A Qualitative Study of College Cadet Women's Leadership Identity Development in a Military
Training Environment

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ABSTRACT

In December 2015, the United States' Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, issued a directive that each branch of military avail every position to women (Pellerin, 2015). Given this and the dearth of literature on women's leader development in military environments, it was imperative to research if and how these environments shape and influence leadership development among college aged women. Specifically, this study sought to reveal women's view of self as leader in the context of a military training environment at a senior military college. The Leadership Identity Development (LID) model developed by Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) served as a framework for this study that utilized constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz (2014). The participants in this study were 21 college students who identified as women participating in a 24-hour military training program between the ages of 19 to 23 and agreed to participate in individual face-to-face interviews. Through interviews and analysis of the data, eight themes emerged from the women's experiences that revealed how they developed as leaders in the environment, and conditions that both promoted and inhibited their leader development. These themes are leadership defined, internal dialogue, strategies for managing influences, practicing leadership, context for learning leadership, external influences, internal influences, and experiences. These findings have implications for future research and practice.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

It is important to understand how college aged women develop a leadership identity in a military training environment that has historically been male-dominated. This study sought to better understand the experiences of 21 women who learned leadership in a military training environment that was a 24-hour live in experience on a campus of higher education. The women agreed to meet for a face-to-face interview that lasted approximately one hour to share their experiences. Constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2014) were utilized in this study, and the Leadership Identity Development (LID) model developed by Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) served as a framework. I share the findings of this study and implications for future research and practice.

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Chapter One

Introduction

A note about language. As this study focused on the role gender contributed to

leadership identity development, it was important to use inclusive language regarding gender

identity, gender expression, and assigned sex at birth throughout the study. At times language

was in the literature that conflated assigned sex, gender identity, and gender expression by using

man/male interchangeably, using woman/female interchangeably, and not including language

that honors the identities of trans and non-binary people. In those cases, quotes and caveats were

noted.

For the first time in the history of the military in the United States of America, all service

positions (enlisted and officer) in both combat and support roles across all military branches

(Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Marines) are open to cisgender women. Despite this

change, misperceptions and barriers remain for women and require on-going attention and

advocacy. However, given the long history of American military, it is only relatively recently

that cisgender women have been fully integrated into the military. Moreover, it is only since the

1970s that women have been permitted access to military training environments such as the

service academies (Kamarck, 2016; National Women's History Month, 2015; National Women's

History Project, 2017; Parrish, 2016). By design, the military organization has historically been

exclusively male. Subsequently, it is understandable that the culture lends itself to promoting

traditional masculine styles of leadership, and rewards members who mimic such characteristics

(Weitz, 2015). This culture permeates military training environments, socializing new recruits at

a young age to embrace the male-dominated culture.

There are three main forms of military training environments that exist in the modern American higher education landscape: Service Academies, Senior Military Colleges (SMCs), and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). These military training environments focus on developing leadership and character in a regimented and disciplined educational regime that aligns with military culture (Dunn, Ho, Odom, & Perdue, 2016). In addition, while each training environment proffers both academic and military training, the nature of these environments and the experiences of military students remain distinct from civilian students.

These undergraduate training environments are designed to develop leaders for the express purpose of preparing future military officers, but also to provide a safe environment to learn and practice skills needed when cadets commission in their chosen service branch. However, given the context of a male-dominated organization, new questions arise about inclusivity. Importantly, it is unknown if these unique military training environments are effective in the way they teach and train future military officers to operate in a clearly diverse workplace. Also unknown is the extent that these environments recognize, appreciate and validate the unique and diverse leadership perspectives and characteristics of this new class of future leaders. Understanding these and other similar questions would allow both higher education and the military insights to better identify and prepare emerging leaders who do not fit the status quo (i.e., heterosexual, White, and male).

This study was designed to explore the experiences of women cadets in their development of self as a leader in the context of a military training environment. However, it was first important to know the history of how and when women were integrated into the United States Armed Forces because it provides critical context for how a military culture was built as a male-dominated environment and was subsequently slow to grant access to women.

Women in the Military in the United States

Women have served in the United States Armed Forces, which consists of five branches—Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy (U.S.C. 10, 2012), in unofficial roles since the American Revolutionary War (Colonial Williamsburg Education, 2008; Pellerin, 2015; The Women's Memorial, 2016). However, the role of women in the U.S. military was not formalized until the Army Nurse Corps was established as a permanent organization by Congress in 1901 and the Navy Nurse Corps in 1908 (Kamarck, 2016). During World War I, women served important but limited roles in clerical and nursing position, with over 24,000 women serving in official capacity (National Women's History Project, 2017).

A couple of decades later, due to the high demand of World War II (WWII), the U.S. government had few options but to open more positions to women in the military. In 1942, Congress created the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and opened the Naval Reserve to women (Kamarck, 2016; The Women's Memorial, 2016). The Marine Corps Women's Reserve was established by Congress in 1943 and the Women's Army Corps (WAC) was temporarily incorporated into the Army (Kamarck, 2016; The Women's Memorial, 2016). By the conclusion of WWII, over 400,000 women were serving in the military, accounting for nearly 3% of all military personnel (The National WWII Museum, 2017). Following the conclusion of WWII, women were officially integrated into the U.S. Armed Forces through the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 (Kamarck, 2016; National Women's History Month, 2015; National Women's History Project, 2017). While legislation formalized a permanent role for women in the military, it severely limited them to only 2% of enlisted rank and 10% of officers. Further, it explicitly forbade women from serving in combat (Kamarck, 2016).

Following the great wars of the early 20th century, the next wave of military action in the

Pacific Region gave rise to more advancement for women. In 1967, during the Vietnam War,

the cap on women in the military was repealed and the percentage of women serving in the

military grew considerably over the next three decades (Kamarck, 2016). Then, in 1973 the

military draft ended, making the U.S. Armed Forces an all-volunteer organization (Kamarck,

2016; The Women's Memorial, 2016; National Women's History Project, 2017). This action

made recruiting and retaining military personnel (specifically men) more challenging, but opened

the military to more opportunities for women to serve.

The 1970s was a decade of influential social, legislative, and policy changes that further

opened access for women to more military positions and training. For example, the Navy

opened pilot training to women in 1973, and the Air Force did the same shortly after in 1976

(Kamarck, 2016). Then, in 1975, Public Law 94-106 was signed by President Gerald R. Ford

that allowed women admission to the three service academics: the Air Force Academy in

Colorado, the Naval Academy in Maryland, and West Point in New York. The first women

attended these institutions in the summer of 1976 (Kamarck, 2016; National Women's History

Month, 2015; National Women's History Project, 2017; Parrish, 2016). However, while the

academies were now accessible to women, new barriers were erected.

In 1977, the Secretary of Defense, at the request of Congress, submitted a formal

definition of combat and who was able to serve in combat situations. So, while women's access

to serve in military roles was expanded, they were expressly prohibited from combat roles

(Kamarck, 2016; National Women's History Project, 2017). Following this, women were

officially incorporated into the Army with the disestablishment of the WAC in 1978, however,

they were still limited to non-combat roles (Kamarck, 2016). It was during this time that Colonel

Margaret A. Brewer became the first woman brigadier general in the Marine Corps (National

Women's History Month, 2015). The change that took place in the 1970s was largely motivated

by the passing of the Equal Rights Amendment and a larger national movement in the 70s for

equality for women (The Women's Memorial, 2016).

Several decades passed before a third wave of progress occurred in the 1990s. In 1991,

Congress authorized women to fly in combat missions and in 1993 to serve on combat ships

(Colonial Williamsburg Education, 2008). This marked the first time that women were allowed

to serve on the front lines of military operations. In 1994, the Secretary of Defense Les Aspin

approved the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule (DGCDAR), sometimes

referred to as the Direct Combat Exclusion Rule, which directly defined *which* positions women

could and could not serve, specifically any direct combat positions (Kamarck, 2016). The

intended purpose of this action was to open more positions to eligible women, beyond the 1970s

legislation, who could meet the qualification standards. However, during the 1990s, even with

the passing of the DGCDAR, lines were blurred when women were deployed to combat zones.

Women were deployed to provide support, not to directly engage the enemy in combat.

However, as seen in practice during the Gulf War, there was no distinction between combat and

non-combat roles in a war zone, even for women. During the war, 13 women died and two were

taken captive, marking a low but important period in the emergence of equality among military

personnel (The Women's Memorial, 2016). At the start of the 1990s, women composed 11% of

the U.S. Armed Forces and by the end, women made up approximately 14% of the military (The

Women's Memorial, 2016).

By the early 2000s, women were serving in leadership roles of the highest ranks. Captain

Kathleen McGrath was the first woman to command a U.S. Navy warship in 2000, Colonel

Linda McTague was the first woman commander of a fighter squadron in the U.S. Air Force in

2004, and in 2005, Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester became the first woman awarded the Silver Star

for combat action (Colonial Williamsburg Education, 2008). However, it was not until 2008 that

the U.S. Armed Forces had its first woman four star general, Army General Ann E. Dunwoody

(National Women's History Month, 2015). Then "On January 24, 2013, Secretary of Defense

Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey announced the

rescission of the 1994 DGCDAR and directed each military service, as well as United States

Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), to develop plans to implement the change"

(Women in Service Review, 2016, p.1). This opened the doors for the first two women, 1st

Lieutenant Shaye Haver and Captain Kristen Griest, to graduate from Army Ranger School in

August 2015 (Neuman, 2015; Thompson, 2015). However, despite this high distinction they

were not permitted to serve in the Ranger Regiment as women were still prohibited from combat

roles. As an elite special operations unit of the U.S. Army, the Rangers have unique

responsibilities that entail top secret, covert missions and require the highest physical fitness

standards (Skovlund, 2017).

Shortly after, upon receiving recommendations and research from each service branch,

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced in December 2015 that women would be able to

serve in *all* roles in *all* branches of the U.S. Military starting January 2016. The directive stated

that no positions or occupations would be off limits to women for the first time in history

(Pellerin, 2015). Defense Secretary Carter stated no barriers would prevent women from serving

in all aspects of the military as long as they met all qualifications and standards, including the

Green Berets, Navy SEALS and Army Rangers—all elite special operation units in the military

reserved for the best of the best (Pellerin, 2015). This announcement opened an additional

213,600 positions previously closed to women across 52 military occupations (Women in

Service Review, 2016). In January 2017, it was announced the first woman had been selected to

join the 75th Ranger Regiment, making her the first woman and the first special operations unit to

have a woman serve alongside men, and crossing a final boundary of women serving in the

military (Myers, 2017).

As of September 2016, women made up approximately 16% of the U.S. Armed Forces.

According to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) (2016), women composed 14.6% of

the Army, 18.7% of the Navy, 8.1% of the Marine Corps and 19.4% of the Air Force. According

to DMDC December 2016 report on active duty women by rank and service, women only made

up 8.1% of the highest-ranking position across all service branches classified as a level of

general or admiral. This means 64 women hold a position of general or admiral, making up

7.2% of people who hold one of the top four ranks in the military across all services. However,

while the trajectory of women serving continues to move upward, several environmental

obstacles remain.

Racism Role in Integration

Much of the literature on women in the military generally refers to integration. It is

important to note that integration is not equal for all women (The Women's Memorial, 2016).

While often not explicitly stated, the first integration of women often referred to White women.

Women of color were usually months if not years behind White women in being allowed to join

the U.S. military. For example, at the start of WWII Puerto Rican women were denied access to

the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. It was not until 1944 when Puerto Rican men were accepted

into the Army that the Army Nurse Corps reluctantly accepted Puerto Rican women's

applications (The Women's Memorial, 2016). Then, in 1948, Executive Order 9981 was issued,

ending racial segregation in the armed services (National Women's History Month, 2015). The

first two African American women entered basic training for the Marines in 1949, and the Navy

followed suit in 1950 with 25 African American women enlisted personnel and two officers (The

Women's Memorial, 2016). The Air Force integrated African American women in basic and

advanced training in 1949 and the Army integrated in 1950 (The Women's Memorial, 2016). In

1978, the first African American woman, Joan C. Bynum, a Navy nurse, was promoted to a rank

of captain, equivalent to the rank of colonel in the Army (National Women's History Month,

2015). Marine Corps Captain Vernice Armour was the first African American woman to

become a pilot in the Marine Corps and the first woman in the history of the Defense Department

to fly combat missions in Iraq (National Women's History Month, 2015).

It is imperative to understand the history and timeline by which women were permitted

entry into the U.S. military because it lays the foundation for understanding the many barriers

experienced by women that continue today. This history reflects the reticence of a male-

exclusive environment to allowing women into their brotherhood without mandates from the

government. It also demonstrates that integration was not always equal for all, and that to be a

woman of color presented additional barriers on the path to equality in the military.

Military Training Environments

There are multiple paths to becoming a military officer, but for the purposes of this study,

there are three main forms of military training environments that will be discussed as they share

the similar quality of occurring in a higher education setting. The three forms of military

training programs are Service Academies, Senior Military Colleges (SMCs), and Reserve Officer

Training Corps (ROTC). These military training environments focus on developing leadership

and character in a regimented and disciplined lifestyle that aligns with military culture (Dunn et al., 2016).

First, Service Academies are undergraduate education academies funded by the federal government to train and educate commissioned officers for the U.S. military (Today's Military, 2017). Each service academy focuses on one specific branch of the military and is a 24-hour, live-in residential program for all four years of the student's academic career. There are five service academies: the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Today's Military, 2017). No civilians attend the service academies, and education is fully funded with the expectation that students commission into the military and serve for a minimum of four years. The U.S. Coast Guard Academy reached its highest percentage of women in 2016, with an entering class that was 38% women (Melia, 2016). At West Point, women were 22% of the incoming class, and in the Naval and Air Force academies, women accounted for 24% of the incoming class (Melia, 2016). The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy reported women accounted for 13.2% of the incoming first year class (Class Profile, 2017).

The second type of military training environment is the Senior Military Colleges (SMCs). SMCs are similar to service academies in that they provide a 24-hour live-in residential military training experience for all four years of college. The experience at a SMC is known as a Corps of Cadets (Dunn et al., 2016), however admissions is offered to civilians both in the Corps of Cadets and at some SMCs to the university (OCadiz, n.d.; Today's Military, 2017). The military training experience is not limited to commission track students as it is in the service academies. According to the Department of Defense, there are seven SMCs in the United States: Texas A&M Corps of Cadets, Norwich University, The Virginia Military Institute (VMI), The Citadel,

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, University of North Georgia, and Mary Baldwin Women's

Institute for Leadership (Today's Military, 2017). Within the SMCs there are variations in the

environment of the military training. For example, all students who attend VMI, Norwich, The

Citadel and Mary Baldwin are required to participate in the military training program but not

required to commission in the military. On the other hand, schools such as Texas A&M,

Virginia Tech, and University of North Georgia have civilians who also attend the institution but

do not participate in the military training program. All but one of these programs enrolls

predominately men. Texas A&M Corps of Cadets is 15% women (Assefa & Moghe, 2016),

while VMI has 11% women (Virginia Military Institute, 2017), the Citadel is 8% women

(Citadel, 2017), the VTCC is 15% women (Virginia Corps of Cadets, 2016), and UNG with the

largest percent of women at 17% (Women in the Corps of Cadets, 2017). Mary Baldwin is

unique in that its program is specifically designed for women only and thus exclusively enrolls

women (Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership, 2017). No data were found for percentage

of women participating in the corps at Norwich.

The third form of military training environments is Reserve Officer Training Corps, often

referred to as ROTC. Founded in 1916, ROTC serves as a military scholarship program to cover

the cost of tuition as long as graduating students serve a minimum of four years in active duty

military as a commissioned officer (Silva, 2008; Today's Military, 2017). ROTCs are military

training environments offered at more than 1,000 colleges and universities in the United States

(Silva, 2008; Today's Military, 2017). ROTC programs require students to participate in

academic courses, fitness programs and summer trainings, but unlike service academies and

senior military colleges, do not require a 24-hour residential experience. Rather, ROTC students

live, dress and engage in the college environment similar to their peers, minus wearing the

designated service uniform once or twice a week. There are four service branch opportunities for

ROTC; they are Air Force, Army, Navy-option, and Marine-option (Today's Military, 2017). As

all cadets on track to commission in the U.S. Military are considered ROTC, even those at SMC

and academies, it was challenging to find data on how many women are in ROTC. No data was

found on how many women are enrolled in ROTC across the country or by service.

Senior Military Colleges

A Senior Military College (SMC), which provides the context for this study, is a specific

military training environment unique in that it combines traditional higher education

opportunities and experiences in conjunction with the traditional military training environment.

The first SMC founded was Norwich University by Captain Alden Partridge, which paved the

way for future SMCs (Niche Blog, 2014). Capt. Partridge's reason for departing from the

traditional military academy was to create a curriculum that combined both a liberal arts

education with military science (Niche Blog, 2014). The purpose of SMCs is to develop military

leaders of character and cultivate military principles (Today's Military, 2017). Not all members

of the SMCs' Corps of Cadets are required to commission in the military, therefore creating a

unique dynamic of military and citizen leader track students in the same military training

environment (Today's Military, 2017). It is in these environments that cadets are socialized to

the military cultural and informal training begins with the role of women in the military.

Women's Enrollment

In order to fully understand the experiences of women in a SMC military training

environment, it was important to understand when women were admitted to SMCs. Each SMC

admitted women at different points in history and under different circumstances; some followed

legislation, while others were mandated by court order.

The University of North Georgia (UNG), located in Dahlonega, Georgia, was the first SMC to admit women to the university in 1873 and women in the Corps of Cadets in 1973 (Regeski, 2016). Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets located in Blacksburg, Virginia also admitted women to their corps in 1973. However, unlike UNG, women were not admitted to the university until 1921 (75th Anniversary Steering Committee, 1996). Both Corps of Cadets admitted women prior to the service academies.

In 1974, Norwich University, located in Northfield, Vermont and Texas A&M in College Station, Texas admitted women to their Corps of Cadets (History of Norwich University, 2017; Stephenson, 2013). Norwich is the oldest of the SMCs, established in 1819 (History of Norwich University, 2017) while Texas A&M is the youngest of the SMCs, established in 1862 as part of the Morrill Act (Stephenson, 2013). In addition, both SMCs have a Corps of Cadets and a civilian population on campus similar to UNG and Virginia Tech.

The Citadel and Virginia Military Institute (VMI), both required by court ruling, did not admit women until the 1990s, becoming the last SMCs to incorporate women into their programs. The Citadel, located in Charleston, South Carolina, under force from a federal court order, admitted one woman in 1995; she left the program in less than one week due to stress and isolation ("Woman cadet", 1999). Then, in 1996, largely due to a Supreme Court Ruling forcing VMI to admit women, The Citadel's Board of Visitors immediately voted unanimously to remove sex as a requirement on the admission's application (Janofsky, 1996; United States v. Virginia 518 U.S. 515, 1996). It was not until three months following the ruling that the VMI governing board voted nine to eight to actually admit women (Allen, 1996). Then in August of 1997, 31 first-year women were admitted to VMI in Lexington, Virginia, officially putting an end to all-male SMCs (Meserve, 1997).

It was important to understand when women were admitted to SMCs, as the long history

of being male-exclusive organizations sets the tone for the barriers cadet women may experience

in a military training environment. It also demonstrates the recalcitrance of military training

environments to welcome women and the fear of doing such may have on the establishment of

the training programs, which in turn may influence how cadet women develop a view of self as a

leader in these environments.

Statement of Problem

With the recent passing of legislation that opens all positions, including combat roles, to

women, it is imperative that the education and training environments of military leaders are

conducive to a diverse group of leaders. The environments and structures for the leader

development programs were originally devised for male cadets only. More research is necessary

to understand if and how these environments influence the leadership development of women's

views of self as leaders. At the time of this study, little to no literature explored how women

develop a view of self as a leader in these environments and how elements of the environment,

including the role of other women, influence this development. Moreover, where there is

literature that focuses on the importance of diversity in leadership roles, these studies do not

specifically study the military culture and even more so, military training environments.

Findings from the study will help inform the ways training programs are and are not working in

creating environments that are inclusive of diverse leadership characteristics.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the process of how cadet women in

a university military training environment perceive that their view of self as a leader changes

over time and how the process supports and subverts the Leadership Identity Development

Model (LID) (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). This study used

constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz

(2014) and uses the LID model as a sensitizing concept to understand the LID in the context of a

senior military college. This study was conducted at a single institution of higher education

environment by interviewing upper class cadet women who completed four or more semesters in

the military training program while enrolled as an undergraduate student. The study is informed

by the LID Model as a sensitizing concept, as the study was not explicitly designed to test this

model. The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in
   a military training environment?

