not authorized. If Soldiers use dyes, tints, or bleaches, they must choose a natural hair color. Colors that detract from a professional military appearance are prohibited. There- fore, Soldiers must avoid using colors that result in an extreme appearance. Applied hair colors that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright (fire-engine) red, and fluorescent

or neon colors. It is the responsibility of leaders to use good judgment in determining if applied colors are acceptable, based upon the over- all effect on a Soldier's appearance.

(c) Soldiers who have a texture of hair that does not part naturally may cut a part into the hair or style the hair with one part. The part will be one straight line, not slanted or curved, and will fall in the area where the Soldier would normally part the hair. Soldiers will not shape or cut designs into their hair or scalp.

(2) *Male haircuts.* The hair on top of the head must be neatly groomed. The length and bulk of the hair may not be excessive and must present a neat and conservative appearance. The hair must present a tapered appearance. A tapered appearance is one where the outline of the Soldier's hair conforms to the shape of the head (see scalp line in fig 3–1), curving inward to the natural termination point at the base of the neck. When the hair is combed, it will not fall over the ears or eyebrows, or touch the collar, except for the closely cut hair at the back of the neck. The block-cut fullness in the back is permitted to a moderate degree, as long as the tapered look is maintained. Males are not authorized to wear braids, cornrows, twists, dreadlocks, or locks while in uniform or in civilian clothes on duty. Haircuts with a single, untapered patch of hair on the top of the head (not consistent with natural hair loss) are considered eccentric and are not authorized. Examples include, but are not limited to, when the head is shaved around a strip of hair down the center of the head (mohawk), around a u-shaped hair area (horseshoe), or around a patch of hair on the front top of the head (tear drop). Hair that is completely shaved or trimmed closely to the scalp is authorized. (See figs 3–1 and 3–2.)

(a) *Sideburns.* Sideburns are hair grown in front of the ear and below the point where the top portion of the ear attaches to the head. Sideburns will not extend below the bottom of the opening of the ear (see line A of fig 3–1). Side- burns will not be styled to taper, flair, or come to a point. The length of the individual hairs of the sideburn will not exceed 1/8 inch when fully extended.

(b) *Facial hair.* Males will keep their face clean-shaven when in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty. Mustaches are permitted. If worn, males will keep mustaches neatly trimmed, tapered, and tidy. Mustaches will not present a chopped off or bushy appearance, and no portion of the mustache will cover the upper lip line, extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth (see lines C and D of fig 3–1), or extend above a parallel line at the lowest portion of the nose (see line B of fig 3–1). Handlebar mustaches, goatees, and beards are not authorized. If appropriate medical authority allows beard growth, the maximum length authorized for medical treatment must be specific. For example, "The length of the beard cannot exceed 1/4 inch" (see TB Med 287). Soldiers will keep the growth trimmed to the level specified by the appropriate medical authority, but are not authorized to shape the hair growth (examples include, but are not limited to, goatees, "Fu Manchu," or handlebar mustaches).

(c) *Wigs and hairpieces.* Males are prohibited from wearing wigs or hairpieces while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty, except to cover natural baldness or physical disfiguration caused by accident or medical procedure. When worn, wigs or hairpieces will conform to the standard haircut criteria, as stated within this regulation.

(3) *Female haircuts and hairstyles.* The illustrations provided in figure 3–4 are intended only to clarify language regarding authorized hair lengths and bulks. The requirements for hair regulations are to maintain uniformity within a military population for female Soldiers while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty, unless otherwise specified. Fe- male hairstyles may not be eccentric or faddish and will present a conservative, professional appearance. For the purpose of these regulations, female hairstyles are organized into three basic categories: short length, medium length, and long length hair.

(a) *Short length.* Short hair is defined as hair length that extends no more than 1 inch from the scalp (excluding bangs). Hair may be no shorter than 1/4 inch from the scalp (unless due to medical condition or injury), but may be evenly tapered to the scalp within 2 inches of the hair line edges. Bangs, if worn, may not fall below the eyebrows, may not interfere with the wear of all headgear, must lie neatly against the head, and not be visible underneath the front of the headgear. The width of the bangs may extend to the hairline at the temple.

(b) *Medium length.* Medium hair is defined as hair length that does not extend beyond the lower edge of the collar (in all uniforms), and extends more than 1 inch from the scalp. Medium hair may fall naturally in uniform, and is not required to be secured. When worn loose, graduated hair styles are acceptable, but the length, as measured from the end of the total hair length to the base of the collar, may not exceed 1 inch difference in length, from the front to the back. Layered hairstyles are also authorized, so long as each hair's length, as measured from the scalp to the hair's end, is generally the same length giving a tapered appearance. The regulations for the wear of bangs detailed in paragraph 3–2*a*(a), apply. No portion of the bulk of the hair, as measured from the scalp, will exceed 2 inches.