2. How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change
   over time?

3. What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development
   of a view of self as a leader?

4. What are the variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a
   leader develops in a military training environment?

Reflexivity

Before commencing this study, it is important to acknowledge my lived experiences,

particularly those most closely related to the nature of this study. In doing so, I along with any

consumer of this research become more aware of any bias in the study design and analysis of

data. I am a White, heterosexual, cisgender woman born in the United States raised by a White

woman who served in the United States Air Force. I am 34 and working on a doctoral degree in

Educational Research and Evaluation in which I was a full time student for four years while

working two part-time jobs, one as a graduate assistantship that pays my tuition and a stipend and one hourly job working with cadets and academics, and now working a full time job while completing my dissertation.

My mother was a single mom for a portion of my life and served as an enlisted woman during the 1980s and 1990s in the United States Air Force. I was raised with an older brother and a younger sister, positioning me as the middle child. As the dependents of an active duty military parent, we lived in several different places in my childhood, though a large portion of my early youth was in Virginia. In addition, we lived in Nebraska, Germany, California and Italy. The variety of cultural and geographical locations greatly contributed to my worldview and perspective on the roles and abilities of women.

As a young girl with a mother serving in the military, I was raised with a perspective that women can and are able to work and serve in leadership positions. A full understanding that there were differing opinions, mechanisms, and systems in place that restricted the progression of women in leadership did not occur to me until after high school. As a child, I believe I was sheltered from the reality of my mother's experience, not truly understanding the overt discrimination and daily microaggressions that she experienced in the workplace. It was not until college, when the inequalities were apparent to me and I had my own personal experiences, that my mother and I really talked about her experiences.

Before returning to school to begin a Ph.D., I worked in a civilian position that allowed me to work with and serve cadets in a military training environment. It was my military background that enticed me to take the position. Through that work, it became more clear to me the difficulties that women face in leadership roles and developing as leaders in a male-dominated environment, and specifically one with a long history of men serving as leaders. The

difficulties I saw were women not having a place at the table, women having their voices not be equal to those of men, and women identified cadet leaders working hard to embody the traditional masculine characteristics of leadership, but receiving push back such as being called derogatory names and lack of respect from peers and subordinates. This experience of witnessing what I observed to be gender inequality and overt sexism sparked in me the desire to better understand how women develop a view of self as leader in a military training environment.

My upbringing and experiences have taught me that women are fully capable and should serve in high-level leadership positions, and that there are benefits to the greater organization in a military environment when women have a seat at the table in leadership decisions. I assume that women have all the necessary abilities to productively and effectively lead others. Based on knowledge gained from readings, research and personal experience, I believe that men do not have any inherent leadership abilities that women do not, and that women, just as men, develop a view of self as leader and have the ability to lead others in a military training environment.

I believe that there are cultural, systematic and oppressive mechanisms in place, some explicit and others implicit, that hinder women's progression to leadership positions in a military context. I believe this is due to the lengthy history of patriarchy in American society. Therefore, for women to be seen as truly equal in the workplace and in society will require a cultural shift in thinking, action, and systems such as hiring practices and promotion processes. I find this assumption to be even truer for me given the 2016 presidential election.

I also believe that women can hinder their own and others' progression into leadership roles. I have personally experienced women holding other women back because of competitiveness instead of lifting them up and encouraging more women's voices at the table in the military training context as well as in the civilian sector. Closely aligned with this

assumption, I also believe that some women are not aware of sexism and oppression they

experience, that they have been so desensitized to the patriarchal society that they do not

recognize they should be treated better and as equals. It is these beliefs and assumptions that

have encouraged me to pursue this research interest in how women develop a view of self as a

leader in a military training environment.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

In order to fully examine the phenomenon of women's leadership in a university-based military training program, it was imperative to review empirical studies that examined various dimensions of leadership and theoretical frameworks informing leadership development. In this chapter, I review existing literature on women's leadership with particular attention to military and higher education settings in the United States. I start by examining the research that has been broadly conducted on women's leadership. This was an impressive and expansive area of research that was limited to areas germane to the present study. The first section has subsections that include leadership styles, barriers to leadership, and conditions that promote women's leadership. Second, I present prior research pertaining to women's leadership in the military. Here I organized the literature again around subsections that include leadership styles, barriers, and conditions that promote leadership. Third, I examine prior studies specific to military training. To conclude this chapter, I present a fourth area of literature on women's leadership in higher education, in which I present the sensitizing concept that guided the study, the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) developed as a grounded theory by Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005). Combined, this literature review served as basis for the central ideas of my study, namely, the lived experiences of women cadets that result in a view of self as a leader.

Women's Leadership

Researchers have approached the study of women's leadership in a variety of ways (e.g. barriers to women's leadership, conditions for women's leadership progression, or women's leadership styles in relation to the Social Change Model) (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998;

Dugan, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan, Komives, & Segar, 2008; Haber & Komives,

2009; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007; Kalysh, Kulik, & Perera, 2016; Kanter, 1977; Komives,

Wagner, & Associates, 2009; Perry, Davis-Blake, & Kulik, 1994; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson,

2002). For this study, to understand the process of how collegiate cadet women develop a view

of self as a leader, and how that view of self may change over time, it was important to approach

women's leadership development by first understanding the broader experiences of women

leaders. Three themes were identified in the literature that contribute (independently and

collectively) to prevailing knowledge of women's leadership development. The first theme I

identified was that men and women differ in preferred leadership styles. These differences

subsequently shaped the second theme I identified: women experience a multitude of barriers in

their pursuit of leadership positions. These barriers included negative gender stereotypes and

incongruence with male-dominated environments. The third theme identified was that mediating

conditions likely promote women's leadership through reduction or elimination of barriers.

These themes provide critical insights to better contextualize how cadet women experience their

development of a view of self as a leader in a university-based military training environment.

Styles of Leadership among Women and Men

Research shows that women and men have different styles of leadership (Bem, 1974;

Boldry, Wood & Kashy, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Kaufman &

Grace, 2011). Styles of leadership are defined as "relatively stable patterns of behaviors

displayed by leaders" (Eagly et al., 2003, p. 569). These styles of leadership are often described

in the literature from a binary perspective. Women tend to be more democratic and have a

participatory approach to leadership while men tend to be directive in nature with an autocratic

approach to leadership (Eagly et al., 2003; Kaufman & Grace, 2011). One alternative

perspective to this is that women do not necessarily have different styles from men; rather they use leadership behaviors to align with positions of differing levels of formal power. In such cases, it is not that leadership styles are different, but instead the position warrants a different type of leadership (Kanter, 1977).

This dualistic perspective of leadership results in oftentimes misconstrued generalization of women's style of leadership where women are expected to lead in certain ways regardless of their preferences (Billing & Alvesson, 2000). In fact, leadership styles may be socially constructed rather than a result of biology (Briskin, 2006; Lester, 2008). The concept of gender as a social construct, from a feminist perspective, sees this duality as gender performing, in that expression of one's gender is mediated by other's perception of one's gender (Butler, 2006; Nicolazzo, 2017).

Researchers, however, have tended to use a binary construction of women and men to analyze and understand these differences in leadership styles. What has emerged, then, is a tendency to describe a generic women's leadership style as democratic and participatory in nature, and where power is derived from collaborative relationships (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003; Brescoll, 2016). Women leaders are often described by others as cheerful, compassionate, kind, gentle, helpful, soft-spoken and yielding (Bem, 1974; Boldry et al., 2001). Women have also been characterized as more emotionally expressive than men (Boldry et al., 2001). When women push back on these traits, or act in traditional masculine style of leadership, they are frequently referred to in derogatory terms such as "bitch," "witch," or "pushy" (Cormier, 2007; Lim, 2009).

Conversely, men's leadership styles are described differently from women in that they are directive with an autocratic approach (Eagly et al., 2003; Kaufman & Grace, 2011). Men

tend to be more favorably associated with traits such as ambitious, assertive, athletic, competitive, self-confident, and willing to take a stand (Bem, 1974; Boldry et al., 2001). Moreover, masculine traits have been shown to be associated with results-oriented outcomes such as "getting the job done" while feminine traits are associated with relationship oriented outcomes such as expressing concern and care for others (Bem, 1974).

However, there is research that diverges from the binary paradigm and suggests that individuals who have styles of leadership that align with both women and men are described as androgynous leadership characteristics (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003). This means they demonstrate both feminine and masculine characteristics of leadership (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003). The benefits to androgynous leadership include flexibility in responding in the most appropriate way to a variety of situations, a broader range of responses to fit needs of individuals and increased effectiveness in leading others (Park, 1997). This style of leadership may be the most effective in creating positive organizational change (Kaufman & Grace, 2011); however, more research is needed to understand how this style of leadership is intentionally developed in people.

Leadership styles are perceived differently among men and women and subsequently create barriers for women as they pursue leadership positions. These differences create a gender bias where a prevailing concept of leader is tightly coupled with a person's gender expression. Expectations are subsequently formed at the intersection of gender and leadership because each are socially constructed and rewarded (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). It is this gender bias and the resultant barriers that likely contribute to the prevention of women pursuing and attaining leadership roles.

Barriers to Women's Leadership

The existence of barriers was the second theme that emerged as critical to understanding women's leadership. Two barriers—negative gender stereotypes and incongruence with male-dominated environments—were identified as important environmental conditions that detract women from effectively pursuing and carrying out positions of leadership.

Gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes are prevailing beliefs about the characteristics of women and men. Such stereotypes prescribe how one acts, their intellect, or capabilities based on those beliefs (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). These stereotypes reinforce expectations that men serve in specific roles that are different from the types of roles women serve. It is these explicit gender stereotypes that ultimately inhibit a woman's ability to achieve leadership positions due to behaviors leading to biased hiring practices and or a lack of leadership self-efficacy (Kalysh et al., 2016).

Gender stereotypes not only influence the roles women play in the workplace, but also the expectations to lead or occupy leadership positions. Researchers have found that women are perceived by others as lacking leadership abilities and are described by others using negative leadership traits such as being too emotional and having inadequate quantitative skills (Crocker et al., 1998). In addition, women's stereotypical characteristics include being more communally focused with a heightened concern for others (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). Moreover, a culturally prescriptive gender stereotype relegates women to certain leadership expectations and to avoid behaviors that do not align with a prevailing norm of women leaders (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007).

Conversely, gender stereotypes about men converge on what are perceived as ideal leadership traits including assertiveness, taking control, and confidence (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). Men, therefore, are readily associated with a "think manager, think male" ethos in the

workplace. Given this default mentality, men are more often recruited, retained, and promoted than their women counterparts (Ryan et al., 2016).

Evidence strongly suggests that these gender stereotypes inhibit women's ability to achieve leadership positions due to biased workplace practices and compound already deficient leadership self-efficacy among women (Kalysh et al., 2016). This occurs when those who are the hiring authority see a lack of fit between the expected qualities the person in the role should have and those of the candidate (Brescoll, 2016; Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). In such cases, traditional characteristics for women such as kindness and warmth are inconsistent with the expected qualities for those in achievement-oriented position that may require a person to present themselves as tough and forceful (Heilman, 2001; Kalsyh et al., 2016; Lyness & Heilman, 2006).

Gender stereotypes have also been shown to influence a woman's own view of her ability to pursue leadership positions. Davies, Spencer, and Steele (2005) argued that when women were exposed to gender stereotypic commercials, such as a woman college student dreaming of becoming the homecoming queen, it undermined a desire to pursue leadership positions. Findings from that study further supported the notion that gender stereotyping in the context of work can and does hinder women's pursuit and achievement of leadership positions, even cause early attrition (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016).

An implicit association that women prioritize family over career and men prioritize career over family may further contribute to retention and attrition in the workplace (Kalysh et al., 2016). Researchers found evidence of workplace expectations that women "take care" and men "take charge" (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). This mentality shapes a woman's self-perception compelling her to question her own abilities and desires to be a leader, and contributes additional self-doubt about gender roles outside the workplace.

Stereotype threat. Research about stereotype threat offers a theoretical explanation for why gender stereotypes can have a negative impact on women's leadership trajectories. Defined as "the concrete, real-time threat of being judged and treated poorly in settings where a negative stereotype about one's group applies" (Steele et al., 2002, p. 385), stereotype threat is situational whereby cues in the environment send negative signals to the individual about their group membership. These signals reinforce negative stereotypes about one's social identity and likely influence what others think and expect from a person's performance and abilities (Steele, et al, 2002.). Subsequently, stereotype threat has long-term impact on an individual's performance because in order for a stereotype to be internalized, the person or group must be repeatedly exposed to stereotypes over a long period of time (Steele et al., 2002). Repeated exposure to negative stereotypes has been linked to underperformance on work tasks, tests, and job duties (Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005; Hoyt & Murhpy, 2016; Steele et al., 2002).

Stereotype threat is a critical component to understanding women's progress towards assuming leadership roles. Stereotype threat acts to undermine a woman's view of her own abilities and can result in underperformance (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). This explains why some women who have been exposed to negative stereotypes choose not to pursue leadership opportunities. Stereotype threat is activated when women are made aware of a particular gender identity and then associated with the negative gender stereotypes of women leaders (Davies et al., 2005). This activation forces women to align workplace behaviors with negative stereotypes of women and further inhibits desire to pursue leadership opportunities.

Gender stereotypes are but one barrier women experience in the pursuit of leadership positions. Gender stereotypes compel women to fit certain expectations to align with traditional characteristics and behaviors of women while undermining their leadership self-efficacy. These

stereotypes preclude women from pursuing and achieving leadership positions. Stereotype threat

serves as one important theoretical explanation for why gender stereotypes have a negative

impact on leadership trajectories among women.

Male-dominated environments. A second barrier women encounter as they pursue

leadership opportunities pertains to the challenge of obtaining these opportunities in male-

dominated environments. Gender stereotyping and other barriers experienced by women are

more prominent in environments that are male-dominated, where women are the minority and

their high visibility increases pressure to perform. These environments have been shown to

activate stereotypes more quickly and easily among coworkers (Kalysh et al., 2016; Kanter,

1977; Perry et al., 1994). Examples of male-dominated environments include corporate

boardrooms, government organizations such as Congress and state - legislatures, high tech

companies, and the military. Women are historically under-represented in these environments

and reflected in small numbers of women in higher-ranking positions.

Women reported a range of negative experiences in male-dominated environments that

serve as a barrier to leadership advancement. First, women often feel isolated. Women

overwhelmingly report feeling separated from social and work groups that are key to their

performance and success (Kaufman & Grace, 2011). This is directly related to women being in

the minority in many workplaces. This compels women to withdraw out of fear of being seen as

the token woman whose lone voice represents all women. For this reason, women often do not

engage in activities designed to validate and promote women to leadership positions (Kaufman

& Grace, 2011). Thus, women's perceptions of tokenism lead to feelings of isolation (Kaufman

& Grace, 2011).

Several other barriers have been reported by women that hinder advancement in male-dominated environments including: (1) a lack of mentoring opportunities, (2) their own commitment to personal and family responsibilities, (3) exclusion from informal networks of communication, (4) lack of role models who are women, and (5) stereotyping and preconceptions of women's roles and abilities (Catalyst Newsletter, 2001, as cited in Evans, 2014). These findings coincide with other studies (e.g., Evans, 2014) that found women still ranked commitment to personal and family responsibilities as their top barriers to advancement to higher positions of leadership.

Because of these barriers, women are more likely to experience gender stereotypes and stereotype threat in male-dominated environments. Moreover, women are more likely to be evaluated on their performance based on gender stereotypes rather than ability (Jansen, van der Velde, & Telting, 2001; Stone & Hernandez, 2013). Further contributing to gender incongruence are masculine cues in the environment, which exacerbate stereotype threat for women (Hoyt & Murphy, 2014). With small numbers of women in male-dominated environments, women leaders experience increasingly higher levels of stereotype threat as they consider, pursue, and engage in leadership opportunities (Hoyt & Murphy, 2014).

As reported in the literature, women and men's styles of leadership create barriers for women as they seek to occupy leadership positions. These barriers are central to understanding women's leadership and environments that negatively or positively influence success. These barriers included gender stereotypes and incongruence with male-dominated environments. Next, I examine the research identifying conditions that promote women's leadership and offset the barriers experienced by women.

Conditions that Promote Women's Leadership in Workplace Settings

Research shows that it is possible to offset the effects of barriers women experience and promote women's leadership in the workplace in three ways: (1) create identity-safe environments (Davies et al., 2005), (2) increase women's leadership efficacy (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007), and (3) encourage participation in professional development opportunities designed specifically for women (Levine, Gonzalez-Fernandez, Bodurtha, Skarupski & Fivush, 2015). Individually and combined, these conditions reduce the effects of barriers such as gender stereotyping, stereotype threat, and the male-dominated environment experienced by women as they pursue and occupy leadership positions.

Creating an identity-safe environment, defined as an environment where the risk of experiencing stereotype threat is reduced (Davies et al., 2005), is one condition that promotes women's leadership. Researchers found that such environments counteract many self-reported barriers, such as reported high levels of stereotype threat that decreased a desire to pursue leadership positions (Davies et al., 2005). Within these identity-safe environments women do not feel singled out or ostracized because there is less emphasis on stigmatized social identities creating an environment where members of historically stigmatized group feel welcome and supported. Further, all members in the environment challenge negative stereotypes and actively work to minimize stereotype threat (Davies et al., 2005).

A second condition involves increasing women's leadership self-efficacy. Leadership self-efficacy is "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). When women leaders are presented with gender stereotype threats, those who have a high leadership self-efficacy are able to perform better than leaders who possess a low leadership self-efficacy (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). It is

the very nature of a higher self-efficacy, which directly contributes to an increased likelihood of being more resilient when faced with gender stereotype threat. This increased psychological well-being can mean the difference between advancement to higher leadership positions or not (Hoyt & Blascovic, 2007).

A third condition to promote women's leadership is encouraging participation in professional development opportunities specifically designed for women. Women faculty members, for example, who participated in a longitudinal, cohort-based, experiential leadership program, reported improved networking and negotiation skills (Levine et al., 2015). These findings support the notion that participation among women in professional development and training in leadership skills can enhance their leadership abilities and prepare them to effectively transition to leadership positions. This outcome can mediate both the external and internal influences women experience related to gender stereotype barriers.

The combination of these conditions identified in the literature creates environments conducive to women leaders. Organizations with such environments intentionally design mechanisms to promote women's leadership that ultimately mediate the effects of negative or prohibitive conditions experienced by women who pursue leadership. The three mediating conditions identified here were: (1) identity safe environments, (2) promoting leadership self-efficacy, and (3) participation in professional development opportunities designed for women. Research clearly supports efforts to influence the growth of women in leadership positions that originate in these mediating conditions.

To understand how cadet women's view of self as a leader changes over time, it was important for me to first understand different approaches to leadership between women and men. Second, I needed to identify the barriers to leadership as experienced by women in the

workplace. Third, I wanted to understand the extent that conditions encourage and promote women in leadership. These themes emerged from the literature and provided critical insight to better understanding what women cadets may experience in their pursuit of leadership within the context of the military training environment in higher education.

However, an important gap was identified in the literature where the majority of research conducted on gender and leadership was *not* conducted in the context of higher education and college students. This is substantiated by other researchers (e.g., Dugan et al., 2008) and provides the impetus for this study. This gap in the literature calls into question the application of the research on gender and leadership to college-aged students; specifically, the incorporation of stereotype threat in understanding the process by which women cadets develop a view of self as a leader in the context of higher education and a military training culture.

Women's Leadership in the Military

The military culture, environment, and impact gender role stereotypes have on women in the military was a second major area necessary to understanding how cadet women's view of self as a leader changes over time. The specific context of this study warrants an exploration of the influences of a military training environment that is historically male-dominated. For that reason, it was important to understand the military culture inclusive of the overall ethos and environment, and reexamine preferred styles of leadership, barriers to women's leadership in the military, and conditions that promote women's leadership in the context of the military with research that specifically focused on women's experience in the narrowed context of the military environment.

Military Environment

Military environments are one of the most masculine institutions in the United States (Weitz, 2015). Subsequently they are male-dominated and reinforce traditional masculine characteristics of leadership (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Looney, Robinson Kurpius, & Lucart, 2004; Weitz, 2015). The military has been classified as a gendered organization because of an overemphasis on power and rank within a hierarchical organization, and, at least until recently, limited the number and types of occupations available to women (Archer, 2012; Carreiras, 2006). In addition, the military environment is numerically male-dominated, especially in combat roles, and reinforces a dominant masculine culture as the norm (Carreiras, 2006). These environments value hyper-masculine characteristics of leadership such as physical ability, competition, aggressiveness, risky behavior, and in some cases objectification of women (Weitz, 2015) and promote normative concepts of gender (Archer, 2012). It is precisely these environments that foster a style of leadership that has historically excluded women and inhibited other leadership styles. It is then this preferred style of leadership that determines who is or is not considered a qualified leader.

Preferred Styles of Leadership in the Military

While the military has gradually increased the number of women serving at all ranks and in all branches, it remains male-dominated and favors a masculine approach to leadership. This preferred style of leadership inhibits women's ability to advance as leaders if they do not conform to the expected qualities of a leader.

As example, one practice in the Marines is called "loudership" (Brownson, 2014). The louder the leader the better, which accentuates and promotes the typical alpha male as leader (Brownson, 2014). In addition to loudness, physical strength is a requirement of a good leader,

with women not seen as equal to men (Brownson, 2014). In the military, men are often seen as "unemotional, brave, psychologically fit, and ready for action" (Archer, 2012, p. 379). These qualities epitomize what it means to be a good soldier. Women, however, are depicted as "overly emotional, use sexuality to get ahead, and use feminine leadership style instead of traditional masculine leadership" (Archer, 2012, p. 379). Women are then forced to consistently balance being emotional and tough, as crossing the line has repercussions (Archer, 2012).

The perception among women is that successful leaders fit a standardized set of masculine traits (Brownson, 2014). This mentality has been shown to reinforce an expected style of leadership in the military as measured by the traditional characteristics of masculine leadership. As women strive to be an "honorary man," they frequently shed any non-conforming leadership characteristics or behaviors to adapt to perceived expectations (Brownson, 2014).

Research About Barriers to Women's Leadership in a Military Environment

The environment, especially a traditional military environment, can influence and present challenges for women as they develop a view of self as a leader (Anderson & Buzzanell, 2007; Boyce & Heard, 2003). The culture and organizational structure of the environment influences a woman's ability to seek leadership positions (Anderson & Buzzanell, 2007). For military women, issues of gender stereotypes, stereotype threat, and challenges from a male-dominated environment further complicate the barriers to leadership.

Gender stereotypes. The military environment perpetuates gender-role stereotypes related to primary job functions (i.e., Military Occupational Specialty), leadership or officer positions, and assignment to combat zones (Archer, 2012). These gender-role stereotypes serve as explicit and implicit barriers in the promotion and retainment of women in the military as it limits their roles and can affect their own perceptions of their leadership potential.

For example, Archer (2012) found that gender-role stereotypes were exasperated in combat zones because men were identified as protectors while women needed protection. This gender-role stereotype lessens the value women bring to a unit, and unnecessarily adds extra duty to men's load in combat zones (Archer, 2012). Recruits are exposed to explicit gender-role stereotypes as early as basic training when both men and women are socialized to the idea that women have three roles in service: bitch, dyke, or slut (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014). Women are expected to decide during boot camp which role they want, accept it as reality, and move on (Archer, 2012). The role of "bitch" has been deemed the most successful role for women (Archer, 2012). In at least one branch, men are socialized at boot camp that women are "easy, emotional, and sexually coercive" (Archer, 2012, p.373). This informal teaching from the start of training perpetuates gender-role stereotypes that are carried throughout the military career.

Stereotype threat. The propagation of gender-stereotypes in the military environment puts women at risk for stereotype threat. Military women are exposed to cues, especially in combat zones, that signal to them that negative stereotypes about their identity as woman may influence what others think and expect from their performance and abilities (Archer, 2012; Steele et al., 2002). For example, researchers have shown that women in combat feel the need to compensate for stereotypes of women and stereotype threat dissuades some women from furthering their military careers.

As the military environment promotes gender stereotypes of women as sexually promiscuous and use of their sexuality to get ahead, some women fall prey to this stereotype threat and conform to expectations (Brownson, 2014). The same is true for the stereotype that women are seen as physically and emotionally weak. Some women eventually conform to these prescribed stereotypes and use their standing as subordinate women as reason to take shortcuts

and not perform at the expected standards (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014). For other women, this reaction to stereotype threat pressures them to compensate for poor performing women (Brownson, 2014). In these situations, especially for those aspiring to leadership positions, women are burdened by a sense that they must exceed all standards to garner respect from peers that identify as men (Brownson, 2014). These women feel a constant need to censor themselves to avoid being identified as the stereotypical woman (Archer, 2012).

Moreover, stereotype threat dissuades women from pursuing military leadership opportunities in the first place. Many women choose not to pursue certain career specialties, especially those with a clear path to higher military rank (Brownson, 2014). While women may have the skill set, aptitude, and resilience to be successful in hyper-masculine specialty fields, they choose not to pursue them because of negative experiences resulting from isolation of frequently being the only woman (Brownson, 2014).

Male-dominated environment. Women have historically faced challenges in military environments because training tended to reinforce traditional masculine traits of leadership (Boyce & Heard, 2003). These environments present challenges for women such as increased sexual assault, feelings of isolation, and few women mentors.

One of the largest challenges women face in hyper-masculine, military environments is increased risk of sexual assault. This risk is even greater in combat zones where heightened masculinity, increased adrenaline, and separation from sexual partners for extended periods exacerbate violence toward women (Brownson, 2014; Weitz, 2003). Women serving in combat are encouraged to be vigilant, dress and act appropriately, and always be escorted by a "battle bud," typically a trusted male, to prevent rape (Weitz, 2003). These practices inherently

reinforce masculine views that women are weak and need men as the protectors in addition to putting the onus on women for rape prevention rather than men (Archer, 2012; Weitz, 2003).

Another challenge women experience is what researchers have identified as a "band of brothers" mentality (Weitz, 2003). The military culture emphasizes the importance of brotherhood (i.e., a warrior mentality that also protects) to address combat readiness and success in battle (Rosen, Knudson, & Fancher, 2003). The challenge for women is acceptance into the brotherhood. Lacking acceptance among peers that are men and an absence of a similar "sisterhood mentality," women develop a sense of competition with other women rather than camaraderie (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014). The limited number of women and a perception that few women will be successful contribute to lack of upward mobility and mentorship options for women (Archer, 2012).

Given the small numbers of women in military service, there are few women mentors available to guide and support women who aspire to leadership positions (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014). Men are hesitant to mentor women out of fear of showing favoritism or special treatment to women, and fear sexual scandal (Archer, 2012). This leaves women with few options for role models or mentorship, which have been shown to be essential elements in leadership development (Larsson et al., 2006).

As reported in the literature, women experience barriers in the military environment that inhibit their ability to be successful and occupy leadership positions. These barriers are central to understanding women's leadership and environments that negatively or positively influence success. These barriers included gender stereotypes and incongruence with standard as masculine in the military environment. Next, I examine the research identifying conditions that promote women's leadership in the military and offset the barriers experienced by women.

Research About Conditions that Promote Women's Leadership in a Military Environment

Some conditions have been demonstrated to offset the barriers that women experience in the military that are distinct from those already reviewed. The literature suggests that there are three ways to promote women's leadership development in a military environment: (1) increasing the number of women, (2) developing a "sisterhood" or "siblinghood" mentality, and (3) eradicating informal teaching that reinforces negative gender stereotypes (Archer, 2012). Individually and combined, these conditions reduce the effects of barriers women experience in the military environment.

One important condition that promotes women's leadership in the military is boosting the number of women who serve in active duty. This critical mass increases the likelihood of women mentors and role models (Archer, 2012). As previously noted, role models are a critical component of leadership development (Larsson et al. 2006). In addition, it would lead to higher integration in units with both men and women. According to several researchers, the integration of women and men units increased acceptance for women by peers (Archer 2012; Eagly et al., 1995; & Rosen et al., 2003). This in turn creates a positive, friendlier, and less hostile environment for women.

A second condition that promotes women's leadership involves building social capital. Women need to be encouraged to compete less with other women and build camaraderie (Eagly & Cali, 2007). The development of a "sisterhood" increases support and community among women leading to camaraderie and increased social capital (Archer, 2012). The de-gendered extension of this idea is "siblinghood" whereby women and men build camaraderie regardless of one's gender to form a cohesive unit free of sexual misconduct, stereotyping, and competition (Archer, 2012).

The third condition is the amelioration of socialization processes that reinforce gender stereotypes. At basic training or boot camp, recruits are informally taught highly gendered roles that women should serve in the military (Archer, 2012). This behavior perpetuates men's gender stereotypes of women, and women succumbing to stereotype threat. Archer (2012) argues that the eradication of such socialization would foster a greater sense of freedom among women to develop as leaders.

To understand how cadet women establish a view of self as a leader, and how this might change over time it was important to: (1) understand the military environment, (2) identify preferred leadership styles in the military, (3) isolate the barriers to leadership as experienced by women in the military, and (4) distinguish the influences of conditions that promote women in leadership. These themes provided critical insight to better understand what women cadets may experience in their pursuit of leadership within the context of the military training environment in higher education. I now turn my attention to considering some of these same issues within the context of not only the military, but training environments for college aged students.

Women's Leadership Development in Military Training Environments

The central purpose of this study was to examine leadership identity development of women in the context of a higher education based military training environment. Few studies have articulated how women develop a leadership identity in the context of a male-dominated military training environment. However, researchers have studied gender role stereotypes in women's leadership experiences in military training environments. In this section, I consider research about some of the same issues I have addressed before, but in this case what I am synthesizing is research specific to military training environments that include college women.

CADET WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Research About Gender Role Stereotypes in Military Training Environments

It is well established that gender role stereotypes are heightened in male-dominated environments such as the military training environment (Anderson & Buzzanell, 2007; Boyce & Herd, 2003; Kalysh et al., 2016; Kanter, 1977; Perry et al., 1994). These stereotypes reinforce traditional masculine styles of leadership and likely influence how cadet women view self as a leader and restricts leadership development processes.

In the military training environment, being a solider and a good leader are predicated on traditional gender roles (Boyce & Herd, 2003). One study found that cadets enrolled at Texas A&M University, when asked to evaluate the ideal cadet based on 14 leadership traits, overwhelmingly described the ideal cadet as embodying characteristics of a masculine style of leadership (Boldry et al., 2001). In this study, both men and women cadets responded in a similar pattern. Moreover, male cadets were rated to have more leader-like qualities such as self-confidence and leadership, compared to their women identified peers.

Male cadets at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) similarly associated men with the position of military officer but did not associate women with successful military officers (Boyce & Herd, 2003). Female cadets, in contrast, did not have a significant association of leadership with either men or women (Boyce & Herd, 2003). Instead, these women viewed military leadership characteristic to be associated with both.

A study of midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy (USNA) examined gender role stereotype in the evaluation of military officers (Looney et al., 2004). Cadets were given identical personnel reports of military officers and were asked to evaluate the qualifications and performance for promotion (Looney et al., 2004). The content of the reports presented to the midshipmen were identical and only differed in terms of the associated officer's name. Findings

from this study revealed that reports with a feminine name were described using more stereotypical feminine characteristics of leadership (Looney et al., 2004). These findings reinforced the existence of gender role stereotypes in the military training context, and that men perceive military leadership to be associated with characteristics of men rather than women (Boyce & Herd, 2003). Evidence suggests, however, that women may perceive military leadership to be associated with both women and men characteristics of leadership (Boyce & Herd, 2003).

Women in the Boyce and Herd (2003) study suggest an emerging equality in the military. A study by Silva (2008) seemed to confirm the emerging equality in the military for women. In an exploration of how female cadets experience and report gender norms in the military training context, specifically how female cadets balance a tension between masculine military culture and traditional feminine characteristics, Silva found that some female cadets reported Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) as an escape from traditional gender norms experienced in their civilian lives. Female cadets reported being seen as soldier in the military training context, which was free of gender. However, the identity of soldier has been previously defined in masculine characteristics of leadership (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Silva, 2008). What the female cadets viewed as a "gender-blind (sic) organization" was in fact a masculine organization with the standard defined in masculine terms, which was revealed when the women wanted to be seen as a soldier, not as a woman (Silva, 2008).

The Silva (2008) study revealed one gapping issue among women cadets. A majority of women cadets reported they did not want to make the military a long-term career choice because of stereotypical social roles (Silva, 2008). These cadets reported a military career would in fact detract from their desires to serve in the role of mother later in life (Silva, 2008). Importantly,

this study reinforced the complexity of the intersection of being a woman and serving in the military.

Little research has been done to study the experiences of women in military training environments. What has been done to date has focused on gender role stereotypes, and neglected exploration of leader identity development of women in a military training environment. The review of the literature clearly identified a gap in understanding women's experiences in a military training environment and their leader identity development.

College Student Leadership

The setting for this study was a U.S.-based university and participants were student cadets aged 18-24. To understand the process of how cadet women develop a view of self as a leader, it was important to understand how college students in general develop as leaders, particularly how they form a leadership identity. Much research has been conducted on students' leadership development, but little has been done on student leadership identity development (Olive, 2015; Owen, 2012). One notable exception to this is the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). Here, researchers explored the leader identity development components of collegiate leadership experiences. The LID serves as a central sensitizing concept for this study. Additional studies explored how students' identities serve as a condition in the development of their leadership identity.

Leadership Development

Owen (2012) made an important distinction between leadership development and leadership identity development that was critical to the perspective of this research study. Where leadership development is *externally* focused on the process between leaders and others (such as

followers, leader identity development is *inwardly* focused on the integration of leadership with personal values, personal experiences, and self-efficacy (Owen, 2012).

These key differences highlight the important work of leadership development in higher education, such as the vast research conducted related to the Social Change Model (e.g., Dugan, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan et al., 2008; Haber & Komives, 2009; Komives, Wagner et al., 2009). However, the distinction calls attention to the glaring gap in research focused specifically on leader identity development. The Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) worked toward closing the gap (Komives et al., 2005). While the Social Change Model focused on what leadership is, the LID shifts attention to how leadership is developed (Owen, 2012). For this reason, the LID served as a sensitizing concept for the research study and will be examined next.

Leadership Identity Development Model

The Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) was relevant to understanding how cadet women's view of self as a leader changed over time. The LID—developed by Komives et al. (2005)—describes six stages college students move through as they develop a leadership identity. These stages produce a model of understanding the process of leadership identity development. An important condition to consider when applying the LID is the role identity plays in understanding a student's leadership identity development experience.

The LID model is the result of a grounded theory study that focused on the process by which college students developed a leadership identity (Komives et al., 2005). The identified six stages students move through are: (1) awareness, (2) exploration/engagement, (3) leader identified, (4) leadership differentiated, (5) generativity, and (6) integration/synthesis (Komives et al., 2005). In addition, the researchers theorized that as students completed one stage, they

experienced a transition period prior to moving to the next stage (Komives et al., 2005). The

transition period consisted of group influences, as well as developing self, changing view of self

with others, and broadening a view of leadership (Komives et al., 2005).

While the LID identified six stages college students move through as they developed a

leadership identity, a majority of students in the study had already passed through the first three

stages prior to college (Komives et al., 2005). Stage one (awareness) involves an individual's

recognition of leaders' existence and that they are external to themselves (Komives et al., 2005).

In stage two (exploration/engagement), the student begins to take responsibility for themselves

and engage in opportunities, but not in formal leadership roles (Komives et al., 2005). This

typically occurs when students participate in group activities such as sports or clubs. Stage three

(leadership identified) often occurred somewhere between high school and first year of college.

In this stage, students are able to recognize that groups have leaders and followers, and that being

a leader meant you held a formal position, but that not everyone could be a leader (Komives et

al., 2005).

Students progress through the remaining stages of the LID model during the college

years. In stage four (leadership differentiated) more complex understandings of leadership begin

to materialize (Komives et al., 2005). For example, students realize leadership is not only for a

person in a formal position of leadership, but that *anyone* in the group could be a leader

(Komives et al., 2005). Leadership is identified as a shared responsibility. At stage five

(generativity), students begin to focus their energy, serving as leaders in groups that align with

their interests and values (Komives et al., 2005). This frequently involves teaching and leading

younger members to continue the work after relinquishing their formal position (Komives et al.,

2005). The final stage (integration/synthesis), leadership becomes an integrated part of who

students are, it is a part of their identity (Komives et al., 2005). At this stage of identity development, students embrace leadership as a part of who they are rather than as a position or affiliation with a specific group (Komives et al., 2005).

As students move from stage to stage there is a transition period experienced that is critical to the student's leadership identity development. The transitions involve four categories: (1) developing self, (2) group influences, (3) changing view of self with others, and (4) broadening view of leadership (Komives et al., 2005). As students progressed through each stage, how they experienced each category of the transition changed, moving from an awareness of leadership to an internalization of leadership as an identity (Komives, et al. 2005; Owen, 2012).

The six stages of leadership identity and the transition period are situated in developmental influences. These influences include significant individuals involved in the students' life including adults and peers, in addition to reflective learning and meaningful involvement (Komives et al., 2005). These influences continuously play a role in students' development as they transition and progress through the stages.

The LID model was helpful in understanding how college students develop a leadership identity. It provided a framework for understanding the leadership identity development process that may or may not apply in a military training environment. An important condition to consider when applying the LID is how students' other dimensions of identity such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation and gender expression intersected with their identity as a leader (Komives, Longerbeam, et al., 2009; Owen, 2012).

Identity as a Condition in Leadership Identity Development

The interplay of students' identities was important to identify how cadet women develop a view of self as a leader because the role of identities provides a more robust understanding of the intricacies at play when developing leadership identity. Individuals are never a single identity at a time and their lived experiences are a reflection of a reality rooted in their multiple identities. Specifically, I reviewed literature on gender identity, racial identity, ethnic identity, and sexual orientation in relationship to leadership identity development. A clear distinction was made in the literature that discussed the process by which students developed leadership identity and actions or values of a leader based on students' identities. At the time of this study, little empirical research was available that described the process by which students develop leadership identity taking into account the influences of gender, racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation identities.

Gender and leadership. Research on college student leadership is consistent with broader research on women's leadership in that college-aged women identify with traditional feminine styles of leadership. This alignment of leadership style presents challenges for women as they pursue leadership opportunities (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017). The majority of empirical research on college women's leadership is in relation to styles of leadership. While the literature is helpful in understanding remarkable consistency between women's leadership and college women's leadership, there is in fact a gap in empirical research related to women's development of a leadership identity.

College women's leadership development is consistent with broader women's leadership development in that collegiate women report having more traditional feminine styles of leadership, which maintains a focus on relational skills (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003; Haber-

Curran & Sulpizio, 2017). In alignment with research on feminine styles of leadership, Caucasian women who participated in leadership development programs reported a focus on the development of traits that were value based rather than skill based (Rosch, Boyd, & Duran, 2014).

College women's traditional feminine styles of leadership—namely a democratic, relationally focused, collaborative rather than autocratic, and compassionate approach (Bem, 1974; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Kaufman & Grace, 2011)—can serve as a barrier for women in their pursuit of leadership opportunities (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017). Interestingly, college women who reported alignment with a feminine style of leadership reported fewer aspirations for leadership positions while women who reported alignment with a masculine style of leadership reported higher aspirations for leadership positions (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003).

College leadership development research clearly shows that students align with findings from more general studies such that women identify most readily with traditional feminine styles of leadership and experience similar barriers. However, there is a dearth of research describing the process by which women develop leadership identity. Gender, however, is only one dimension of identity that shapes leadership development among college students.

Race and leadership. A student's racial identity is a second identity that shapes a college student's leadership identity. Unfortunately, little research was found that specifically related to leadership identity development and racial identity in the context of students in higher education. The majority of research on students' racial identity and leadership related to practices, values, and behaviors of leadership rather than how students' racial identity influenced development of leadership identity (e.g., Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan et al., 2008; Rosch et al., 2014; Sessa et al., 2016).

Research that did focus on students' leadership identity development taking into consideration racial identity found that students of color did not identify themselves as leaders (Arminio et al., 2000). Students of color either did not see themselves as leaders or avoided using the term as it had negative connotations (Arminio et al., 2000). The negative connotations included association with the majority group, that they had joined forces with the oppressor and felt separated from their racial peer group (Arminio et al., 2000). The identity of leader was also too much of a burden for some students in which they had to balance being radical enough and not too radical (Arminio et al., 2000).