(c) *Long length.* Long hair is defined as hair length that extends beyond the lower edge of the collar. Long hair will be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned above the lower edge of the collar (except when worn in accordance with para 3–2*a*(j)), except that bangs may be worn. The regulations for the wear of bangs detailed in paragraph 3– 2*a*(3)(*a*) apply. No portion of the bulk of the hair, as measured from the scalp as styled, will exceed 2 inches (except a bun, which is worn on the back of the head and may extend a maximum of 3 1/2 inches from the scalp and be no wider than the width of the head).

(d) *Additional hairstyle guidelines.* Faddish and exaggerated styles, to include shaved portions of the scalp other than the neckline, designs cut in the hair, unsecured ponytails (except during physical training), and unbalanced or lop- sided hairstyles are prohibited. Hair will be styled so as not to interfere with the proper wear of all uniform headgear. All headgear will fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without bulging or distortion from the in- tended shape of the headgear and without excessive gaps. When headgear is worn, hair should not protrude at distinct angles from under the edges. Hairstyles that do not allow the headgear to be worn in this manner are prohibited. Examples of hairstyles considered to be faddish or exaggerated and thus not authorized for wear while in uniform or in civilian clothes on duty include, but are not limited to hair sculpting (eccentric texture or directional flow of any hairstyle to include spiking); buns with loose hair extending at the end; hair styles with severe angles or designs; and loose unsecured hair (not to include bangs) when medium and long hair are worn up.

(e) *Devices.* Hair holding devices are authorized only for the purpose of securing the hair. Soldiers will not place hair holding devices in the hair for decorative purposes. All hair holding devices must be plain and of a color as close to the Soldier's hair as is possible or clear. Authorized devices include, but are not limited to, small plain scrunchies (elastic hair bands covered with material), barrettes, combs, pins, clips, rubber bands, and hair/head bands. Such devices should conform to the natural shape of the head. Devices that are conspicuous, excessive, or decorative are prohibited. Some examples of prohibited devices include, but are not limited to: large, lacy scrunchies; beads, bows, or claw or alligator clips; clips, pins, or barrettes with butterflies, flowers, sparkles, gems, or scalloped edges; and bows made from hair- pieces. Foreign material (for example, beads and decorative items) will not be used in the hair. Soldiers may not wear hairnets unless they are required for health or safety reasons, or in the performance of duties (such as those in a dining facility). No other type of hair covering is authorized in lieu of the hairnet. The commander will provide the hairnet at no cost to the Soldier.

(f) *Braids, cornrows, twists, and locks.* Medium and long hair may be styled with braids, cornrows, twists, or locks (see glossary for definitions). Each braid, cornrow, twist, or lock will be of uniform dimension, have a diameter no greater than 1/2 inch, and present a neat, professional, and well-groomed appearance. Each must have the same approximate size of spacing between the braids, cornrows, twists, or locks. Each hairstyle may be worn against the scalp or loose (free-hanging). When worn loose, such hairstyles must be worn per medium hair length guidelines or secured to the head in the same manner as described for medium or long length hair styles. Ends must be secured inconspicuously. When multiple loose braids, twists or locks are worn, they must encompass the whole head. When braids, cornrows, twists, or locks are not worn loosely and instead worn close to the scalp, they must stop at one consistent location of the head and must follow the natural direction of the hair when worn back, which is either in general straight lines following the shape of the head or flowing with the natural direction of the hair when worn back with one primary part in the hair (see para 3–2*a*(1)(*c*)). Hairstyles may not be styled with designs, sharply curved lines, or zigzag lines. Only one distinctive style (braided, rolled, twisted, or locked) may be worn at one time. Braids, cornrows, twists, or locks that distinctly protrude (up or out) from the head are not authorized. The bulk of the hair may not be such that it impairs the ability to wear the advanced combat helmet (ACH) or other protective equipment or impedes the ability to operate one's assigned weapon, military equipment, or machinery. A fully

serviceable ACH including all of its component parts must be worn in accord- ance with its technical manual to ensure a proper fit for safety.

Figure 3–1. Measurement figure

(g) *Hair extensions.* Hair extensions are authorized. Extensions must have the same general appearance as the individual's natural hair and otherwise conform to this regulation.

(h) *Wigs.* Wigs, if worn in uniform or in civilian clothes on duty, must look natural and conform to this regulation. Wigs are not authorized to cover up unauthorized hairstyles.

(i) *Physical training.* Long length hair, as defined in paragraph 3–2*a*(3)(*c*), may be worn in a ponytail during physical training. A single pony tail centered on the back of the head is authorized in physical fitness uniforms only when within the scope of physical training, except when considered a safety hazard. The pony tail is not required to be worn above the collar. When hair securing devices are worn, they will comply with the guidelines set in paragraph 3–2*a*(3)(*e*). Hairstyles otherwise authorized in this chapter (such as braids, twists, and locks) may also be worn in a pony tail during physical training.

(j) *Physical training in utility uniforms.* Pony tails are authorized using guidelines set forth in paragraph 3–2*a*(3)(*j*), while conducting physical training in utility uniforms. However, if the helmet is worn during physical training, hair must be secured using guidelines in paragraph 3–2*a*(3)(*a*) through (k).

b. *Cosmetics.*
(1) Standards regarding cosmetics are necessary to maintain uniformity and to avoid an extreme or unprofessional

appearance. Males are prohibited from wearing cosmetics, except when medically prescribed. Females are authorized to wear cosmetics with all uniforms, provided they are applied modestly and conservatively, and that they complement both the Soldier's complexion and the uniform. Leaders at all levels must exercise good judgment when interpreting and en- forcing this policy.

(2) Eccentric, exaggerated, or faddish cosmetic styles and colors, to include makeup designed to cover tattoos, are inappropriate with the uniform and are prohibited. Permanent makeup, such as eyebrow or eyeliner, is authorized as long as the makeup conforms to the standards outlined above. Eyelash extensions are not authorized unless medically pre- scribed.

(3) Females will not wear shades of lipstick that distinctly contrast with the natural color of their lips, that detract from the uniform, or that are faddish, eccentric, or exaggerated.

(4) Females will comply with the cosmetics policy while in any military uniform or while in civilian clothes on duty.
c. *Fingernails.* All personnel will keep fingernails clean and neatly trimmed. Males will keep nails trimmed so as not to extend beyond the fingertip unless medically required and are not authorized to wear nail polish. Females will not exceed a nail length of 1⁄4 inch as measured from the tip of the finger. Females will trim nails shorter if the commander determines that the longer length detracts from a professional appearance, presents a safety concern, or interferes with the performance of duties. Females may only wear clear polish when in uniform or while in civilian clothes on duty. Females may wear

clear acrylic nails, provided they have a natural appearance and conform to Army standards.
d. *Hygiene and body grooming.* Soldiers will maintain good personal hygiene and grooming on a daily basis and wear

the uniform so as not to detract from their overall military appearance.

APPENDIX F
COAST GUARD GROOMING REGULATIONS COMSTINST M1020.6I

2.B. Grooming Standards

Grooming standards are based on several elements including neatness, cleanliness, safety, military image, and appearance. Forms of altering an individual's appearance, such as the use of cosmetics, hair color or styles, colored contact lenses, fingernail color and length, tattoos, body piercing, branding, intentional scarring, etc., that are not in the keeping with the customs, traditions, and spirit of military appearance are not acceptable for Coast Guard personnel in uniform. It is the member's responsibility to confirm identity with their official ID card. It is impossible to provide examples of every appropriate or unacceptable hairstyle or "conservative" or "eccentric" grooming, therefore the good judgment of leaders at all levels is key to upholding the Coast Guard grooming policy. The appropriateness of a hairstyle shall also be judged by its appearance when headgear is worn. All headgear shall fit snugly, properly, and comfortably on the head without distortion or excessive gaps. Hair shall not be visible below the front brim (combination or ball cap) or extend beyond the forward point of the garrison cap.

The Superintendent, Coast Guard Academy; Commanding Officer of Training Center Cape May; and Commander, Telecommunication and Information Systems Command (parent command for Coast Guard Honor Guard) are authorized to establish more restrictive grooming standards for cadets, officer candidates, enlisted recruits, members of the training command's permanent party, and Honor Guard members. Restrictive grooming standards are not applicable to tenant commands of the units authorized to establish such restrictive standards. The table below describes general grooming requirements.

Grooming Item	Policy
Hair – Overall	• • Must be clean, well groomed, and neat. • • Hair coloring, if used, must look natural. Unnatural colored hair (e.g. pink, purple, green, two-tone black/blonde) is not authorized. Non-distracting mild highlights that are well blended are authorized. • • Must not touch eyebrows when groomed, or extend below front of properly worn headgear. • • Must not have shaved decorative patterns or sections on the scalp. • • Must not contain ornamentation other than prescribed in this section for women's hair style.

Hair – Men Only	• • Hair above the ears and around the neck will be tapered from the lower natural hairline upwards at least 3/4-inch and outward not greater than 3/4-inch to blend with hairstyle. A totally clean, shaven scalp is authorized. • • Hair will not be blocked across the back of the neck. • • Hair on the back of the neck must not touch the collar. The bulk of hair must not be more than 1-1/2 inches from scalp. Braids, micro-braids, or other methods of combining strands of hair are not authorized. • • Hair will be no longer than 4 inches and may not touch the ears, collar, extend below eyebrows when headgear is removed, show under the front edge of headgear, or interfere with properly worn military headgear or safety gear.

Grooming Item	Policy
Hair – Women Only	• • Must be clean, well groomed, and neat. Hair coloring, if used, must look natural. Must not have shaved decorative patterns or sections on the scalp. • • Must not contain ornamentation other than prescribed in this section for women's hair styles.
Examples of some authorized women's hair styles:	All haircuts and styles will present a balanced, neat, professional, and well groomed appearance. • • The hair may touch, but not fall below a horizontal level with the bottom edge of the back shirt or Jacket collar, except the foul weather parka. • • Hair (to include bangs) will not extend below the eyebrows. • • No portion of the bulk of the hair as measured from the scalp will exceed two inches. • • Hair accessories shall not add more than two inches of bulk or interfere with the proper wearing of all style Caps (to include the use of a hair sock). Hair that would normally fall below the lower edge of the collar, and all ponytails or braids, regardless of length, shall be neatly and inconspicuously fastened, pinned or secured to the head. When a hairstyle of multiple braids, micro braids, hair extensions, or weave is worn, it must stay with in uniform standards and will be of small diameter (approximately 1/4-inch or less) and in uniform dimension. Braid ends will be secured only with inconspicuous material that matches the color of the hair. Micro braids, extensions, and weaves may extend out from the scalp.