In addition to disassociation with the term leader, students of color described the purpose of leadership was to serve the group, not individual needs (Arminio et al., 2000). Students of color saw themselves as highly involved, not as leaders, to achieve the goals of the group (Arminio et al., 2000). In groups of students of color, there was a sense of community and family, with the focus on the group, not a main leader (Arminio et al., 2000)

Ethnicity and leadership. Ethnicity, defined as "reference to distinctions based on national origin, language, religion, food, and other cultural markers" (Frable, 1997, p. 145) has been shown to impact the leadership identity development process (Onorate & Musoba, 2015). The LID presented a model by which students developed a leadership identity (Komives et al., 2005), but did not elaborate on the role ethnicity played in developing a leadership identity, and specifically did not include Hispanic or Latina/o students (Lozano, 2015).

Hispanic college women at a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) were reported to have experienced similar stages of the leadership identity development process as outlined in the LID, however, their development was more fluid, not a linear process (Onorato & Musoba, 2015). Lozano (2015) described the leadership identity development process for Latina/o students as the

leadership journey. The journey had phases and stages, but was fluid, less structured and

hierarchical than the LID (Lozano, 2015).

Most of the transitional periods in the LID aligned with Hispanic women's experiences

(Komives et al., 2005; Onorato & Musoba, 2015). However, the end stage of achieving fully

integrated leadership identity (i.e., seeing oneself as a leader) may not be the culminating end

state for Hispanic women (Onorato & Musoba, 2015). Similarly, Latina/o students in a different

research study pushed back at the notion of needing to be the leader and a hierarchical structure

and preferred a community approach to leadership (Lozano, 2015). This point emphasizes the

need to understand the context and worldview perspective in which leadership is taught.

In addition, it was important to the women that the leadership roles they served in had an

activist component; that their leadership needed to serve the greater good and reconcile injustice

(Onorato & Musoba, 2015). This was also true for Latina/o students at a Historically White

Institution (HWI), that leadership required an action component, to serve and care for others

(Lozano, 2015). This was a component that was not identified in the LID (Komives et al., 2005).

Sexual orientation, gender expression, and leadership. In alignment with the LID

(Komives et al., 2005), one review of the literature found that while the context for practicing

and developing as a leader was different for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)

students, the process of developing as a leader was the same as Komives et al.'s (2005) research

(Renn & Bilodeau, 2005). However, it is important to note that it was the context in which

LGBT students practiced and learned leadership that allowed them the space to be out and

embrace their identity as LGBT (Renn, 2007).

Olive (2015) found the same result as Renn and Bilodeau (2005) when he studied

leadership identity development of six students who identified a lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer

(LGBQ). Olive found no significant difference between how LGB students developed a

leadership identity and the heterosexual students in Komives et al.'s (2005) study. In fact, unlike

racially and ethnically diverse students, LGB students were able to connect their sexual

orientation identity with their leadership identity (Renn, 2007). For example, students identified

as gay leaders or queer activists (Renn, 2007). One limitation of each of these studies was the

limited or lack of participants who identified as transgender, therefore leaving a gap in the

literature in understanding how gender expression can influence leadership identity development.

Students' identities do not exist as single components of how they develop as leaders.

For this reason, it was important to examine the literature on the intersection of students'

identities as they developed leadership identity. Students experience challenges in connecting

their racial, ethnic, and gender identity with their identity as a leader (Renn & Ozaki, 2010).

Researchers found, for example, that students might see themselves as a leader and as a woman

who was a feminist, but *not* as a feminist leader. Or a student might identify as Latina and a

leader, but *not* as a Latina leader (Renn & Ozaki, 2010). The only identity group in Renn and

Ozaki's (2010) study that integrated identities was leaders in LGB organizations, in that to be

LGB was to be an activist leader.

In addition to challenges in interconnecting identities, women of color expressed

experiences of double oppression, being a woman and being a person of color (Arminio et al.,

2000). Hispanic women at an HSI had similar experiences, in that they reported the need to

reconcile what it meant to be woman and be a leader based on their cultural upbringing and what

they were taught was the role of women (Onorato & Musoba, 2015).

There is limited empirical research that addresses the process by which students' racial,

ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and gender expression identities influence how they develop a

leadership identity. It was therefore imperative to further investigate how students' multiple social identities influenced how students develop a leadership identity (Onorato & Musoba, 2015).

To understand the role other identities play in the process of how cadet women develop a view of self as a leader, it was important to understand how college students develop as leaders and the role of multiple, overlapping identities play in leadership identity development. While research has been conducted on students' leadership development, little has been done on students' leader identity development (Owen, 2012). The LID (Komives et al., 2005) explored the leader identity development component of collegiate leadership, and how a student's identity can serve as a condition in how they develop a leadership identity. Further research is needed to understand specifically how gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender expression play a role in developing a leader identity development to fill in the gap in our understanding of leader identity, especially among college-aged women who, maybe for the first time, are examining a view of self as a leader.

The review of the literature revealed significant gaps in our understanding of women leaders in male-dominated organizations such as the military. Further, there is a need to study and understand how women develop a view of self as a leader in the context of a military training environment. Research on women and leadership has focused almost entirely on the barriers women experience in the pursuit of leadership positions and has predominantly occurred outside the context of higher education. Komives et al.'s (2005) LID model has provided a theory for understanding how college students develop a leadership identity that can be used to further explore the context of leadership identity development in a military training environment.

This review of the literature leads me to identify the following sensitizing concepts, described as "a place to *start* inquiry, not to *end* it" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 31), that may inform my own research. First is the role gender stereotypes may have on women cadets' own perception of what leadership positions are desirable and attainable, and their own sense of capacity to achieve. Second is that women cadets may be unable or choose not to recognize the role gender plays in their view of self as a leader. As was found in Silva's (2008) study, women may identify with being cadet or soldier, but not be able to reconcile this with masculine characteristics of leadership. Third, the socialization that occurs in a male-dominated military training environment likely impacts women cadets' view of self as leader; specifically, how women define leadership, what leadership positions they have a desire to achieve, and how they want to be seen by others as a leader. A fourth influence is the possible nuanced differences among women based on the role gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender expression play in developing a leadership identity. These sensitizing concepts were used as starting points to inform this qualitative study to more completely understand the process by which cadet women develop a view of self as a leader in a military training environment.

Chapter Three

Methods

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the process of how cadet women in a university military training environment perceive that their view of self as a leader changes over time and how it supports and subverts the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). This study used constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz (2014) and uses the LID model as a sensitizing concept to understand the LID in the context of a senior military college. This study was conducted at a single institution of higher education environment by interviewing upper class cadet women who completed four or more semesters in the military training program while enrolled as an undergraduate student. The study is informed by the LID Model as a sensitizing concept, and it is not explicitly designed to test it. The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?

2. How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change over time?

3. What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development of a view of self as a leader?

4. What are the variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a military training environment?

In this chapter, information is provided regarding sample selection including specifics of the population and how participants were selected for participation. This chapter will also

include discussion of the interview protocol, trustworthiness of the data, data collection

procedures, and data analysis procedures. The constructivist grounded theory methods will be

described in sufficient detail, including the role of participant interviews. Finally, I provide an

anticipated presentation of results from the study.

Grounded Theory

Charmaz (2014) describes what grounded theory as a methodology is. However, for the

purpose of this study, as a theory is not being developed but rather applied in a new context,

grounded theory was used not as an overarching methodology but as an approach to methods for

collecting and analyzing data. According to Charmaz, "Grounded theory is a way of conducting

inquiry that shapes data collection and emphasizes analysis" (p. 26). The intended use of the

grounded theory methodology is to produce a theory that is grounded in the data resulting from

study of a particular process. However, in this case, the Leadership Identity Development (LID)

Model (Komives et al., 2005) serves as the theory guiding the study. Therefore, for this study,

constructivist grounded theory methods were used to understand the application of this model in

the context of a military training environment, utilizing data collection and analysis techniques

adapted from grounded theory methodology.

Constructivist grounded theory methods allows for flexibility during data collection while

at the same time homing in on the relevant pieces of information that help to answer the research

questions and guide future interviews; it is a systematic process to collect and analyze data

(Charmaz, 2014). Grounded theory utilizes a specific coding process to include initial coding,

focused coding and theoretical coding, which will be elaborated on in the data analysis section.

In addition, critical researcher activities such as memo-writing throughout the research process

are included because they are central to grounded theory.

Charmaz (2014) uses the term constructivist grounded theory to expand upon the methods developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). According to Charmaz, constructivist grounded theory is a "contemporary version of grounded theory that adopts methodological strategies of the original statement of the method, but shifts epistemological foundations and takes into account methodological developments in qualitative inquiry" (p. 342). This definition incorporates the view that knowledge is co-constructed by participants and researcher. Where other forms of research assign knowledge authority only to the researcher and not the participant, here, the researcher serves as the interpreter of the research data, not the authority on it, and there is no one absolute truth (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). This is in contrast to Glaser and Strauss' (1967) objectivist classical grounded theory, in which the researcher is set upon discovering truth and serves as the expert, defining what that truth means (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Given this, in order for a researcher to conduct constructivist grounded theory, it is important her paradigm aligns with constructivism. According to Charmaz, constructivism is the "perspective addressing how realities are made, bring subjectivity into view and assumes people, including researchers, construct the realities in which they participate" (p. 342). Importantly, this is the paradigm I adopted in this study, co-constructing knowledge with the participants.

In addition to a constructivist paradigm, a grounded theory approach requires that the data collected be rich and that the researcher "seek thick description" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 23), which means extensive notes are taken on observations of the participant in the interview, such as how she non-verbally responds to questions and narratives from the transcribed interview. It is this thick, rich description that ultimately allows the researcher to better understand the participant's experience and is therefore incumbent upon the researcher to ensure that the method of data collection directly relates and answers the research questions.

Sample Selection

Institution

The research study was conducted at a single institution in the southeast. The institution was a four-year public research university with a 24-hour, live-in, residential military training component. Students who chose to participate in the military training program live with fellow cadets in coed halls all four years of their college experience. Students who engage in the military training experience are also exposed to the traditional college experiences and opportunities while developing leadership skills in the program. They have a regimented schedule that includes daily formations, weekly trainings, academic courses and a designated uniform of the day. In recognition of the role of context, specifically a Senior Military College, a single institution was used for recruitment of participants for the study.

Participants

The participants for this study were women cadets who completed four semesters or more in a military training program, who were 18 or older and lived on campus and participated in a 24-hour military training environment at a four-year public research institution in the southeast referred to by the pseudonym Southeast University. The four semesters were not in relation to academic standing, but rather number of semesters in the military training program. This included cadets who graduated from the military training program, but still attended Southeast University completing an undergraduate academic degree. As compared to first year cadets, cadet women who have at least four semesters in the military training environment have many experiences to describe that relate to their changes in view of self as a leader. There were 75 cadet women in the military training program who meet the requirement (military training

program staff member, personal communication, December 6, 2016). This study aimed to interview 10-15 upper class cadet women.

The recruitment process began once Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A) approved the study. The researcher contacted the potential participants directly via email. The first email from the researcher included the purpose of the research study and an invitation to participate in an approximately one-hour individual interview with the researcher. One additional follow up invitation email was sent if there was no response to the first invitation. After agreeing to participate, each woman received the informed consent form by email prior to the face-to-face interview, providing time for review. Both the interviewee and the interviewer mutually agreed on the interview location allowing for a space that was private, quiet, safe, and comfortable.

Trustworthiness

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), a critical component to the quality of research findings is to establish trustworthiness in the research study. Glesne (2006) makes the argument that trustworthiness should be established early in the process, prior to data collection. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the research project, the researcher engaged in reflexivity, not to remove bias from the research, but to identify her own subjectivity in the research topic (Glesne, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). After each interview was transcribed, the participant had the opportunity to contribute to the narrative by reviewing it, revising it, or asking that sections be redacted. This type of member checking gave the participant an opportunity to review the transcript, which added credibility to the data before analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2015).

Data Collection Procedures

This section will cover the data collection procedures which included individual face-to-face interviews. The steps for data collection procedures are identified, including reference to appropriate protocols and documentation. IRB approval was obtained prior to the start of data collection. The IRB letter is Appendix A.

Individual Face-to-face Interviews

Individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used for data collection to gather rich, descriptive data to better understand the experiences of upper class cadet women in a military training environment. According to Seidman (2013), interviews allow the researcher insight into the participants' lived experiences. The interview format provided an opportunity for the researcher to seek clarification, ask follow-up questions and further explore the reactions of the women to questions and comments (Charmaz, 2014; Patton, 2015). The following section will describe the flow of the semi-structured interview and the content of the five sections of the interview protocol, which can be found in Appendix B and the interview blueprint in Appendix E.

In grounded theory, the interview allows the participant freedom to tell a story rather than asking a prescribed set of questions that aim to fit a theory. For this study the interview protocol was used in application of grounded theory as a method for data collection and analysis rather than methodology. Interview questions were guided by research questions in addition to the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005). In the interview, participants were asked to share their experiences, providing as much detail as they felt comfortable. The researcher then followed up on the experience shared with questions relevant to the participant's experience and that helped to explain the theory being applied in the specific context (Charmaz, 2014). A grounded theory

interview was intended to help answer the larger research question of "What is happening here?" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 87). The flexibility of the individual face-to-face interview elicited the answer to that question through stories from the participant; allowing for follow up questions on gaps to refine the data.

For this study, as described earlier, one semi-structured interview was utilized. Participants were invited to participate in the interview via email (Appendix F). If no response to the first email invitation within one week of sending, the researcher sent a second invitation email (Appendix G). Once the participant agreed to participate in the interview, the researcher and participant agreed upon a quiet location on or near the participant's campus. The researcher sent the time, location and copy of the informed consent (Appendix C) to the participant prior to the scheduled interview.

At the time of the interview, the researcher followed the protocol outlined in Appendix B. She started with creating a comfortable and safe environment to encourage the participant to be open and honest in responses. Before any questions were asked, the researcher reviewed the informed consent in the interview and provided the opportunity for the participant to ask any clarifying questions. Once the informed consent (Appendix C) was reviewed, the participant was asked to sign it if she agreed to participate in the study. She was then asked to complete the short demographic form (Appendix D) to provide background information on the participant. Once this was complete, the recorder was started and the interview began.

The interview questions generally followed the research questions prepared for the study (Appendix B). The interview started with the interviewer's reflexivity about how her interest in the topic developed. This was followed by an initial question that was further intended to build rapport, then moved in to the first area explored in the interview, which focused on the

participant's ability to identify and define leadership. Questions in this area were intended to answer the research question "How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?." Major questions examined how participants define the term leadership, how they would have defined it prior to their military training experience and any differences between men and women's definition of leadership. These initial questions were designed to encourage the participant to reflect on who she was as a leader and began thinking about what experiences contributed to that development.

The interview then moved to a second area, how her view of herself as a leader changed over time. Major questions in the section examined if the participant viewed herself as a leader and aspirations for leadership. The questions in this section were intended to encourage the participant to reflect on how her attitudes about leadership have changed over time and how she sees it continue to change in the future.

The third area explored in the interview were experiences cadet women in a military training environment perceived contributed to and inhibited their development of a view of self as a leader. Major questions in this section focused on specific incidents or experiences that contributed to her development of her view of self as a leader. Questions were also intended to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences as a woman and share any challenges or barriers that inhibited their ability to develop as a leader.

The fourth and final area explored through the interview was the variation among women in view of self as a leader. The major questions in this area prompted the participant to share any other identities or aspects of her life that may intersect with her view of herself as a leader. For example, a participant's racial or ethnic identity may impact the way she experiences and describes herself as a leader. This was done to answer the research question, "What are the

variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a

military training environment?"

The interview was concluded by giving the participant the opportunity to provide any

additional thoughts or information she would like to share that she believed were relevant to the

topic. In addition, the participant was asked if she would be willing to come in for a follow up

interview if the researcher had any additional questions or wanted to seek clarification on any

information shared.

Data Analysis Procedures

The grounded theory method is an iterative process with data analysis and data collection

occurring simultaneously (Charmaz, 2014). The process of analyzing data during data collection

keeps the researcher involved and connected with the data (Charmaz, 2014). This process

encourages an emergent analysis of the data. According to Charmaz (2014), there are three

phases to grounded theory analysis; initial coding, focused coding and then theoretical coding.

Charmaz describes coding as the "process of taking data apart, defining, and labeling what these

data are about; a grounded theorist creates qualitative codes by defining what he or she sees in

the data" (p. 342). The same form of analysis will be applied to the transcripts.

Initial Coding

Initial coding is the first phase of coding in grounded theory. The researcher begins the

coding phase using line by line coding; this forces the researcher to examine the data closely and

to begin conceptualizing it (Charmaz, 2014). This coding reflected a sensitivity to the literature

and theoretical model, while simultaneously remaining open to emergent findings. The initial

codes are descriptive. They should summarize the data with a succinct name that captures the

meaning of the line (Charmaz, 2014). An important distinction to note is that initial coding is

not predetermined as in some qualitative analysis, but instead is directly connected to the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Initial coding occurred during the data collection phase as interviews were transcribed to remain consistent with the systematic iterative process of grounded theory.

Focused Coding

The next stage of coding is focused coding. This phase involves the researcher focusing on the most common or significant codes identified during initial coding (Charmaz, 2014). The intended purpose of focused coding is to move the data analysis forward while maintaining the integrity of the data, ensuring the codes still emerge from the data through an inductive process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In this phase, the researcher may code or begin to group initial codes (Charmaz, 2014). Focused coding helps the researcher to begin to synthesize the data and move toward theorizing about the meaning of the data (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Focused codes are more conceptual than the concrete initial codes. This phase of coding occurred after a few interviews had been analyzed using initial codes. This allowed for a larger amount of data to compare and organize focused codes.

Theoretical Coding

The final stage of coding in grounded theory according to Charmaz (2014) is theoretical coding. Charmaz's approach to grounded theory uses this phase of coding, though some researchers still utilize axial coding as described by Corbin and Strauss (2008). Theoretical coding follows initial and focused coding to bring clarity and organization to the substantive codes that were developed in the previous phase (Charmaz, 2014). It often includes coding that reflects constructs identified in the literature. Theoretical coding moves the analysis into theorizing, connecting the data and focused codes, developing a theory that emerged from the data (Charmaz, 2014). Theoretical codes are integrative and "underlie substantive codes and

show relationships between them, rather than replace the substantive codes" (Charmaz, 2014, p.

150). According to Glaser (1992) as cited in Charmaz (2014), "theoretical codes preclude a need

for axial coding because they weave the fractured story back together" (p. 150). In this study,

theoretical coding was utilized to organize the focused codes and identify appropriate

connections between focused codes, including those related to context and the LID Model. The

theoretical codes were used to theorize about experiences of cadet women that emerged from the

data, but not used to develop a theory.

Memo-writing

         According to Charmaz (2014), memo-writing is a critical method in grounded theory and

"is the pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of papers" (p. 162).

Memo-writing occurs throughout the entire research process, documenting how the researcher

arrived at her conclusions. Memo-writing in grounded theory assists the researcher in pulling

apart codes, analyzing them and making notes about what they mean and how the codes can

contribute to theory (Charmaz, 2014). This process helps to capture the researcher's thoughts,

reflections and speculation of connections during the entire study from data collection to

application of theory. Memo-writing was utilized in this study to document observations after

each participant interview, interpretations of the data and possible connections between

participants and research questions. In addition, after each interview, the tables developed by

Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, and Osteen (2006) to better explain the LID Model

were used as a memo rubric for this study. I completed one table for each participant as an initial

analysis of where the participant may be in the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005).

Presentation of Findings

The findings of the research study will be connected to the constructs of the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005). This will include the LID stages, as well as the transition through of each stages (Komives et al., 2005). Each of the four research questions that guided the interviews will be answered through the findings. As these questions guided the data collection phase and development of the interview questions. In addition, the findings in relation to the model will be described in descriptive themes and will articulate how the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005) fits in the context of the military training environment and any gaps that exist between the context and the model.

Conclusion

Constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis best fits the purpose of this research study and provides appropriate data to answer the research questions. The focus of the study was to better understand and describe the process of how view of self as a leader changes over time for cadet women in a military training environment using the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005). It was therefore appropriate to use constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz (2014) to understand the LID in the context of a Senior Military College to explain how women's view of self as a leader changes. The iterative systematic process of grounded theory provided consistency through the research process from data collection through data analysis. This method provided an understanding of application of theory in a specific context that contributes to the understanding of women's leadership development, particularly in higher education military-based contexts.