Examples of some authorized women's hair styles (continued):	Hairpins (bobby pins), small barrettes, elastic bands, small plain scrunchies (elastic bands covered with material not to exceed one inch in width), and small combs that are plain black, navy blue, brown, or color similar to the individual's hair are authorized. The following hairstyles are not authorized: • • Lopsided hairstyles • • Extremely asymmetrical hairstyles • • Single braid that goes down one side of the head • • Widely spaced individual hanging locks • • Pigtails that protrude from the head

COMDTINST M1020.6I

Some examples of not authorized accessories and/or devices:	The following hair accessories are not authorized: • • Headbands • • Sweatbands • • Devises that are conspicuous, excessive, or decorative to include, but are not limited to: o large/lacy scrunchies o beads o bows o claws o clips o decorative pins o decorative barrettes Foreign material (e.g., ribbons, beads, decorative items) will not be woven into the hair.
Wigs and hairpieces	• • If worn, must be of a good quality and fit properly. Must be of a conservative style and conform to the hair standards above. Natural hair under the wig will meet hair standards described above. • • Will not be worn if it would present a safety hazard.

APPENDIX G
MARINE CORPS GROOMING REGULATION 1004

MCRD-UNIF-1004 Attire and Personal Appearance

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

1. With the aid of references, **maintain personal appearance** to present a professional military appearance. (MCRD-UNIF-1003)

2. Given leave, liberty, or other occasion, **wear civilian attire** to present a professional appearance and uphold the image of the Marine Corps. (MCRD-UNIF-1004)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify **appropriate grooming standards** to present a professional military appearance. (MCRD-UNIF-1003a)

2. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify **accessories and their appropriate use for wear** to present a professional military appearance. (MCRD-UNIF-1003b)

3. Without the aid of references, given a list, select the **Marine Corps Order that governs weight and body fat standards** to present a professional military appearance. (MCRD-UNIF-1003c)

4. Without the aid of references, given a list**,** select **civilian attire that is considered unacceptable standards of dress** to present a professional appearance and uphold the image of the Marine Corps. (MCRD-UNIF-1004a)

5. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify **civilian clothing serviceability and cleanliness standards** to present a professional appearance and uphold the image of the Marine Corps. (MCRD-UNIF-1004b

1. **GROOMING STANDARDS**: The purpose of this lesson is to familiarize Sailors with Marine Corps Appearance requirements. Sailors do not have to abide by Marine Corps grooming standards unless the Sailor elects to wear Marine Corps service uniforms or go "Marine Regs". Also, this lesson will discuss the mandatory civilian clothing requirements for all service members on Marine Corps installations.

The regulations & requirements for grooming of the Marine Corps are to maintain uniformity and team identity within the military population. Therefore, the selected Marine Corps Reserve component will comply with these regulations while on active status. Eccentric or faddish styles are not acceptable within the grooming standards of the Marine Corps.

a. Definitions:

(1) Eccentric: Departing from the established or traditional norm. Deviating from an established or usual pattern or style. A deviation from conventional or accepted usage or conduct especially in odd or whimsical ways.
(2) Faddish: A transitory fashion adopted with wide enthusiasm
(3) Conservative: Traditional in style
(4) Inconspicuous: Not readily noticed or seen
(5) Unsightly: Unpleasant or offensive to look at

b. Eccentricities and faddish styles may include:

(1) Hair styles
(2) Facial hair
(3) Make-up
(4) Nail polish
(5) Jewelry
(6) Eyeglasses
(7) Individual appearances that detract from uniformity & team identity

2. **MALE GROOMING STANDARDS**: Male Marines will be well groomed at all times ensuring that their hair will be neat and closely trimmed.

a. Hair:

(1) The hair on the back and sides of the male Marine should be clean shaven below the hair line and evenly graduated to not more than three inches on top
(2) A Male Marine's hair will never be over three inches in length on top
(3) Hair will be styled so as not to interfere with the proper wear of headgear
(4) Block-style trimming is not authorized
(5) No male Marine will be required to have his hair clipped to the scalp except while undergoing recruit training or medical purposes
(6) Male hairstyles will conform to the natural shape of the head
(7) The bulk of hair is not to exceed approximately 2" above the scalp when styled
(8) When used, hair gel & mousse should provide a conservative, natural appearance. Dyes, tints, bleaches and frostings, which result in natural colors, are authorized. The hair color must complement the person's complexion. Color changes that detract from a professional image are prohibited.