Limitations

A possible limitation of this study would be generalizability to a larger population, though this is not the purpose of qualitative research. This study focused on a very specific population in a very specific context. Therefore, the information gained from this study contributes to existing theoretical understanding and explores contextual conditions that may influence it but cannot be directly applied to women college students in all settings. In addition, due to the specific nature of the study, it was conducted at a single institution. Findings might not be applicable to other universities with military training and education activities. Due to the specific context and the single institution and the historical context of being a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), the participant pool may not be diverse in relation to identities such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender expression. In addition, the study was limited by the institution's ability to identify gender only on a binary scale and one box that marked the participant's gender, therefore potentially leaving out participants who identified as woman, but the institution had designated as male. Therefore, the diversity of the participants should be taken into consideration when applying the findings. Another limitation is the use of retrospective interviewing (i.e., asking the participants to recall their experiences). As Bernard, Killworth, Kronenfeld, and Sailer (1984) point out, individuals are actively engaged in making meaning of their experiences and what they recall often has a more positive cast than was experienced at the time.

Chapter Four

Study Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe how cadet women in a university military training environment perceive themselves as leaders, how this perception changes over time, and how view of self as a leader supports or subverts the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) as described by Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005). This study used a constructivist approach to grounded theory method presented by Charmaz (2014) and the LID model as a sensitizing concept to understand the LID in the context of a senior military college. This study was conducted at a single institution of higher education and involved interviewing upper class cadet women who completed four or more semesters in the military training program while enrolled as an undergraduate student. The study was informed by the LID Model as a sensitizing concept, and it is not explicitly designed to test it. The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?

2. How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change over time?

3. What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development of a view of self as a leader?

4. What are the variations among women in the ways they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a military training environment?

This chapter will present the findings of the research study, which utilized the methods outlined in chapter three. First, I will describe the 21 individuals who participated in the research

study, to include the characteristics of participants in table format. Then I will describe the

themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews, how women cadets in a military

training environment make meaning of leadership. The chapter will conclude with a summary of

the findings.

        A note on language. As this study focused on the role gender contributed to leadership

identity development, inclusive language regarding gender identity, gender expression, and

assigned sex at birth was used throughout the study. This chapter used language directly from

participants' own words, which at times conflated assigned sex, gender identity, and gender

expression by using man/male interchangeably, using woman/female interchangeably, and not

including language that honors the identities of trans and non-binary people. In those cases,

quotations were utilized.

<div align="center">**Description of Participants**</div>

        Participants in this study were over the age of 18, had completed at least four academic

semesters or more in a military training environment, and identified as cisgender women.

Initially, ninety-three individuals from the study site met these qualifications and received an

invitation to participate. Twenty-one individuals agreed to participate in a one-hour individual

interview. Each participant was asked to select a pseudonym to protect her identity. Descriptive

characteristics are presented in Table 1. Given the small population of women enrolled in a

military program at the study site, limited descriptive information are presented here to protect

the identities of participants.

        Of the 21 participants, 14 reported having a family member who served in the military.

Participants included five citizen track students, one of who was Marine Corps Platoon Leaders

Course (PLC) which is an alternate track from ROTC to purse a Marine commission, 10 Army

ROTC, four Air Force ROTC and two Navy ROTC. Three identified as bisexual. One identified racially as Asian and one as Black. One participant identified as African, one as Chinese, two as Hispanic, and one as Jewish. Each participant identified as a woman. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 23 years old. Eight participants had completed four semesters in the military training program, eight had completed six semesters, and five had completed all eight semesters in the program, but remained at campus completing coursework.

Table 1

Participant Characteristics

Pseudonym	Track	Family Military	Semesters
Leigh	Air Force	No	6
Razz	Citizen	No	4
Sue	Army	Army	6
Jane	Army	Navy	6
Emily	Air Force	Air Force	4
Scout	Army	Air Force, Army, Navy	4
Margaret	Army	Army, Navy, Navy	8
Isabelle	Citizen - PLC	No	6
Joan	Navy	No	4
Susan	Army	Army	8
Alicia	Army	Army	6
Hermione	Air Force	Air Force	6
Daniella	Army	Army, Navy	6
Marie	Navy	No	6
Anne	Citizen	Army, Navy	8
Kristian	Air Force	Air Force, Army, Navy	8
Lindsey	Army	Army	4
Robin	Army	Army	4
Bess	Army	No	4
Page	Citizen	No	8
Sarah	Citizen	Army	4

In the following section, I present the themes that emerged during data analysis to answer each research question. The findings are presented in order of the research questions presented above. First, I present the findings for the first research question, which included the theme *leadership defined*. Second, I present the findings for the second research question, which

include the themes *internal dialogue*, *strategies for managing influences*, and *practicing leadership*. Third, I present the findings for the third research question, which include the themes *context for learning leadership*, *external influences*, and *internal influences*. Fourth, I present the findings that answer the final and fourth research question, which included the theme *experiences*.

Summary of Findings

Research Question One

The first research question was about how women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during the time they spent in a military training environment. Analysis of participant interviews resulted in a single theme identified as *leadership defined*, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

RQ 1: How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?

Third Iteration: Theme			
Leadership Defined			
Second Iteration: Subtheme			
A. High School	B. Change	C. College	D. Military Training Definition
First Iteration: Initial Code			
A1. Directive	B1. Military training program	C1. Delegation	D1. Structured
A2. Positional leadership	B2. Exposure to good leaders	C2. Modeling leadership	D2. Mission focused
A3. Task orientated	B3. Progression from follower to leader	C3. Peer leadership	D3. People focused
		C4. Confident	D4. Similar definitions
		C5. Continual process	

Leadership defined. Participants indicated their experiences had a particularly strong impact on how they learned and subsequently constructed a definition of leadership. Participants described how their definition changed from high school to college, both through formal and

practice-based learning experiences that led them to refine their understanding of leadership. Participants described how this definition was shaped over the span of several intense years living daily in a military training environment on a college campus.

High school. As might be expected, participants' ideas around leadership evolved from earlier experiences. Participants explained how their definition of leadership changed by referencing experiences in high school. For example, participants often described leadership prior to military training as directive, task orientated, and based on position. According to Razz, a civilian track cadet who completed four semesters, "…in high school, I guess it was just someone who tells everyone what to do." Leadership at that time was focused on following directions, giving orders and as the leader doing all the work. Similarly, according to Leigh, an Air Force ROTC cadet with six completed semesters, "…the biggest thing that I struggled with and I think most people struggle with when you're in a leadership position is [delegation]…you just want to do everything yourself."

College. As participants entered the university and their military training, the definition of leadership began to shift. While leadership was still position based as it was in high school, a clearly defined hierarchy and formal structure to leadership begins to emerge where leaders and followers are denoted by military rank. Many participants described the first year in the program being focused on learning to follow others and to respect authority. It was in this first year that participants began to experience and make meaning of peer leadership.

Participants described this time experiencing peer leadership as being one of the most challenging components of leadership they learned. Learning to first follow and then lead others of a similar age was an important revelation to many who had limited, if any, previous experience in hierarchical organizations. According to Susan, an Army ROTC track cadet with

eight completed semesters, peer leadership prompted an unfamiliar layer of self-awareness, saying it is "…way harder than anything else for sure. Especially peers that you respect and you know they could probably do this job better than you." Similarly, Scout, an Army ROTC track cadet with four completed semesters, said, "Peer leadership is probably the hardest thing I've encountered in my life so far." This was echoed across participants as many expressed an uneasiness with blurring lines between leader and follower as they progressed in their years of experience in the military training context. In many instances "bosses" were peers, friends became leaders they were required to follow, and leadership started to mean leading from the middle.

Through the experience, women reported increased level of confidence as they described their definition of leadership. Women shared experiences of being able to speak in front of large crowds, have a command presence, and feel comfortable presenting to their peers. This was a drastic change from how they viewed their abilities in high school. Page, a citizen leader track cadet with eight completed semesters, describes the impact the military training program has had on her definition of leadership and confidence:

> I would have thought about it [definition of leadership] differently [in high school] because I used to be a very timid person. And I mean, I was always very social but when it came to being in front of people and wanting to talk to people and tell them what to do, my brain stops working. And then when I started the [military training program], I was so scared and didn't want to talk to anybody, speak up for anything. And now, I just kind of do whatever I think is right now.

Many women talked of their initial ideas about qualities of a leader transitioning from using terms such as *directive* and *task orientated* to *delegation*, *organized*, and *modeling*

leadership. The definition of leadership evolved from getting the work done to supporting, caring and developing their people. In her reflections of her time as a leader, Leigh shared "[Younger cadets] are just able to see all these different types of leaders, and so hopefully I can be one of those role models that they aspire to be."

As participants' understanding of leadership grew, their definition of leadership continued to shift towards a more nuanced understanding. Participants who had been in the program for six or more semesters began to define leadership as a continual process, that their learning of what leadership is and how to be a leader will continue to grow and change over time. Now instead of needing to hold a position to be respected and seen as a leader, participants described the importance of modeling good leadership to others. Daniella, an Army ROTC cadet with six completed semesters, summarized it well when she said:

> I think leadership is definitely… it's one of those things that never stops. It's always going, it's always evolving. One thing that you did as a leader yesterday is not necessarily the same way you might do it the next time because you've seen a new way to do it or a better way to do it.

Change. Participants' definition shifted as they progressed through their time in the military training program and were exposed to good leaders, an experience some had never had, such as Razz, "In high school… I don't think I was exposed to very many good leaders, because here I can definitely tell, like our [military training program staff]. I'm like, wow, I understand why they got where they were." Prior to the military training program, Razz and others had only been exposed to mediocre or bad leaders, learning what not to do, but not seeing examples of what a leader should be.

The military training program taught the women leadership theory and provided real life examples of good leaders, but it also provided the environment for them to practice and learn leadership for themselves, which contributed to this change. They were able to make mistakes and learn from them, putting into practice what they learned in the classroom.

Participants also described the progression from follower to leader as a critical learning experience that contributed to their shift in definition. They went from often being the top leader in high school, to being at the very bottom once they joined the military training program. This forced them to learn leadership at a slower pace. Sue described how this process helped her to refine her definition of leadership:

> I definitely think the slow progression from follower to leader in the [military training program] has changed it. I know coming out of high school, if someone were just like, "Go lead this squad or platoon," I would have no idea what's going on. But coming in as a freshman, even though it's stressful, just learning everything, and each year as you progress you become, I guess, more grateful. If you stayed in…[you realize] that it's more developmental to be like cadre than to be the freshmen that are getting trained."

The military training program allowed for the progression of learning leadership, and putting that leadership into practice, which for many, was the piece that contributed most to their shift in definition of leadership.

Military training definition. As participants had not yet had the opportunity to serve in the active military, participants were asked to describe the military training program's definition of leadership. Many women reported it being very similar to their own with a focus on caring for one's people and service to others. However, they also noted that there was not necessarily a

one size fits all definition of leadership, and that the nuances of how the program defines

leadership can be different across cadets and staff, as exemplified in Susan's response:

> There is the kind of general mold, but within the [military training program], there really
>
> is no cookie cutter leader, which I think is really awesome because it teaches you to play
>
> to your strengths…I don't know if the [military training program] really holds tight to a
>
> certain definition of leadership, aside from holding to the…school's motto, so that's kind
>
> of the baseline, and then from there, it's just develop within your strengths and develop to
>
> be a leader who's compassionate to other people.

Some participants did share that the military training program's definition varied from

their own in that it was mission focused and very structured, which at times was at odds with the

people focused mentality and defining leadership beyond positions held. Anne described it as

"…very structured. So it's hard sometimes if you're not in a position of leadership to be a

leader, because you're not encouraged." This sentiment was echoed in Leigh's experience as

well, "They're [military training program] more structured-based…want someone who can take

orders and carry out the mission of their chain…Their definition of leadership I would say is

being able to carry out whatever mission they give."

Women's experience in the military training program refined their definition of

leadership from previous concepts held in high school, and participants demonstrated an ability

to differentiate between their own definition of leadership and that of the military training

program's definition. Identifying similarities and the impact of the training program on their

definition, but recognizing and being able to describe how what they have learned, departs from

how they define leadership for themselves.

My analysis of the data identified the major theme that helped to answer my first research question, "How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?" The theme *leadership defined* is indicative of how their experiences, from high school to college, had a particularly strong impact on how they learned and subsequently constructed a definition of leadership.

Research Question Two

My second research question was about how women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment changed over time. My analysis of the data identified three major themes that related to this research question, *internal dialogue, strategies for managing influences, and practicing leadership*, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

RQ 2: How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change over time?

Third Iteration: Theme		
A. Internal Dialogue	B. Strategies for Managing Influences	C. Practicing Leadership
Second Iteration: Subtheme		
A1. View of self	B1. Code switching	C1. People focused
A2. Self-reflection	B2. Gender ignored	C2. Developmental
First Iteration: Initial Code		
A1.1. Authentic	B1.1 Feminine/soldier	C1.1. Be present
A1.2. Confident	B1.2. Cadet/civilian	C1.2. Relational
A1.3. See self as leader	B1.3. Friend/leader	C1.3. Serve others
		C1.4. Taking care of people
A2.1. Failures	B2.1. Don't see gender	
A2.2. Accountability	B2.2. Equal treatment	C2.1. Developing others
		C2.2. Inspire
		C2.3. Teach

Theme 1: Internal dialogue. Participants shared how their own experiences involved *internal dialogue* about their ability to be a leader and see themselves as leaders, and revealed internal processing of their experiences. *Internal dialogue* had two sub-themes, *self-reflection*

and *view of self*. These contributed to how they received and processed messaging about leadership and what their own internal struggles were.

Self-reflection. As participants shared their experiences in the military training environment, many highlighted how they reflected on their understanding of leadership through their failures and self-imposed accountability. The failures were moments when participants believed they made a wrong decision or would do something differently to help their direct reports. One participant shared how her cadet's failures were *her* failures. Here is Razz talking about a cadet under her leadership:

> There's someone who's failed four consecutive PT [physical training] tests. He's going under performance review soon and if he doesn't pass this next PT test, it's very unlikely he's going to be allowed to stay…He was part of my squad…I tried to get him to do PT and I tried to get him to have the motivation…and nothing I said to him helped…I felt very at a loss of what do with that…I felt like I failed.

Others described how they had learned from their failures. Susan illustrated this through her reflection on serving as a commander:

> [It] was the biggest growing experience I've had…I failed over and over and over again. And I was like, "When will this end?" But it never ended…I learned so much from that…And I learned because I failed. And a lot of my learning has come from failing.

Reflection on accountability included learning humility and accepting responsibility for their actions. This internal dialogue shaped their view of self as a leader. One participant shared how important it was to her to own up to one's mistakes. Emily, an Air Force ROTC cadet with four completed semesters, shared "humility is a really big one for me because I'm not perfect, and I know I'm not. I'm not afraid to admit, 'Okay, that was my bad. My mistake.'"

Margaret's reflection, an Army ROTC cadet who completed all eight semesters, captured both the thought on leaders learning from failures and the importance of owning up to one's mistakes well when she shared:

If you do something wrong, owning up to it. If one of your people did something wrong, owning up to with them and then helping them through it. So being accountable for the fact that it might have been a failure on your part as a leader.

This reflection contributed to how women saw themselves as leaders over time.

View of self. Participants shared how over time their view of self changed. This appeared through three subthemes *authentic*, *confidence*, and *seeing self as a leader*.

Over time practicing leadership and reflecting on experiences, participants learned the type of leader they wanted to be and began to embrace that more. This showed up through increased confidence in themselves as a leader, which also contributed to them feeling comfortable being an authentic version of themselves. Margaret exemplified this when she shared, "I am confident, I mean I was confident before but it's a just a different kind of confident, I'm bold, I'm a lot wiser and patient, and a lot more caring." She contributes this to the community that she learned from and supported her through the military training experience.

Through time in the military training environment, participants began to see themselves as leaders. Early in the experience, this was positional focused, in that they were only a leader if they held a position. As shown through Jane's experience, an Army ROTC cadet with six completed semesters, when asked if she saw herself as a leader:

In high school I think I did, but then coming here you start from the bottom and it was, you know, [first year] we kind of break you down a little bit in order for them to build you up for the next couple of years and so I think now, yes absolutely, I do. I feel like

that I've proven that I am one after having been selected for different positions and then

doing well in them.

The further along a participant was in the military training environment, the more they were able

to see themselves as a leader without position.

Internal dialogue was one theme that emerged from the data that helped to answer how

women's view of self as a leader changed over time in a military training environment.

Strategies for managing dialogue was the second theme that emerged from my analysis.

Theme 2: Strategies for managing influences. The second theme identified that helped

to answer research question two was strategies for managing influences. This theme applied to

both external and internal influences. These strategies included the two subthemes *code*

switching and *gender ignored*.

Code switching. Code switching, in this context meaning to switch between identities,

was identified as a strategy for managing influences. Code switching included switching

between feminine and soldier depending on the environment. This was illustrated by Alicia, an

Army ROTC cadet who completed six semesters, who shared the following:

> I think it's a constant reevaluation process because when I'm here [military training
>
> environment] I tend to be less girly just because I'm constantly surrounded by a military
>
> environment. And then, when I go home I kind of rediscover some of the girly things I
>
> do and how I dress tends to be a little bit more feminine and girly when I'm outside of
>
> [military training program] just because this is the environment. But, I think it's like I'm
>
> starting to better find that balance of it's okay to be girly. There's nothing wrong with
>
> being feminine in uniform, you just have to still be professional and respectable.

Others talked about the need to switch between being a cadet and civilian and balancing priorities.

Many participants described the necessity, as well as an accomplishment, to be able to switch between friend and leader, in an environment that focused on peer leadership. Jane, who had to counsel one of her good friends, illustrated it well when she shared:

> It was really difficult to be serious, I had to actually like, step into my role and put our friendship aside for a second, which was kind of difficult. But after I did it, it felt really good knowing that I can flip the switch when I need to.

Code switching allowed for participants to managing the competing influences experienced while learning leadership in multiple different contexts.

Gender ignored. The strategy *gender ignored* was identified in the data as participants described gender being a non-issue. According to some participants, they did not see gender impact their experience or understand why their gender identity as woman mattered. They wanted to participate in the experience equally as their fellow cadets who identified as man. Joan, a Navy ROTC cadet who completed four semesters, shared how she is "usually a little wary about the whole separating women from men and discussing it that way because I haven't seen much of a difference." Isabella, who is on track to join the Marines with two semesters remaining, echoed a similar sentiment.

> I think a lot of females in the [military training program] and in the ROTC programs don't really feel like a minority. I don't think we really think about it. Maybe when people are crunching numbers, and you can just see the big difference between males and females, it maybe looks like a big difference. I really don't think that it's something

that's consciously thought about by cadet a lot. I think it's just something that is the way

it is.

Gender ignored was identified as a strategy that some participants may have employed in

order to lessen the impact by the external influences in the military training environment.

Participants who shared that gender should not or does not matter, and that their experience was

not impacted by their gender, still shared examples of how they were treated differently or had to

act differently due to their identity as woman. Demonstrating that while it was their preference

for their gender not to matter, it clearly still did in some instances. For example, Isabell shared:

Something definitely that's different between getting orders from a female versus a

male… is when a male tells you to do something, it is what it is. When a female tells you

to do something, it can come off as sounding bossy, and rude, and bitchy, and oh my

gosh. So it's kind of like that in the [military training program] too, sometimes there will

be males who when they have a female above them and they hear her tell them to do

something, it's like, "Oh, what a bitch. Why is she having us do that?" But if they were

hearing it from a guy it would be completely different…And I've definitely been in that

experience or I've seen that happen.

Joan shared a different example where she was trying to fight against the standard, which

was perceived to be more of an alpha male role, as she was taking on a new position:

And really, actually any NCO role, which is what the juniors fall into, are a little more

bring down the hammer and force standards, but I'm excited because, generally, it's

taken on a very aggressive and a little more puff-out-your-chest way, and I think that I

have a way to do it and I definitely want to make – I want to show – I want demonstrate

that there's a way to do it that you don't have to be a big alpha male…So it's definitely

interesting because this is a role that doesn't generally fit with my personality, but I

definitely am excited to see how my personality type can – I'll see if I can change that a

little bit.

 Both women shared examples of either experiencing or witnessing differential treatment

or double standards in relation to gender. Therefore, while the preference may have been for

gender to be a non-issue, or they tried not to see how it affected theirs and others experiences, it

appeared that it still played a role in leadership identity development.

Strategies for managing influences was an important theme that emerged from my

analysis, as it shed light on how women's view of self as a leader, in the context of a military

training environment, changes over time. *Practicing leadership* was another theme that emerged

from the data.

Theme 3: Practicing leadership. The third theme identified that helped to answer how

women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment changed over time was

practicing leadership. This theme contains two subthemes, *people focused* and *developmental*.

People focused. Participants described how over time their view of how they practiced

leadership evolved from being directive to a focus on care for their people. Participants

described the importance of caring for direct reports, showing up and being present where your

people are and knowing the people under you command. Often it is a mission first mentality, but

Anne, who was civilian track with eight semesters completed, shared she thought it should be

people first; "I think it's really important that you take care of your people while also achieving

the mission…I feel like the people are more important."

Many participants emphasized the importance of showing care, knowing the people under your command, and their lives in order to be a good leader. Leigh illustrated this desire to be authentic with her people well when she shared:

> Trying to get to get to know people from their roots and try to genuinely go deep into conversations with people instead of saying, "Have a good day" like the whole, I guess, not artificial…try to get to know my people very well so that they feel comfortable telling me.

Others described it as sacrificing for others and a desire to serve others, as demonstrated by Sarah when defining leadership:

> Sacrifice, just being willing to be a servant leader, to sacrifice your time, to sacrifice your needs, your sleep, your everything in order to take care of the people under you or adjacent to you. If I can let someone else sleep in and do something for them in the meantime, like volunteer for something in the Army, then I want to be the one doing that…it was just learning how to sacrifice.

Developmental. Based on the experiences shared by participants, a strong focus on developing "your people" was a change participants experienced during their time in the military training experience. A developmental focus involved not just caring about your people but investing in their career development and long-term goals. Participants such as Razz described the importance of "enabling others to achieve their goals" while Anne suggested that she tended to "focus on teaching". Participants shared that as leaders they were development focused and had a desire to make their people better. They took ownership for inspiring others to do the right thing.

My analysis of the data identified three major themes that helped to answer my second research question, which was about how view of self as a leader in a military training environment changed over time. These themes were *internal dialogue*, *strategies for managing influences*, and *practicing leadership*.

Research Question Three

My third research question focused on what experiences participants perceived contributed to and inhibited their development of a view of self as a leader. My analysis of the data identified three major themes that related to this research question, *context for learning leadership, external influences, and internal influences*, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

RQ 3: What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development of a view of self as a leader?

Third Iteration: Theme		
A. Context for Learning Leadership	B. External Influences	C. Internal Influences
Second Iteration: Subtheme		
A1. Military Training Environment	B1. Leadership role modeled	C1. Internalized stereotypes
A2. Civilian	B2. Experienced challenge	
	B3. Gender Bias	
	B4. Gendering	
First Iteration: Initial Code		
A1.1. Climate	B1.1. Bad leaders	C1.1. Negative self-talk
A1.2. Better for women	B1.2. Mentor	C1.2. Other's perceptions
	B1.3. Role model	C1.3. Prove self
A2.1. Outside involvement	B1.4. Someone invested	
	B2.1. Sexual assault	
	B2.2. Injury	
	B2.3. Disqualified	
	B3.1. Different standards	
	B3.2. Female competition	
	B3.3. Positivity	
	B3.4. Physical training	
	B3.5. Quota	
	B4.1. Female leadership	
	B4.2. Gendered positions	

Theme 1: Context for learning leadership. My analysis of participants' experiences resulted in the theme *context for learning leadership*. This theme developed from the subthemes *military* training *environment* and *civilian*.

The theme *context for learning leadership*, the environment in which cadet women developed their view of self as a leader, played a critical role for participants. The main context was the *military training environment*. However, given that the single institution used also had a non-military, traditional college environment component, from this point referred to as civilian,

some participants also shared how the *civilian* context contributed to their view of self as a leader.

  Military training environment. The military training environment was a 24-hours a day/seven days a week leadership development program where all members were in the same environment, but may have different tracks; Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Army ROTC, Marines, Navy ROTC and civilian. Participants described how this context contributed to and in some cases, inhibited their view of self as a leader through the subthemes *climate* and perception that some services were *better for women*.

  Climate. Participants shared their experiences and described the climate of the military training environment. The climate was described as slow to change. Participants discussed how the institution originally started as all male and that contributes to the current climate.

  When women were first admitted to the program, all women were assigned to the same group, in which they housed and marched together. They were not fully integrated into the program until later. This history likely contributes to what many described as a boys' club and male-dominated. Hermione, an Air Force ROTC track cadet who completed six semesters, shared:

    I joke a lot, "You gave up your gender when you joined the [program]." At this point, it's

    like you are one of the guys. It's definitely a guys' club but on the other hand, I mean, I

    don't think there's really people here that look on you differently because you're a girl.

One participant shared the climate influenced the type of female you have to be, as illustrated by Jane:

    I think for the Army environment, I definitely try to be more…I don't even know what

    the word is, like tougher or something like that because it is such a male-dominated

profession that I do feel like sometimes I change the way that I act to fit in. I always tell,

like girls that I lead, "Oh don't do that," but like, I do it too. It's just a natural instinct to

just be one of the guys.

Isabella shared how she felt the military training environment, while majority male, was actually

good practice for active duty:

And it was kind of a guy's world, and you know that you're a female. So if you do have

an opinion about something, somebody might write it off as, "Ugh. That's just her being

a girl. This is a guy's environment," type of thing. But other than that, I really don't

think females really think too much into it. If anything, it's really really good practice for

how the real military is. And learning how to work with males. And males learning how

to work with females is really important.

Some participants shared that climate could vary depending on which company you were

in or which ROTC you were a part of. For that reason, participants reported selecting specific

services or tracks perceived to be better for women.

Better for women. When participants were asked why they joined a particular track,

some shared it was because they heard it was better for women. One participant shared she was

told the Air Force was better for women and that influenced her decision. Another shared she

was told the Navy and Marines were not a welcoming environment for women. When asked if

perception was reality, one participant shared this was not the case for Navy but the Marine

perception seems to be true, Marines have the fewest women. Scout captured this sentiment

when she shared why she selected Army:

I know the Marines don't have a very good reputation with females. And I know the

Navy kind of doesn't either. And so it's really always up to the Air Force or Army. And

I know I wanted to go Army because I felt like I had the most opportunities.

A few participants described the Army as doing a good job of welcoming women and

treating them fairly. A large majority of the participants shared they felt the military training

program was a welcoming environment for women and that their gender did not impact their

experience.

The context of the military training environment has components that both contributed

and inhibited women's development of a view of self as a leader. The *civilian* context also

contributed to some women's development.

Civilian. The civilian context included the subtheme *outside involvement*, which both

contributed to but also inhibited women's development of a view of self as a leader.

Participants described involvement outside the military training environment contributed

to their broader view of leadership and how they practiced leadership. It allowed them the

opportunity to practice leadership in a different context. Lindsey for example, who completed

four semesters in the program and was Army ROTC, served on the orientation team. She shared

how the experience serving in a different context helped her as a leader, "It was definitely

something that shaped my leadership, just like with organization and communication and

knowing the why behind things." And Page, who completed all eight semesters in the program

and civilian track, talked about her experience in her sorority:

Being in my sorority, I was actually on homecoming court my senior year. And so that

kind of put me in the spotlight that I wasn't used to having, and so it made me kind of

realize that, hey, all eyes are on you. You need to make sure that you're doing this. But

then also at the same time, it's okay to make mistakes. And it's okay to just be who you are. You don't have to put on a show ever. And so it's a very humbling experience…it was just that kind of experience definitely made me realize what I was doing and who I was as a person was a very positive person and wanting the best for everyone and everything, and so I think my sorority has definitely influenced a lot of who I was also.

Participants also described the challenges faced with involvement outside the military training environment. Too much involvement in the civilian context for some was seen as a negative. They felt their loyalty to the military training environment was called into question as well as their ability to serve in leadership roles. Page felt this when she experienced conflict regarding her attire for homecoming, whether to wear the uniform or wear a gown representing her organization:

> For the actual walking on the field…I'd talked to them [military training program], and I was like, "Listen. I know that it would be great to represent the [military training program], but at the same time, I'm representing my organization. I don't want people to associate me with just being, oh, she's a cadet." I wanted to them to know, oh, she is representing her organization for what she's standing up for… And so it was a little bit of pushback, actually a lot of pushback, but I think that in the end, they definitely understood where I was coming from, and it was hard, but it helped to have other people understanding.

Some participants described feeling there was a double standard for men involved in Greek affiliated organizations and women involved in Greek affiliated organizations. As demonstrated by Margaret's experience:

If you're in a sorority and you're in the [military training program] it's a big

hullabaloo…they're looked down upon because it's that girl frilly thing…I think it's

really frustrating when a guy can be in a super high leadership position and be in a

fraternity and no one really says anything about it…but as soon as you step out in your

sorority letters it's like, "Wow, hmm, you're not gonna dedicate your time to [military

training program]."

Involvement in the civilian context contributed to women's development as a leader in

that it allowed for a second context to practice leadership. However, if too involved, it was seen

to inhibit women's leadership development. Another theme that helped to answer the research

question was *external influences*.

Theme 2: External influences. My analysis of participants' experiences resulted in the

theme external influences. This theme developed from the subthemes *leadership role modeled*,

experienced challenge, *gender bias*, and *gendering*. External influences are behaviors and

messages participants were exposed to that shaped their view of leadership and contributed to

how they practiced leadership.

Leadership role modeled. Participants described observing leaders who influenced and

contributed to what they thought a leader should be and how they should act. Leadership role

modeled included good examples of leaders from role models and mentors, but also poor

examples of leadership.

Participants described good leaders who served as mentors, either through formal

structures or informal relationships. Participants described peers who served as mentors as well

teachers, family members, and staff within the organization. That mentors have an important

role in teaching and investing in their mentees. Some participants believed it was not necessary

for the mentor to be a woman, but what mattered was that they took the time to develop the

mentee.

Bad leaders were described as unprofessional, terrible to people and would not listen to

their people. Bad leaders had a large impact on others, decreasing morale and failing to meet

expectations of those who report to them. In the process of learning leadership, participants still

learned even from the bad leaders. Hermione shared this reflection when talking about previous

leaders:

> And then along the way, you pick up things. Like, I've had squad leaders I didn't like.
>
> I've had commanders that I really didn't like and, in that sense, I think the negative
>
> shapes you more…I never want to act like that.

Role models were described as individuals who inspired others. Participants shared role

models ranged from coaches and parents to their one up in the chain of command and women in

leadership. These individuals were described as role models for what good leadership looked

like. Qualities used to describe role models for good leadership included care for people,

relational, and investment in others. Daniella grew as a leader by learning from someone who

she felt role modeled good leadership, "He's one of those that believed in us…the fact that he

believed in us, that we could get better and that we will get better…that definitely shaped me as a

leader…he's one of those people that I learned from."

Leadership role modeled was a subtheme of external influences that contributed to how

women's view of self as a leader developed. Another subtheme of external influences was

experienced challenge.

Experienced challenge. Participants described experiences they identified as a challenge

or crisis, and coming out the other side stronger. Many participants described experiences that

forced them to make a choice as to whether they will continue in the organization and on their

career trajectory or make a change. They made the choice to persevere through the challenge,

which contributed to how they view themselves as a leader.

Alicia, who completed six semesters in the program and Army ROTC, described a back

injury in high school that inhibited her ability to continue with gymnastics, but also taught her

about how she wants to lead others:

> I was a competitive gymnast for years, and I was recovering from a knee injury and I fell
>
> one day while I was trying to start tumbling again, and I injured my back. And, it was so
>
> bad that I couldn't move, like I could barely walk, I couldn't bend over to tie my shoes or
>
> anything. And, it took me quite a while to recover. And, it still bothers me sometimes I
>
> have issues with some of the disks in my back and things like that. And, I had to quit
>
> gymnastics and that was the most devastating thing in the world to me at the time. 'Cause
>
> my whole life revolved around the sport of gymnastics so, and I was in high school, and I
>
> had just moved… I was dealing with this new school, I didn't know anybody, and I lost
>
> the sport that my life revolved around. So, I was just completely lost. And then, I kind
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> of tried different things and it kind of forced me to step outside of my comfort zone.
>
> And, I think I really learned how to value just being a well-rounded individual from that
>
> and appreciate going outside of your comfort zone, trying new things, accepting what you
>
> can't control, and making the best of your situation. And, I think that experience really
>
> helped me kind of push that well-rounded idea out to people that I lead. And, it's really
>
> important to me for anyone that I'm leading, that they're not just good at putting on a
>
> good uniform, or just good at PT, or just good at one aspect. I really try to make sure that
>
> they're happy with their friendships, their relationships, their academics, their life in the

[military training program], and that they're really getting a well-rounded experience. Because I think it is so important to have well rounded people leading not just a good cadet.

Through the experience, Alicia shared how she grew from the challenge she experienced. Margaret, who completed eight semesters in the program and was Army ROTC, shared how two different peers sexually assaulted her during her time in the military training program. She described how she is resilient and stronger from the experience and how it has shaped her leadership:

No one should get taken advantage of ever, but I think, particularly in the [military training program], guys get this power struggle when they think they're big and in charge and in leadership and they just go nutso and do stupid stuff. And that really impacted my kind of trajectory in the [military training program] but also in the end from how I dealt with it. It showed my resilience and tenacity, which, those are two of my favorite words. I realized that no one could mess with me after that. Once I took the time to realize what happened and all that stuff, like I am essentially invincible…I think me dealing with a lot of the trauma of things in college ended up being one of my greatest strengths because of how I handled it. But it's not the idea of trauma that made me great, it's the idea that I pick myself back up every single time.

Margaret also shared how it not only influenced her own view of self as a leader, but also how others questioned her ability to lead:

Leadership wise it just made me feel very small and ... until I went to talk to people, got it all out there. But I felt really small, very, obviously, taken advantage of and didn't feel safe for a while. And I think when you're trying to be a leader and be the best that you

can be and someone does something like that it's pretty unfair because they go on and live their life and they're trying to get leadership positions and that's not fair. And I think because people thought I was emotionally damaged or had whatever problems from both times happening ... not as much senior year because it was second semester senior year but junior year they were like, "Well, is Ms. Margaret… gonna be okay in this leadership position, is this too much?" I'm like, "It's not too much for me to handle because I'm still here and kicking butt." I had a 3.6 that semester, I took some incompletes and finished classes later because I went home and I'd tell people, "What happened?" Okay, so I was like, "I'm really sick," I went home early because I just needed to get out of [town] and I switched rooms second semester, and everything was good to go. As good as it can be to go, and I think the way people treated me is like, oh, if something happened to a guy would you ask the same questions, like are they emotionally okay? And I think that was really, really frustrating because I know it definitely impacted what leadership position I got that second semester because people didn't think I was ready and I was very ready. I've always been ready for whatever position because that's just in my nature and that's just a really crappy thing… being sexually assaulted puts a damper on anyone's day but I think when you're trying to think of yourself as a strong empowered woman or just leader in general it makes you question a lot about your self-worth. But I'm a heck ton better. I think that's a big part of the pivoting of my leadership and my abilities because I realized I was worth a lot and I'm an important entity to society, whether it's being a cadet, a student leader on campus, anything like that.

The challenges experienced by participants was not positive; it was however how they reflected on the challenge; demonstrating resiliency, tenacity, self-awareness, and perseverance

that helped to shape their view of self as a leader. Participants who described experiencing a

challenge or crisis while in the program also described how they learned and grew from that

experience. They were able to reflect on the experience and see how it made them a stronger

person and a better leader, as both Alicia and Margaret did.

    Gender bias. Gender bias was an external influence identified through the analysis of the

data that inhibited participants' view of self as a leader. Gender bias was not an external

influence that many participants were able to identify easily themselves, as their preference was

to ignore their gender and assume it had no impact on their leadership identity development.

Through analysis of the data, however, it was clear gender bias manifested itself in a variety of

ways including different standards, creating competition among females, cadet women being told

they were too positive, the need to meet quotas, and challenges with physical training.

    Participants described a variety of different standards experienced by cisgender women

and men. The first was the difference in interpretation of assertiveness. If a man was assertive,

it was interpreted as taking initiative and taking charge. If a woman was assertive, she was

considered a bitch and ranked low by her peers. Isabella shared, "I'm going to be a big bitch. I

know that. That's okay. But that's also part of being a female in the military is accepting that."

    Sarah, who completed four semesters and was citizen track, shared her perspective on

struggling with the balance of being too nice or strict:

    Women have a hard balance between being strict and being a bitch. And trying not to do

    that. And I think we box ourselves in so much to not try and be a bitch, and it just-- I

    don't know. There's no happy place, unfortunately… I'm just too nice. I've been told I'm

    too nice. This morning I was told I was too nice. And I was like, "I thought I was being

    strict." And they're like, "No. You were being really nice." I don't know.

When asked which was worse for her, being perceived as a bitch or too nice, Sarah shared:

> Probably being a bitch because if you're a bitch then that's all anyone thinks of you. But
> if you're too nice, they're just like, "Oh, she's just really really nice." And I mean, it may
> annoy people, but they're not going to get mad at you, or they're not going to not listen to
> you because you're being too nice, for the most part.

Participants described women and men being rated differently by their peers. Men evaluated women differently; women were scrutinized when selected for leadership positions with an expectation to check all the boxes. This was in contrast to male peers who could be mediocre and no one questioned when they were selected for leadership position. Sue shared her experience at a military summer training camp:

> I was told in my platoon, from a lot of people, that I just come off as a super nice person
> so people want to help me...Versus my battle bestie there…we had very opposite
> characteristics. I was the super nice one…I ranked super high on my peer evals because
> of that…Then [my friend] she was super abrasive. She was called a bitch by a lot of the
> people in the platoon. I did think that sometimes she came off strong, but I didn't think
> there was anything wrong with it, because that's how she led and she got stuff done, and I
> actually thought she did super well. But then when all the guys talked about her, she got
> ranked second to last. They were just like, "She's not nice, and she just does stuff this
> way".

Another different standard was the ability to sleep with different sexual partners. According to participants, men can sleep around and still attain leadership positions and respect. However, women lose respect if they sleep around, are less likely to achieve a leadership

position, and referred to as "whores". Emily reiterated this analysis when she shared her perception:

> Women are just seen in such a different light…If they're known as that [whore], there's no…I don't see how they could hold a leadership position and be taken seriously. Especially if it's known that they hooked up with somebody in the [program]. They're like, "Well, I heard she hooked up with this guy, and now she's trying to lead everybody." The guys aren't going to take her seriously…That kind of title ruins that potential for them, because they could be good leaders, but nobody's going to follow them because they have this reputation.

Given the small number of women, the standard of leadership as male, and other gender biases experienced by participants, some participants described the competition that can occur for women when they feel they are vying for limited positions. Female competition is women sizing themselves up to other women and feeling the need to be seen as better than or different from the other women. A few women described this as judging other women and disagreeing with the philosophy that they should be treated differently because they are women.

A few of the women did not report experiencing female competition specifically in their ROTC programs, such as Emily, who was Air Force ROTC with four completed semesters, "I haven't really seen any competition in the Air Force that I have seen in the [military training program]." And others shared they felt women did a good job of supporting each other. That they rely on each other for support and lift each other up, such as Scout, who completed four semesters and was Army ROTC, "I think we do rely on each other. I am very good friends with a lot of other female leaders in the [military training program], and not just from my company."

A few participants described themselves as very positive people. Moreover, they saw it as a good quality of a leader, however they were referred to as too smiley, and too positive, as shared by Scout, who was Army ROTC and had completed four semesters, "I do have a reputation of being a positive person, even sometimes overly positive. And that kind of reputation doesn't bother me because that's just who I am. I'm enthusiastic." Others were told they were too soft due to their kindness and positivity, such as Susan, who had completed all eight semesters and was Army ROTC, "They always told me I was too soft, but that's who I am." Participants received these comments as feedback on their leadership style that may need to change prior to active duty.

Participants described that within the organization there are expectations for how many women there are in leadership roles in each level of the chain of command. These quotas were seen as a detriment to women's successful leadership as many participants reported being questioned for attaining a leadership role or hearing that she only got it because they need a female. This instilled a fear and self-doubt in some participants that instead of earning a position, they were selected only because of their gender to fulfill a quota.

Physical training (PT) was another area women felt there were different standards for cisgender men and women. According to participants, not only do the different services have standards that are differentiated based on sex, but women feel the need to keep up with men in order to attain respect. If a woman is strong at PT, her peers are impressed and surprised by her ability. Alicia shared her perspective on PT:

> PT, I mean typically it's a little harder for females to be as fast of runners and things like
>
> that. So, that's kind of something that I think we've all struggled a little bit with. We

want to keep up with the guys on everything. We never want to be viewed as slower or

not as capable in any capacity.

The ability to be seen as a strong leader seemed to be tied to one's ability to be strong

physically and achieve a high PT score. This reinforces the standard of a good leader as male.