d. Eccentric haircuts: The following hair style types are considered eccentric and are not authorized:

(1) Hair styling which include single patches of hair on the top of the head
(2) Hair styled to run a strip down the center of the scalp i.e. "Mohawk" or "Landing Strip" fashion

(3) Hair styled to leave an unusually large open (bald) area on the top of the head
(4) Hair styles that include the etching of letters, signs, or figures
(5) Braiding of hair for male Marines is prohibited

e. Facial hair: Regardless of whether a Marine is on duty or on leave & liberty, his face will be clean-shaven with the exception of eyebrows and eyelashes. Excessive plucking or removal of eyebrows is not authorized except for medical reasons. Exception to this rule will be a medical officer has determined that shaving is temporarily harmful to the individual's health. In these cases, the current edition of MCO 6310.1 applies. A mustache may also be worn.

(1) Sideburns:
(a) Will not be tapered or flared
(b) Will not grow below the top of the orifice of the ear
(c) The length of the individual sideburn hair will not exceed 1/8 inch

(2) Mustache: When worn, the mustache will be neatly trimmed and kept within the parameters set in the grooming regulations.

(a) Will not extend past the corners of the mouth
(b) Will not drop below the margin of the upper lip or the nostril area
(c) Length of mustache hair will not exceed ½ inch

(3) Nose/Ear/Chest hair:

(a) Hair protruding from the nose will be trimmed
(b) Ear & nose hair must be clipped regularly
(c) Chest hair shall not protrude in an unsightly manner over the top of your undershirt or the long sleeve khaki shirt

(4) Finger nails: Finger nails will be kept clean and neatly trimmed so as to not interfere with performance of duty, detract from military image or present a safety hazard.

(a) Nails shall not extend past the fingertips (Males)

(b) Finger nail polish for males is not allowed

3. **FEMALE GROOMING STANDARDS:** Female Marines will be well groomed at all times. When the uniform is worn, hair may touch the collar but does not fall below the collar's lower edge.

The requirement for hair regulations is to maintain uniformity within a military population. Women's hairstyles require non-eccentric and non-faddish styles, maintaining a conservative, professional and feminine appearance. Appropriate style may be based on headgear.

a. Three basic hairstyle categories:

(1) Short length: hair that extends no more than 1 inch from the scalp (excluding bangs) Hair may be no shorter than ¼ inch from the scalp, but may be evenly graduated to within 2 inches of the hair line. Bangs, if worn will not fall into the line of sight, and may not extend beyond the hair line at the temples.

(2) Medium length: hair that does not extend beyond the collar's lower edge (in all uniforms), and extends more than 1 inch from the scalp. Medium hair may fall naturally in uniform and is not required to be secured. Graduated styles are acceptable, but the length, from front to

back, may not exceed 1 inch difference in length. The regulations for bangs previously discussed are relevant. Bulk of the hair may not exceed approximately 2 inches from the scalp.

(3) Long hair: hair that extends beyond the collar's lower edge.

(4) Long hair will be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned, except that bangs may be worn. No portion of the bulk of the hair will measure approximately more than 2 inches from the scalp (except a bun, which may extend a maximum of 3 inches from the scalp) and no wider than the width of the head.

b. Faddish or exaggerated hair styles: Hair will be styled so as not to interfere with the proper wear of all uniform headgear.

All headgear will fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without distortion or excessive gaps. When headgear is worn, hair should not protrude at distinct angles from under the edges. Hairstyles, which do not allow the headgear to be worn in this manner, are prohibited. Hair styles not authorized for wear with the uniform are:

(1) Locks and twist (not including French rolls/twists)
(2) Hair sculpting (eccentric directional flow, twist, texture or spiking)
(3) Buns or braids with loose hair extending at the end
(4) Multiple braids that do not start at the top of the head
(5) Hair styles with severe angles

c. Physical Training (PT) hair styles:

(1) Physical training in PT gear:

(a) Medium and short length hair may be worn down for organized PT, except when a safety hazard

(b) Long hair must be secured.

(c) Pony tails are authorized.

(d) Barrettes and small ponytail holders must be consistent with the hair color

(e) Ribbons, bows, scrunchies, alligator clips etc. are NOT authorized

(2) Physical training in Boots & Utilities (Boots/Ute's)

(a) Use standard PT hair guidelines

(b) When boots & Ute's are worn in a non-PT related environment, hair must be secured in accordance with the uniform hairstyle regulations

d. Braid's, Extensions, Wigs, Accessories, and Coloring:

(1) Braid's: Medium and long hair may be braided but must present a neat, professional, and well-groomed appearance. Foreign material such as beads and decorative items shall not be braided into the hair.