Gendering. Gendering is in reference to styles of leadership and certain positions seen as

female, which inhibits participants' ability to view themselves as leaders in all areas. Female

leaders were often described as pushing for company unity, seen as a mom figure in their

leadership roles, and played the support role. Susan shared all that she learned from her two

direct reports, both men, but neither learned from her, they questioned her style of leadership,

and considered her too soft.

Other participants described specific positions that are more typical "girl jobs" or

positions that are not commonly held by men. As the perception reported was that women play

the support role, positions such as public affairs and medical service officer tend to be filled by

more women. While positions such as a non-commissioned officer (NCO) require the more

typical Alpha male leadership qualities. Susan also shared that:

> Sometimes they try to mold you into…into this box of you have to be tough. You have
>
> to be kind of insensitive. You have to just be that go-get-them leader…but they're also,
>
> through other leadership courses….incorporating the, I would say, more important side of
>
> leadership, which is caring about people and knowing your people.

Gendering often inhibited women's view of themselves as a leader and ability to be their

authentic versions of themselves.

Theme 3: Internal influences. The theme *internal influences,* focused on the subtheme

internalized stereotypes, also helped to answer the research question as to what inhibits women's

development of a view of self as a leader. The experiences shared by participants demonstrated

how internal dialogue about their ability to be a leader and see themselves as leaders, influenced

their view of self as a leader.

    Internalized stereotypes refers to the messages women have received and processed to be

true that inhibit how they see themselves as a leader. Through analysis of participants'

experiences it became clear that women struggled with negative self-talk, putting too much

weight into other's opinions of them and felt the need to prove themselves to others as well as to

their own selves. These showed up through double thinking decisions, questioning why they

were selected, and fear that it had to do only with their identity as woman. This is illustrated

through Jane's experience:

> Whenever I get picked for a leadership position I don't automatically feel 100%
>
> confident in it, for example when I got [_____] Commander, I definitely didn't think I
>
> deserved it. I wasn't just being humble, like I absolutely was like, there are many other
>
> people in my company who would've done better or could do better and I don't know
>
> why I was picked for it. I was very nervous for this position and so I have to prove it to
>
> other people I can do it.

When I followed up to ask Jane if she ever asked why, she responded by saying, "Sometimes I'm

afraid of the answers…I think what I'd be afraid to hear was 'Oh, by default' or something like

that, 'Oh, you're a girl we need leaders,'" implying the only reason she was selected was due to

her gender expression to fill a quota.

    Participants also spoke a lot about other's perceptions of them. Concern for how women

in general are perceived by men, or how they are individually perceived by men. Some

participants shared a strong desire to want to be liked by others and not be seen as a bitch,

therefore choosing tone and volume in which they spoke to not be received poorly. Sue

illustrated this when she shared she was criticized for yelling when all she did was speak loudly.

Some participants described how they had to learn to be okay that not everyone will like them,

which is part of being a leader. These internalized stereotypes inhibited women's ability to be

their authentic selves and see themselves as a leader unless they behaved in a way that was

accepted by others.

My analysis of the data identified three major themes that helped to answer the research

question, "What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their

development of a view of self as a leader?" These themes were *context for learning leadership*,

external influences, and *internal influences*.

Research Question Four

My fourth research question was about the variations among women in the way they

perceived their view of self as a leader developed in a military training environment. My

analysis of the data identified one major theme that related to this research question, *experiences*.

The intention of this research question prior to the start of the project was to consider the role

diversity played in view of self as a leader. However, due to the limited diversity within the

population that was studied, the participants who engaged in the research were rather

homogenous based on demographics such as race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation and

participants did not share how these identities influenced their experience. However, through

analysis of the data, there were variations among participants based on temporal and positional

experiences, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

RQ 4: What are the variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a military training environment?

Third Iteration: Theme
A. Experiences
Second Iteration: Subtheme
A1. Semesters
A2. Leadership position
First Iteration: Initial Code
A1.1. 4 completed
A1.2. 6 completed
A1.3. 8 completed
A2.1. Cadre
A2.2. Commander
A2.3. Fire Team Leader
A2.4. Regimental staff
A2.5. Battalion staff

Experiences. Through analysis of the data, I identified that the length of time participants engaged in the military training program, number of *semesters*, as well as *leadership positions* held, contributed to variations among participants.

Semesters. The number of semesters completed, four, six, or eight, revealed a difference among participants. Individuals who completed at least six semesters in the military training environment demonstrated more reflection on their experiences and ability to articulate the way gender may have contributed or inhibited their view of self as a leader. For example, Kristian, who completed eight semesters and Air Force ROTC, was able to describe how gender impacted her leadership experience when selected for a leadership position:

I didn't like it at all. I absolutely hated it because I was like, "The only reason they

picked me was because I was a woman and they needed me." And that was the only

reason. It was a checkbox for them. But I talked to my dad, and he was like, "Look,

whether that's their reason or not, you're there to do a job at the end of the day. And who

cares why they picked you. You're there. You have this opportunity, so do it." And I

was like, okay, so that's what I tried to do at the end of the day.

Participants who had completed all eight semesters of the military training program were

able to fondly reflect on their experience and clearly describe how they had been changed by the

experience. This was different from their peers who completed four semesters in the program.

Here is Margaret's reflection after completing her eight semesters:

So I think that's [military training program] what impacted me the most…I am not the

same person as I am when I started at [school name]. I am confident, I mean I was

confident before, but it's just a different kind of confident. I'm bold, I'm a lot wiser and

patient, a lot more caring. And it's the culture and the community of people here that did

that, that helped shape me. I know obviously a lot of it is also that internal dialogue with

yourself and your self-development, but I couldn't have asked for a better four

years…I'm at a loss. It's hard put it into words how much something has changed you

when you don't even realize all the change was happening…I am a different person and I

know my mom can see it too and I think that's something really special.

Leadership position. Through my analysis of the data, leadership positions held

contributed to variations among women in their view of self as a leader. Participants who held a

significant number of positions, as well as high-ranking positions, could describe themselves as a

leader without holding a position.

Participants who held lower ranking positions, designed for individuals who completed

three to five semesters, had a different view of themselves as leader. Their view of leadership

was centered through the lens of positions they held. They saw themselves as leaders, but

because of the title or rank bestowed upon them, not separate from their position. This was

illustrated by Bess, an Army ROTC cadet who completed four semesters, when asked if she saw

herself as a leader, she shared:

> Honestly, after this weekend, yes. And the reason why I say that is I think I put down for
>
> my leadership positions is I'm inspector general… So I inspect uniforms and stuff like
>
> that when we have formals and stuff like that, in random rooms… I have final say if it is
>
> or it's not [a gig]... After doing that, I have thought, "Okay. So what I say actually
>
> matters."… So yeah, I definitely think I'm in charge

> Number of *semesters* completed, as well as *leadership positions* held, contributed to

variations among participants and how they saw themselves as leaders. Based on the

demographic data provide by each participant, the more semesters, and the more significant

positions held, the broader the view of leadership, and that it was not position based, but rather

anyone can be a leader. The theme, *experiences*, helped to answer the final research question

regarding variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader

develops in a military training environment.

In this chapter, I presented evidence of each theme that emerged during data analysis that

help to answer the research questions. These themes were *leadership defined*, *internal dialogue*,

strategies for managing influences, *practicing leadership*, *context for learning leadership*,

external influences, *internal influences*, and *experiences*. In Chapter 5, I will describe how these

findings align or present gaps in the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) (Komives,

Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005) and situate the findings of this study in the

existing research literature on women's leadership development in the context of the military and

military training environment.

Chapter Five

Discussion

In December 2015, the United States' Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, issued a directive that each branch of military avail every position to women (Pellerin, 2015). This new imperative was part of sweeping changes under the Obama Administration to construct a more diverse and inclusive military including a reconceptualization of education and training environments. U.S. military leadership development environments and organizational structures have historically been designed for men, not women, often using men as exemplars for what leadership is and placing a strong emphasis on physical ability as a component of a successful leader. A review of the literature revealed significant gaps in our understanding of women leaders in masculine organizations such as the military. Subsequently, more research is necessary to understand if and how these environments shape and influence leadership development among women. Specifically, this study sought to reveal women's view of self as leader in the context of a military training environment. At the time of this study, a scarcity of research has explored how women develop a view of self as a leader in these environments and how elements of the environment influence this development.

In a groundbreaking study, Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) posited the Leadership Identity Development (LID) model and provided a theory for understanding how college students develop leader identity. This model serves as a framework for the present study, which was designed to explore the context of leadership identity development in a military training environment. Further, this study used constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz (2014). This approach

best fit the purpose of this research study and provided appropriate data to answer the research questions.

Constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis were utilized for this study as a way to better understand and describe the process of how a view of self as a leader changed over time for cadet women in a military training environment explained through the LID Model proposed by Komives et al. (2005). The iterative systematic process of grounded theory provided consistency through the research process from data collection through analysis. The findings in this study suggest that as women develop a leadership identity in a military training environment, the influences and context in which they are learning and practicing leadership shape their view of self as leaders in important and profound ways.

The findings presented in this study were informed by data from individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This process facilitated the emergence of a deeper understanding of cadet women's experiences in a military training context. Data analysis followed three phases to grounded theory analysis: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2014). From this analysis, eight themes emerged that capture the unique experiences of the women who participated in this study. These themes are: *leadership defined*, *internal dialogue*, *strategies for managing influences*, *practicing leadership*, *context for learning leadership*, *external influences*, *internal influences*, and *experiences*.

Describing the Participants

Twenty-one cadets participated in this study who identified as women and completed four semesters or more in a military training program. Each cadet ranged in age from 19 to 23 years, lived on campus, and participated in a 24-hour military training environment at a four-year, public research university. Participants represented all military and civilian tracks offered

by the military training program, which included Air Force ROTC, Army ROTC, civilian track, Marine track, and Navy ROTC. Three participants identified as bisexual. One identified racially as Asian and one as Black. One participant identified as African, one as Chinese, two as Hispanic, and one as Jewish. Fourteen participants reported having a family member who served in the military.

Findings in this study, which are next discussed, suggest that the more semesters participants completed, the better they were able to reflect on their experience in the military training environment and discuss the perceived impact, if any, gender played in how they developed a leadership identity. In addition, some shared that they specifically chose a specific track based on a perception that it was more welcoming and friendly to women.

Discussion of Findings

Through analysis of the data, eight themes emerged: *leadership defined*, *internal dialogue*, *strategies for managing influences*, *practicing leadership*, *context for learning leadership*, *external influences*, *internal influences*, and *experiences*.

Leadership Defined

As described in chapter four, I identified the theme *leadership defined*, which had four temporal subthemes: *high school, change, college* and *military training definition*. For many participants, their leadership identity started during formative high school experiences. During this time, participants overwhelmingly defined leadership based on formal or official position titles and that the central task of leaders was to tell others what to do. This finding aligns with stage three of the LID model, leader identified, in which students recognize that groups have leaders and followers, but being a leader means holding a formal position (Komives et al., 2005).

Leader identified often occurs between high school and transitions through the first year of

college (Komives et al., 2005).

This understanding of leadership begins to shift during college. It is during this time in

college that participants defined leadership in terms of a continual process that focused on

leading peers and role modeling leadership. Leadership went from telling others what to do and

defined based on position to recognition of peer leadership, in which lines between leader and

follower are blurred. Participants begin to value role-modeling leadership from any place within

the organization over positional power. These findings are in alignment with stages four,

leadership differentiated, and five, generativity of the LID model (Komives et al., 2005). In this

stage when leadership is differentiated (stage four) students develop a more complex

understanding of leadership and recognize that anyone can be a leader (Komives et al., 2005).

While in generativity (stage five), students begin investing more time in teaching and leading

younger members of the organization and place less emphasis on formal positions (Komives et

al., 2005). The military training environment provides a unique context for women to move

through these stages, allowing for multiple opportunities to observe the complexities of

leadership (leadership differentiated) and investing in others development regardless of

positional authority (generativity). This shift from position focused to investment in people is

indicative of a seemingly important *change* that participants experienced from *high school* and

through *college*. Participants attributed this change to the set of unique environmental factors

promoted in the military training environment.

These unique environmental factors, specific to military training programs, included

embedded positive role models, intentional curriculum, and opportunity to practice leadership.

Participants' exposure to a set of peer and professional military leaders with formal rank and rich

prior experiences fosters critical examination of what a leader could be. While at the same time,

they were exposed to a formal curriculum focused on leadership theory. Women in this

environment are afforded the opportunity to learn about leadership from textbooks but also be

exposed to and learn from leadership in action. This unique environment promotes hands on

learning, and facilitates progressive leadership experiences that allows for self-reflection and

developing confidence. This combination of classroom and proximate military exercises help

women to intellectually engage with leadership identity and then experiment with their own

identity. A sort of "trial and error" approach helps women to progress from a follower identity to

a leader identity. These experiences are in alignment with the transitions outlined in the LID

model where the environmental factors help to influence the transition between stages (Komives

et al., 2005). The specific transitions were not identified at each individual stage in the analysis

of the women's experiences in this study, but rather as a whole in understanding the *change* that

occurred for the women.

     This demonstrates the powerful impact the military training environment has, both

positive and negative, on the leadership identity development of women. Komives et al. (2005)

described the importance of environmental factors to the transition process such as mentors and

membership in a group. Here, the approaches used in military training—combining classroom

learning with regular practice—seems to boost women's view of self as a leader. Clearly

internal questioning of self generates tension that must be addressed. The military training

environment, which is a distinctly different experience than traditional organization involvement,

requires that this be addressed quickly and compels women to more rapidly grapple with and

resolve internal conflicts to fortify their own view of self as leader.

Given the unique context in which women are developing a view of self as leader in this study, it was not surprising to find that the subtheme *military training definition* is not in alignment with LID model. The unique context of a military training environment shapes how women define leadership and provides an opportunity for women to assert how their definition may vary from that of the organization. For example, participants described the *military training definition* as structured, mission focused, and people focused. However, this definition was not always in alignment with how the women define leadership. The *military training definition* was at odds at times with some participants' definition of leadership, as they place people above mission. The mentality of the military context is that mission must come first above people, in order to keep your people safe. Women need to be able to process through and come to terms with the idea that their definition of leadership may be different than that of the organization.

Women demonstrate their confidence in their view of self as leader as they are able to distinguish between their definition of leadership and the organization's definition. In addition, they are able to reconcile these competing priorities and lead in a way that is true to their authentic selves as leaders while still working within the hierarchal structure of the military training context. These findings identify a gap in the application of the LID model to women in military training environments and answer the research question how women perceive their definition changes during their time in the military training environment.

Internal Dialogue

I identified the theme *internal dialogue* in my research, which had two subthemes: *self-reflection* and *view of self*. It is remarkable the ability participants have to reflect on their experience and enact change within that experience by making mistakes, reflecting on them, and implementing change. Women demonstrate humility and the ability to own up to one's mistakes,

even if the mistake was the fault of someone else, as it is a reflection of their failure as a leader.

Women attribute their *self-reflection* and changing *view of self* as leader to the unique military

training context. Sharing that it is through the unique environment that promotes practicing

leadership that they are able to build confidence and progress to seeing themselves as leaders.

This environment provides women the opportunity to show leadership, peers, and followers how

they have constructed a more sophisticated form of leadership.

Women's *internal dialogue* of reflection and their changing view of self is in alignment

with the category *developing self* from the LID model (Komives et al., 2005). Typical of

students in this age group, they move through this category each time a transition from one stage

to another occurs, marking a shift in how they view themselves in relation to the concept of

leadership (Komives et al., 2005). For women cadets, this means the internal dialogue is rather

dramatically informed by a military environment because of a necessity to assume a command

position. Developing self focuses on increased self-confidence, a greater awareness of self, and

implementing new skills (Komives et al., 2005). This alignment reinforces how women's

experiences in the military training environment promote a changing view of self as a leader as

they progress through the military training program.

Strategies for Managing Influences

As described in chapter four, I identified the theme *strategies for managing influences*,

which has two subthemes, *code switching* and *gender ignored*. As participants talked about their

experiences in the military training program, it became clear many of the women needed to

develop strategies to manage external influences on their view of self as leader to serve as a

barrier from internalizing possible negative messages. Many preferred to have their *gender*

ignored as they only want to be seen as a cadet or solider, not first as a woman. While they felt

their identity as a woman importantly separated them from their peers who identified as men,

they often expressed fear that they were only selected for leadership roles to fill a quota, not

based on their leadership abilities and prior performance. However, as much as the women may

have preferred their gender be a non-issue, as shared from their own personal experiences, this

was in fact not the case. Women cadets often described experiences where others did treat them

differently, or they noticed people treated other women differently because of their gender.

These experiences shape how women view themselves as a leader, internalizing these messages

and making decisions about how to lead based on the response from their peers.

Based on how the women talked about their gender identity, it does appear that many of

the women would downplay their gender. Wanting to avoid attending women only events or be

seen as a "girly" cadet by their male peers, all of which they believe discredited their leadership

ability. By doing this, they were better able to limit the internalization of the perceived

negativity and discriminatory attitudes expressed by male cadets. But at the same time, they may

be denying themselves opportunities that otherwise they would engage in, or hiding a part of

their identity, not fully being themselves. This is a strategy that may be critical for women to

implement in order to be successful in military training environments. By compartmentalizing

gender identity, women were better able to operate as a leader when seen by others as gender

neutral.

These findings align with prior research studies on gender role stereotypes in military

training environments that found women cadets desired to be seen as equals to their peers who

identified as men, and be seen only as a cadet (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Silva, 2008). However, in

their desire to be a part of an organization free of gender, women neglected to see that the

standard for the organization was in fact defined in masculine terms (Silva, 2008). A sort of

masking occurred where women cadets in my study did not distinctly identify or articulate the influence of the male-dominated military environment and how this might inhibit their understanding of self as a leader.

Women also employed a strategy of *code switching*. Code switching in this case entails regularly exchanging woman and soldier as well as friend and leader identities depending on the situation. This was at times a conscious choice for some women and unconscious for others. There appears to be tension for some women to remain feminine in some situations while also acting in non-feminine ways in others. Some women reported dressing more feminine or being girly at home, but in the military training program downplaying this to be seen as solider. Or if they were in a sorority, women felt comfortable embracing their femininity in that environment, but not embracing their sorority affiliation in the military training environment. This need to *code switch* inhibits the women to be their full authentic selves in all environments and see themselves as a leader. For women in this study, there does not yet appear to be an understanding of how a "feminine soldier" might operate as a leader in all contexts. Instead, the need to *code switch* as a strategy reinforces a preference for their gender to be a non-issue in order to be successful in the military training program.

This finding clearly aligns with Silva's (2008) masculine leadership standard in military training environments. While women may have either viewed or preferred the environment to be free of gender, it is not (Silva, 2008). Their preference to be seen as cadet or solider reinforces that women must perform like men to be seen as successful in the military training context. If in fact gender were a non-issue, participants would have reported a comfort in holding both identities, as a woman and as a soldier, simultaneously in the military training environment. This has an important influence in shaping how women's view of self as a leader changes over time in

this environment. Instead of embracing all their identities as one, women in this study reported

feeling the need to only represent portions of themselves in certain contexts that were positively

received by their peers, compartmentalizing their leadership identity. This disjointed

representation of who they are as a leader can potentially have long lasting negative impacts on

how they view themselves as leaders, never fully embracing their identity as a leader in all

contexts, which is not addressed in the LID model (Komives et al., 2005).

Practicing Leadership

Women in this study expressed the ways they practiced leadership and that this practice

was rooted in being focused on the needs of others (*people focused*) and supporting the growth of

others (*developmental*). As participants describe how their leadership changes over time, they

share how their style of leadership is focused on taking care of their people. It matters to them

that they truly know about the lives of the people they are responsible for and focusing on their

long-term development. Women describe living this out by sacrificing time, sleep, and their own

priorities, to meet the needs of the soldiers under their command. They describe taking a self-

less ownership for the success and failures of their people.

The ways women in this study describe their relational style of leadership and a focus on

developing their people aligns with other researchers who describe women's leadership style as

democratic and participatory (Eagly et al., 2003; Kaufman & Grace, 2011) with a focus on

collaborative relationships (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003; Brescoll, 2016), and described by others

as kind, gentle, cheerful, and compassionate (Bem, 1974; Boldry, Wood & Kashy, 2001). And

even more so with research that describes women's leadership as more traditional feminine

styles of leadership focused on relational skills (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003; Haber-Curran &

Sulpizio, 2017).