(a) Multiple braids are authorized (two or more)

(b) Braid's must be of uniform dimension

1) Approx. ¼ inch in diameter
2) No more than 1/8 inch of scalp between braids
3) Tightly interwoven
4) Straight line in one direction and continue to the end of the hair

(c) Secure ends with inconspicuous rubber bands

(d) If multiple braids are worn, they must encompass the entire head

(2) Hair Extensions: are authorized for medium and long hair only and must have the same general appearance as the individual's natural hair

(3) Wig's: must look natural and must have the same general appearance as the individual's natural hair

(4) Hair accessories: Except in PT situations, inconspicuous hairpins and bobby pins are authorized. Hairnets will not be worn unless authorized for a specific type of duty. Barrettes, combs, rubber bands, etc. are authorized, if concealed by the hair.

(5) Hair Color: if applied, dyes, tints, bleaching and frostings, which result in natural colors, are authorized. The hair must complement the person's complexion tone. Color changes that detract from a professional image are prohibited.

(6) Body Hair: No female Marine will be required to remove body hair except where leg hair protrudes beyond the appropriate hosiery or causes a visibly uneven texture under the hosiery.

APPENDIX H
NAVY GROOMING REGULATIONS 2201

CHAPTER TWO
GROOMING STANDARDS

SECTION 2: PERSONAL APPEARANCE

2201. PERSONAL APPEARANCE. Because it is impossible to provide examples of every appropriate or unacceptable hairstyle or of “conservative” or “eccentric” grooming and personal appearance, the good judgment of leaders at all levels is key to enforcement of Navy grooming policy. Therefore, hair/grooming/personal appearance while in uniform shall present a neat, professional appearance.

1. HAIR

a. Men. Keep hair neat, clean and well groomed. Hair above the ears and around the neck shall be tapered from the lower natural hairline upwards at least 3/4 inch and outward not greater than 3/4 inch to blend with hair-style. Hair on the back of the neck must not touch the collar. Hair shall be no longer than four inches and may not touch the ears, collar, extend below eyebrows when headgear is removed, show under front edge of headgear, or interfere with properly wearing military headgear. The bulk of the hair shall not exceed approximately two inches. Bulk is defined as the distance that the mass of hair protrudes from the scalp. Hair coloring must look natural and complement the individual. Faddish styles and outrageous multicolored hair are not authorized. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved, and straight hair are recognized, and in some cases the 3/4 inch taper at the back of the neck may be difficult to attain. In those cases hair must present a graduated appearance and may combine the taper with a line at the back of the neck. **One** (cut, clipped or shaved) natural, narrow, fore and aft part is authorized. Varying hairstyles, including afro, are permitted if these styles meet the criteria of maximum length and bulk, tapered neck and sides, and do not interfere with properly wearing military headgear. Plaited or braided hair shall not be worn while in uniform or in a duty status. Keep sideburns neatly trimmed and tailored in the same manner as the haircut. Sideburns shall not extend below a point level with the middle of the ear, shall be of even width (not flared) and shall end with a clean shaven horizontal line. "Muttonchops", "ship's captain", or similar grooming modes are not authorized.

b. Women. This policy applies to female Sailors while wearing the Navy uniform and when wearing civilian clothes in the performance of duty.

(1) Acceptable Hairstyle Criteria. Hairstyles and haircuts shall present a professional and balanced appearance. Appropriateness of a hairstyle shall be evaluated by its appearance when headgear is worn. All headgear shall fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without distortion or excessive gaps. Hairstyles will not interfere with the proper wearing of headgear, protective masks or equipment. When headgear is worn, hair shall not show from under the front of the headgear. Hair is not to protrude from the opening in the back of the ball cap, except when wearing a bun hairstyle. All buns shall be positioned on the back of the head to

ensure the proper wearing of all headgear.

Lopsided and extremely asymmetrical hairstyles are not authorized. Angled hairstyles will have no more than a 1-1/2 inch difference between the front and the back length of hair. Layered hairstyles are authorized provided layers present a smooth and graduated appearance.

Hair length, when in uniform, may touch, but not fall below a horizontal line level with the lower edge of the back of the collar. With jumper uniforms, hair may extend a maximum of 1-1/2 inches below the top of the jumper collar. Long hair, including braids, shall be neatly fastened, pinned, or secured to the head. When bangs are worn, they shall not extend below the eyebrows. Hair length shall be sufficient to prevent the scalp from being readily visible (with the exception of documented medical conditions).

Hair bulk (minus the bun) as measured from the scalp will not exceed 2 inches. The bulk of the bun shall not exceed 3 inches when measured from the scalp and the diameter of the bun will not exceed or extend beyond the width of the back of the head. Loose ends must be tucked in and secured.

Hair, wigs, or hair extensions/pieces must be of a natural hair color (i.e. blonde, brunette, brown, red, gray, or black). Hair extensions/pieces must match the current color of hair. Wigs, hairpieces and extensions shall be of such quality and fit so as to present a natural appearance and conform to the grooming guidelines listed herein. Tints and highlights shall result in natural hair colors and be similar to the current base color of the hair.

(2) Hairstyles. Hairstyles shall not detract from a professional appearance in uniform. Styles with shaved portions of the scalp (other than the neckline), those with designs cut, braided, or parted into the hair, as well as dyed using unnatural colors are not authorized. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved and straight hair are recognized. All hairstyles must minimize scalp exposure. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are authorized.

a. Three strand braids and two strand braids (also referred to as twists) are authorized. Braided hairstyles shall be conservative and conform to the guidelines listed herein.

b. Multiple braids. Multiple braids consist of more than 2 braids and encompass the whole head. When a hairstyle of multiple braids is worn, each braid shall be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (no more than 1/4 inch), and tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional, well groomed appearance. Foreign material (e.g., beads, decorative items) shall not be braided into the hair. Multiple braids may be worn loose, or may be pulled straight back into a bun, within the guidelines herein.

c. Two individual braids. One braid worn on each side of the head, uniform in dimension and no more than one inch in diameter. Each braid extends from the front to back of the head near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., braids are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head to prevent interference with wearing of headgear). A single French braid may be worn starting near the top of the head and be braided to the end of the hair. The end of the braid must be secured to the head and braid placement shall be down the middle of the back of the head.

d. Corn rows. Must be in symmetrical fore and aft rows, and must be close to the head, leaving no hair unbraided. They must be no larger than 1/4 inch in diameter and show no more than approximately 1/8 inch of scalp between rows. Corn row ends shall not protrude from the head. Rows must end at the nape of the neck and shall be secured with rubber bands that match the color of the hair. Corn rows may end in a bun conforming to the guidelines listed herein, if hair length permits.

e. Rolls. Two individual rolls, one on each side of the head, must be near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., rolls are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head and will not interfere with wearing of headgear). Rolls must be of uniform dimension and no more than one inch in diameter.

f. Locks. The Lock hairstyle (Locks) for the purpose of Navy Uniform Regulations grooming standards consists of one section of hair that twists from or near the root to the end of the hair

and creates a uniform ringlet or cord-like appearance. Locks may be worn in short, medium, and long hair lengths in the following manner:

(1) Locks must continue from the root to the end of the hair in one direction (no zig-zagging, curving, or ending before the end of the lock to dangle as a wisp or loose hair) and should encompass the whole head. Locks partings must be square or rectangle in shape in order to maintain a neat and professional appearance.

(2) Locks can be loose (free-hanging where no hair is added to the lock once it is started other than hair extensions that are attached at the end of the natural hair). When worn loose, locks will be spaced no more than three-eighths of an inch apart, diameter/width will not exceed three-eighths of an inch, and locks will be tightly interlaced to present a neat and professional military appearance. Locks may also be worn in a bun provided all hair grooming requirements are met. Locks may not be worn in combination with other hair styles (e.g. twists, braids).

(3) New growth (defined as hair that naturally grows from the scalp and has not yet been locked) will not exceed one-half inch at any time.

(4) Locks that do not meet the above standards and do not present a neat and professional military appearance will not be worn in uniform. Commanding Officers have the ultimate responsibility for determining when hairstyles are eccentric, faddish, or out of standards.

g. Ponytails. The wear of a single braid, French braid, or a single ponytail in Service, Working, and PT uniforms is authorized. The initial accessory for the ponytail will not be visible when facing forward. Authorized accessory devices must be consistent with the color of the hair. The end of the braid or ponytail may extend up to three inches below the lower edge of the collar of the shirt, jacket or coat. In spaces or environments where there are operational hazards such as rotating gear, etc., the hair may not be worn below the bottom of the collar.

(3) Hair Accessories. When hair accessories are worn, they must be consistent with the hair color. A maximum of two small barrettes, similar to hair color, may be used to secure the hair to the head. Bun accessories (used to form the bun), are authorized if completely concealed. Additional hairpins, bobby pins, small rubber bands, or small thin fabric elastic bands may be used to hold hair in place, if necessary. The intent is for pinned-up hair to be styled in a manner that prevents loose ends from extending upward or outward from the head. For example, when using barrettes or hairpins, hair will not extend loosely from the head; when hair is in a bun, all loose ends must be tucked in and secured. Hair accessories shall not present a safety or foreign object damage (FOD) hazard. Hair nets shall not be worn unless authorized for a specific type of duty. Headbands, scrunchies, combs, claws and butterfly clips, are examples of accessories that are not authorized; this list is not to be considered all inclusive.

(4) Unauthorized Hairstyles. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are not authorized: Pigtails; braids that are widely spaced and/or protrude from the head.

(5) Grooming Standards Exception.

a. During group Command/Unit physical training, Commanding Officers are authorized to standardize unit policy for the relaxation of female hair grooming standards with regard to having hair secured to head (e.g., ponytails). Hair restraining devices, if worn, will be consistent with the current hair color.

b. Relaxed Hair Requirement with Dinner Dress Uniforms. Female Sailors are authorized to wear their hair below the lower edge of the collar of the blouse, jacket, or coat of the Dinner Dress Uniform being worn. All other Navy grooming requirements will remain in effect per the guidance promulgated by this instruction.

2. SHAVING AND MUSTACHES (Men). The face shall be clean shaven unless a shaving waiver is authorized by the Commanding Officer per BUPERSINST 1000.22. Mustaches are

authorized but shall be kept neatly and closely trimmed. No portion of the mustache shall extend below the lip line of the upper lip. It shall not go beyond a horizontal line extending across the corners of the mouth and no more than 1/4 inch beyond a vertical line drawn from the corner of the mouth. The length of an individual mustache hair fully extended shall not exceed approximately ½ inch. Handlebar mustaches, goatees, beards or eccentricities are not permitted. If a shaving waiver is authorized, no facial/neck hair shall be shaved, manicured, styled or outlined nor exceed 1/4 inch in length. **Supervisors of individuals with shaving waivers shall actively monitor and ensure treatment regimen is followed.** The following personnel are not authorized to wear any facial hair except for valid medical reasons:

a. Brig prisoners.

b. Brig awardees.

c. Personnel in a disciplinary hold status (i.e., who are serving restriction or hard labor without confinement or extra duties as a result of a court-martial or NJP).

d. Personnel assigned to a transient personnel unit who are awaiting separation:

(1) By reason of a court-martial sentence.

(2) To benefit the service <(MILPERSMAN 1910-164)>.

(3) Pursuant to the recommendation or waiver of an administrative discharge board, for misconduct <(MILPERSMAN 1910-140)>.

3. HAIRPIECES. Wigs or hairpieces shall be of good quality and fit, present a natural appearance and conform to the grooming standards set forth in these regulations. They shall not interfere with the proper performance of duty nor present a safety or FOD (Foreign Object Damage) hazard.

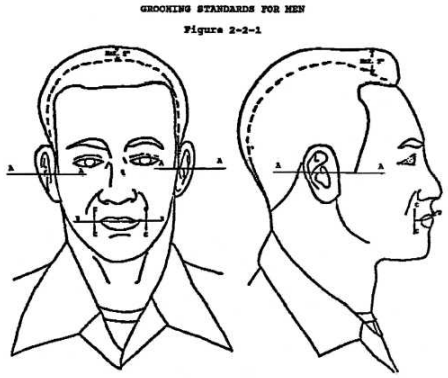
a. Men. Wigs or hairpieces may be worn by active duty personnel while in uniform or duty status only for cosmetic reasons to cover natural baldness or physical disfigurement. Wigs may be worn by Naval Reserve personnel engaged in inactive duty for training.

b. Women. Wigs or hairpieces meeting women's grooming standards are authorized for wear by personnel while in uniform or duty status.

4. COSMETICS (Women). Cosmetics may be applied in good taste so that colors blend with natural skin tone and enhance natural features. Exaggerated or faddish cosmetic styles are not authorized with the uniform and shall not be worn. Care should be taken to avoid an artificial appearance. Lipstick colors shall be conservative and complement the individual. Long false eyelashes shall not be worn when in uniform.

a. Cosmetic Permanent Makeup. Cosmetic Permanent Makeup is authorized for eyebrows, Eyeliner, lipstick and lip liner only. Permanent makeup shall be in good taste and blend naturally with the skin tone to enhance a natural appearance. Exaggerated or faddish cosmetic styles are not authorized and shall not be obtained. Approved permanent makeup colors are as follows: Eyebrows shall be shades of black, brown, blonde or red that matches the individual's natural hair color. Eyeliner shall be shades of black, brown, blue or green that matches the individual's natural eye color and shall not extend past the natural corner of the eye. Lip liner and lipstick shall be the color of the natural lip or shades of pink and moderate reds only. Permanent Makeup is considered an elective medical procedure that is accomplished by qualified medical professionals to enhance natural features and requires careful planning and consideration of associated risks and liabilities to the Sailor.

GROOMING STANDARDS FOR MEN



------ INDICATES SCALP LINE) Sideburns shall not extend below a point level with the middle of the ear, as indicated by line "A". When a mustache is worn it shall not:

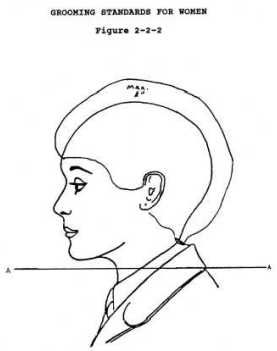
-- Go below a horizontal line extending across the corner of the mouth as indicated by line "B".

-- Extend more than 1/4 inch beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth as indicated by line "C".

-- Protrude below the lip line of the upper lip as indicated by line "D".

Hairstyle properly groomed shall not be greater than approximately 2 inches in bulk. Bulk is the distance that the mass of hair protrudes from the scalp. No individual hair will measure more than 4 inches in length.

GROOMING STANDARDS FOR WOMEN



Haircuts and styles shall present a balanced appearance. Lopsided and extremely asymmetrical styles are not authorized. Pigtails, widely spaced individual hanging locks, and braids which protrude from the head are not authorized. Multiple braids are authorized.

No portion of the bulk of the hair as measured from the scalp shall exceed approximately 2 inches.

Hair shall not fall below a horizontal line level with the lower edge of the back of the collar as indicated by line A. When wearing jumper uniforms, hair can extend a maximum of 1-1/2 inches below the top of the jumper collar.