Women in this study care deeply for the people they oversee, and that commitment to a relational, authentic, genuine style of leadership that listens to their people's needs, shapes their own view of themselves as a leader, and is reinforced each year they continue in their journey to seeing themselves as a leader. The unique context of the military training environment does influence how women show they are *people focused* and *developmental*. Finding the balance between expressing their leadership style with how that style is received by the context. Women need to respect the hierarchical structure of the military and regulations that prohibit fraternization with younger cadets, while at the same time not appearing too soft and promoting care for people over mission. They learn to work within the system to mentor, provide leadership development opportunities to others, and lead with a clear ethic of care. This shift in ability to work within the system is an example of how women's view of self as a leader changes over time, practicing authentic leadership within the structure that is in place.

Context for Learning Leadership

Through my research, I identified the theme *context for learning leadership*, which includes the subthemes *military training environment* and *civilian*. Women described their experiences in the *military training environment* as one that is slow to change and male-dominated. Women perceive an expectation to give up a gender identity to fit into the program. For those who are on track to commission and join the military, this is seen as good practice for active duty and that success in the military hinges on fitting a masculine leadership profile. This becomes a distinct challenge for women exploring a view of self as a leader. Some shared feeling the need to be tougher or change the way they act to fit in. Women struggled to figure out how to be an authentic leader while navigating a "guys' club" as some refer to it.

To counter this challenge, some women even share how their choice of service branch is based on a perception of how it treats women, knowing that some are more welcoming and supportive than others in that they believed they would not be treated differently based on their gender. Some even perceive branches as more or less likely to force them into making choices about negative archetypes to play: a bitch, a slut, or a dyke (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014). This choice of service branch, based on perceptions of the environment, is one that many participants struggled to remedy as they sought to align a style of leadership and their view of self as leader.

This environment contributes to and in some cases, inhibits women's view of self as a leader, as it puts pressure on women to conform to the environment in order to be a successful leader. How women describe the environment aligns with current research that describes military environments as ones that reinforce traditional masculine characteristics of leadership (Boyce & Heard, 2003; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Looney, Robinson Kurpius, & Lucart, 2004; Weitz, 2015). In addition, that these types of environments influence and present challenges for women as they develop a view of self as a leader (Anderson & Buzzanell, 2007; Boyce & Heard, 2003). They are constantly battling competing messages of what it means to be a leader.

The expectation for women to conform to masculine characteristics of leadership as the standard is in direct contrast to how they desire to be their authentic selves when leading others, as they shared in the theme *internal dialogue*. While there are some women whose style of leadership does in fact align with traditional masculine characteristics of leadership, the problem is women do not feel the environment promotes acceptance of all styles of leadership. Moreover, for women who may enact traditional masculine characteristics of leadership, they

report experiencing backlash to those leadership traits, as shared in the theme *external influences*. Therefore it seems women are in a no win situation. This is of concern as the military training environment is founded in the desire is to raise up future leaders for the military and civilian sector.

In addition to learning leadership in the context of the *military training environment*, women are also learning leadership in the *civilian* context. This is described as outside involvement from the *military training environment*. Women in this context were able to practice leadership in a variety of positions such as serving on the orientation team or being highly involved in their sororities. This context allows women to practice leadership differently than in the military training environment in that they felt they could just be themselves, not perform to the unwritten expectation of cadet. For some women this was a place where they could be overly positive and bubbly without it being seen as a negative. In this context women described learning the importance of providing the "why" behind a directive and communication, as this was not something that was often provided in the military training context where the focus was often on direct orders not explanation. This context broadened their view of what leadership could be, contributing to their view of self as leader, and providing them the opportunity to learn and practice leadership differently. It expanded for them the opportunity to see different types of leaders in action, and have others, not cadet affiliated, respond to their leadership style.

At the same time, the *civilian* context added a level of complexity and challenge to their experience in the military training program. Some women were criticized for outside involvement and viewed as not being loyal to the program. In these situations, practicing and learning leadership in the *civilian* context inhibited their view of self as a leader as they often felt guilty for splitting their time. Concerned that their fellow cadets did not see them as fully

committed to the military training program, and potentially impacting their leadership trajectory in the *military training environment*.

This finding of how the *civilian* context shapes women's view of self as a leader by practicing leadership in a different environment is not consistent with previous research. It does however add to knowledge about the experiences that contribute to leadership identity development for women who participate in a military training environment on a campus that offers opportunities outside that experience. The opportunity to practice leadership in a different context may be significant for women as they strive to be their authentic selves as leaders, seeing how their leadership style is received by others if not in the context of the military training environment. They learn to apply leadership in a variety of contexts.

External Influences

The theme *external influences* was identified through my analysis of the data, which includes four subthemes; *gender bias, gendering*, *leadership role modeled*, and *experienced challenge*. As women shared their experiences in developing a view of self as leader, *gender bias* and *gendering* were two components that seemed to be reoccurring *external influences* for women and presented challenges. These challenges are described as being forced into roles that peers and the environment deem are more suited for women, such as playing the role of mom, someone peers could go to with their problems, in a company and serving in support role positions. The reinforcement of gender roles exasperated the *gender bias* women were already experiencing as they witness different standards applied to men and women and feeling pressure to compete with other women as the environment promotes a mindset that only so many women can be in leadership at a time.

The subthemes *gender bias* and *gendering* align with previous research that being a

soldier and a successful leader are predicated on traditional gender roles, and that successful

leaders fit a standardized set of masculine traits (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Brownson, 2014). As

gender role stereotypes are heightened in male-dominated environments (Anderson & Buzzanell,

2007; Boldry et al., 2001; Boyce & Herd, 2003; Kalysh, Kulik, & Perera 2016; Kanter, 1977;

Perry, Davis-Blake, & Kulik, 1994), women in this study report experiencing different standards

as compared to their peers who identified as men and were more often attracted to positions seen

as more suited for women such as public affairs officer or roles in the medical field.

Women were able to describe recognition of these different standards, and acceptance of

them if they choose to pursue a military career. As an example, women learn to accept that they

will be considered a bitch when they choose to be assertive and refuse to back down to their

peers. Some embrace this role, ready to take on the backlash they will experience from others,

knowing they will be a great leader and respected by those they lead. While others may strive to

fight against this stereotype, being overly positive and sensitive to how they are received by

those they lead. A disheartening truth for these women is that unfortunately this is not that

uncommon or rare for male-dominated environments. Previous research has shown that women

must decide early on in their military careers what role they want to play, as early as military

training environments, and that *bitch* is deemed the most successful role for women (Archer,

2012; Brownson, 2014). A role some women in this study have decided to accept as they pursue

an active duty military career, knowing this is a term they will likely be called, and prefer it over

whore. This role is one that will definitely shape how they view themselves as a leader.

While the two subthemes of *gendering* and *gender bias* align with current research

(Archer, 2012; Anderson & Buzzanell, 2007; Boldry et al., 2001; Boyce & Herd, 2003;

Brownson, 2014; Kalysh, Kulik, & Perera 2016; Kanter, 1977; Perry, Davis-Blake, & Kulik,

1994), the two subthemes *leadership role modeled* and *experienced challenged* expand on this

research in ways that expand our understanding of view of self as leader in gendered

environments. Specifically, the impact of mentors on women in male-dominated environments

and the lasting effects of sexual assault by one's peers (Archer, 2012; Brownson, 2014; Weitz,

2003) seems to have important implications for leadership development as described by women

in this study.

First, the hierarchical structure of the military training environment allows women

multiple opportunities to practice leadership as well as to see leadership performed by a variety

of leaders. As leadership positions rotate throughout the academic year, participants benefit

from seeing the impact of what they consider to be good and bad leaders in the organization.

This is instrumental to their view of self as leader because it provides women the opportunity to

learn from them and implement what they learn, contributing to their continual learning and

development of *practicing leadership* and *leadership defined*.

Second, women describe challenges they experienced that contributed to how they see

themselves as leaders and built resiliency as they continued to develop a leadership identity.

Each challenge experienced by individual women is unique and presents its own difficulties in

navigating the process of developing a view of self as leader. These experiences vary in range of

trauma and longer-term implications. In extreme instances, some women described the

challenges of experiencing sexual assault by one's peers as being especially painful and having

lasting implications. This type of challenge might be exacerbated in hyper-masculine

environments, such as the military, where there is an increased risk of sexual assault (Brownson,

2014; Weitz, 2003). This previous research though only focuses on the risk of sexual assault in

the military environment, not on the risks and implications for individuals at the military *training* environment, and the impact that it has on future service. Emerging women leaders in this environment may be especially susceptible to negative experiences, or threats to view of self, where few women role models exist, and a high prevalence of such leadership challenges exists.

Sexual assault in the military training environment is alarming, a serious area of concern as it not only creates unsafe, and unwelcoming environments, it can inhibit a woman's ability to see herself as a leader, calling into question everything she believes about leadership and her role in the military. This is in direct contrast to what a military training environment espouses to be, an environment where individuals can safely practice and learn leadership. But while the climate and culture of these training environments remain a paramount concern, so too does the lack of mechanisms to teach women leaders to successfully develop an identity as a leader.

Internal Influences

The more women talked about their experiences and reactions to selection for leadership positions, it became clear they have internalized stereotypes from their military training environment. Here I identified the theme of *internal influences,* which includes the subtheme *internalized stereotypes*. This internalization of stereotypes results in women being highly concerned about other's perceptions of them and struggling with negative self-talk about their own abilities and qualifications for leadership positions. Oftentimes women expressed feelings of insecurity and feared asking why they were selected for leadership positions. This trepidation arose from an internalized reasoning that they could only be selected to fulfill the organization's quota for women in such positions and not their knowledge or skills as a leader. Seemingly, the stereotypes of women in the military are internally reinforced which has damaging effects on view of self as a leader.

Women's experiences in this study are in alignment with previous research on gender stereotypes and stereotype threat that describe how women's own view of their ability to pursue leadership positions can be negatively impacted when exposed to gender stereotypes (Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005; Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). Specifically, stereotype threat is the internalization of repeated exposure to negative stereotypes in the environment that send signals to the individual about their group membership (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Stereotype threat acts to undermine a woman's view of her own abilities and can result in underperformance (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007). This is seen in this study as women describe altering their tone and loudness in speaking so as not to be perceived as yelling by their peers, and in turn not being liked by others. The idea of not being liked by her peers was very hard for some women to accept, and therefore they would behave in ways that the culture deemed acceptable for them, such as not yelling or being overly assertive.

This finding is of serious concern when thinking about how women develop a view of self as a leader. The perception among women is that the military training environment sends clear messages that women are less qualified to be leaders and need to change how they perform leadership. This is a detriment to all members of the training environment as this messaging negatively impacts women's view of themselves, and how others perceive women's ability to lead and hold senior level positions, thus inhibiting the organization from learning and growing from women leaders.

Experiences

As women completed more semesters in the military training program, they showed a deeper understanding of the role gender played in their view of self as a leader and an ability to reflect on their experiences. The final theme I identified through my research points to the

importance of lived *experiences* to women's understanding of leadership and their identity as a leader. The same was true for women who progressed through leadership positions that had increased responsibility. These women were able to see leadership beyond positional authority and instead focused on the impact they had on the organization.

Women who completed all eight semesters in the military training program, which afforded them significant senior leadership positions, demonstrated the ability to reflect on and articulate their view of self as a leader. This is in alignment with the integration/synthesis stage (stage six) of the LID model, which is the ability to integrate their view of themselves in their view of leadership (Komives et al., 2005). This notably occurs when students can see themselves as leaders across almost any context and without positional authority (Komives et al., 2005). Women cadets who reached this stage of the LID model were able to embrace leadership as a part of who they are, separate from their identity with a leadership position and affiliation with the military training program.

The women who graduated from the military training program can articulate the impact the experience had on their view of self as a leader, and while maybe experiencing their first semester in years without an official position held, could confidently tell me they see themselves as a leader (integration/synthesis stage). Women's ability to achieve this concludes that the military training environment can contribute to the development of a view of self as leader, even with the challenges and obstacles participants' experience in the environment in pursuit of the leader identity.

Summary

These eight themes, *leadership defined*, *internal dialogue, strategies for managing influences*, *practicing leadership*, *context for learning leadership*, *external influences*, *internal*

influences, and *experiences*, do not function independently and in isolation from each other. Together, they are interwoven to reveal the process through which women develop a view of self as leader in the military training environment. This provides insight and further understanding in order to fill in the gap in empirical research related to women's development of a leadership identity.

Women enter the environment with a preexisting definition of leadership (*leadership defined*) that was shaped and formed during high school by peers, teachers, and family members. However, as they are immersed in this very specific context of a military training environment (*context for learning leadership*) they begin to learn, and are continually shaped, by the influences around them (*external influences*, *internal influences*). They spend time reflecting on who they are as a leader (*internal dialogue*) and learn new ways of managing competing expectations and priorities (*strategies for managing influences*) to reconcile what it means to be their authentic selves as a leader. They learn to view themselves as leaders, implementing their own style of leadership (*practicing leadership*) and embracing the identity as leader at the culmination of their graduation from the military training program (*experiences*). These women show resiliency, perseverance, and an exceptional ability to reflect on their failures and successes, to better themselves as leaders with the ultimate desire to create the best experience for their people.

Limitations

As with all research studies, this study has limitations. The first limitation of this study was that it occurred at a single institution. This was by design as the number of institutions that offer the specific context to be studied were limited. However, this also limits the generalizability of the findings to a broader context where women develop a leadership identity

as this study focused on women in a military training environment. However, the study's

findings are relevant to other male-dominated learning environments such as some sciences and

engineering programs where the number of men continue to outpace women and other military

training environments including ones with ROTC programs. In addition, these findings would

be relevant and transferable to college women in any leadership development opportunities.

A second limitation of the study was the specificity of the population, which limited the

diversity of background and experiences representative of all women in military training

environments. The institution in this study was a Predominately White Institution (PWI). This

was reflected in a fairly homogenous group of participants. The lack of diversity of participants

in regards to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender expression creates challenges in

generalizing the findings to all women in military training environments. In addition, based on

the systems used by the specific institution, sex assigned at birth was the only demographic

available to recruit participants, therefore no Trans women were able to be identified and invited

to participate in the study. Therefore, Trans women's experiences are not reflected in this

research study and identify an extremely important gap in the findings that is necessary to better

understand all individuals experiences who express as woman in military training environments.

A third limitation of the study are additional theories that could have been included as

sensitizing concepts to better understand the development of college aged women. Theories that

may have been helpful in guiding the research study are Gilligan's Theory of Women's Moral

Development (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016), and Chickering and Reisser's (1993)

theory of identity development, The Seven Vectors. Given that this is the first time view of self

as a leader among women cadets was the subject of research, these theories could be informative

but were not of central interest.

A fourth limitation of the study was using constructivist grounded theory methods for

data collection and analysis rather than the entire grounded theory methodology (Charmaz,

2014). In addition, the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005) was used as a sensitizing concept in

developing the research study which does differ from Charmaz's approach, however doing so

was in alignment with the intended use of the method by the researcher. While the method used

for the study fit the need of the study, utilizing the entire methodology may have added

additional credibility to the study and additional findings had the researcher conducted

theoretical sampling.

A final limitation of the study was my own bias in the creation of interview questions and

analysis of the data. Given my identity as a woman and as a child of a woman who served in the

military, my perspective influenced how I analyzed and reported the findings of the study.

Someone with a different background, experience, and gender identity, may have identified

different themes through the data analysis process.

Implications

Based on the findings of the research study, there are implications for future research,

namely the use of the grounded theory methodology, and recommendations for policy and

practice.

Future Research

The research findings focused on women in military training environments. To expand

upon these findings, future research should be conducted with women actively serving in the

military. Shifting the focus to active duty women, who have been exposed to additional years of

training and influences, would be helpful to more deeply understand the longitudinal nature of

leadership identity and the factors that contribute to or inhibit view of self as a leader. A specific

area to study with active duty women would be the long-term impact of sexual assault during the military training environment on view of self as leader. Namely, how do these experiences shape women's expectations for active duty and what impact does it have on their progression of leadership positions pursued and achieved?

An important component that was missing from this study was the intersection of identities. Further research should be conducted to explore and better understand how race, ethnicity, social economic status, sexual orientation, faith, and gender expression interplay with each other as women develop a view of self as leader. This study focused on participants' identity as women, but this may not be the most salient identity that influences participants' view of self as leader. Studies have been conducted to learn more about how identities such as race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation of participants individually influence their development of a leadership identity, but there is limited information that describes the impact of the intersection of identities on leadership identity development.

Trans women's experience in military training environments and active duty military is an additional area for future research. When understanding how women develop a leadership identity, it is important to understand the perspective from all women. As this study only included women who reported as cisgender women, this perspective was missing, and as more Trans women enter the military, this will be important knowledge for leaders in developing curriculum and teaching leadership.

Methodology

This study utilized constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis, which added rigor and structure to the data analysis process (Charmaz, 2014) and provided a helpful and meaningful way to code and organize the data. Arguably, future research

would benefit from using the entire grounded theory method to better understand and theorize about the process of how women develop a leadership identity. However, the approach used for this study shows promise for studies that want to utilize a systematic process for data analysis, implementing a multilayer approach to coding, and organization of data. For example, this study utilized the LID model (Komives et al., 2005) as a sensitizing concept. Themes were identified in the analysis and then compared and contrasted with the LID model. The use of this method revealed new insights into how context of learning leadership can influence a leadership identity.

This would be an especially powerful method in studying the intersectionality of identities, as it could produce a process that helps to better understand the intricacies of how identities impact and shape students' experiences. The theory produced from using the grounded theory method would greatly add to the dearth of research that currently exists on leadership identity development and intersectionality.

Policy and Practice

Based on my analysis of the research findings, there are four major recommendations for changes to policy and practice in military training environments. They include adjustments to quotas, diversification of leadership styles, breakout sessions according to gender, and creating a culture free of hyper-masculinity norms.

While quotas may appear to be helpful in ensuring women are represented in all ranks of leadership, they can also detract from the legitimacy of positions held by women. Due to the perception of quotas, whether factual or not, participants reported questioning themselves and being questioned by others for their selection to leadership positions. There were concerns raised that the only reason they were selected was because of their gender, and this then required them to prove themselves to others that they were capable to do the job. This self-doubt

inhibited women's ability to confidently view themselves as leaders. Quotas are not the solution

to women in leadership, but rather a culture shift is needed that encourages and supports

women's leadership styles. By doing so, the environment makes it clear women's leadership

development is a priority and that the culture values and recognizes that the entire organization

benefits when women are lifted up and encouraged to serve in significant leadership positions

that have the ability to effect positive change throughout the entire organization.

   While one clear recommendation is that teaching leadership should involve a variety of

leaders and leadership styles be presented as examples, the construction of leadership identity is

perhaps more important. This includes exemplars of relational leaders, leaders of diverse

backgrounds, and leaders who operate in challenging environments. To destigmatize the notion

of tokenism, it is imperative that students in military training environments see examples of

leaders with diverse identities and experiences, including women, people of color, diverse gender

expression, sexual orientation, and national origin. This will prepare future leaders to respect

and appreciate the diversity of leadership styles as well as diversity of those they lead.

   A third recommendation for change is to eliminate leadership breakout sessions by

gender. Participants felt this practice isolated women from their peers who identified as men.

They expressed concern that men were not engaging in similar conversations as they were, and

felt it created a double standard. Separating women and men only exacerbates internalized

stereotypes and inhibits view of self as a leader. Further conversations need to occur in regards

to the purpose of the breakout sessions, ensure they are not perpetuating gender stereotypes, and

that the onus for a welcoming and successful experience is not placed solely on women. In

addition, while participants did not share it directly, consideration for gender expression should

be incorporated in assignment of breakout sessions if sessions were to continue. If sessions are

pre-assigned based on sex assigned at birth, then individuals may feel additional isolation and

oppression if not included in dialogue groups that align with their gender expression.

The final recommendation for change is to create an environment free of hyper-

masculinity norms, one that does not define success in terms of traditional masculine

characteristics of leadership. My findings as well as previous research have demonstrated the

harm this can have on women as they develop a view of self as leader. In order to achieve this,

language and behavior that promotes gender stereotypes must not be tolerated. Leaders must

role model and teach behavior that promotes inclusive and safe environments, respect for

diversity, and abolishes any mentality that tolerates sexual assault. Concurrent with this shift,

women leaders should be trained to operate in these environments and in ways to directly

address behaviors detrimental to or in opposition of their leadership identity. Only through these

actions can a military training environment move away from being a gendered organization and

to one that fosters an inclusive environment that promotes women's view of self as leader.

Implications for Practitioners in Higher Education

In addition to the *specific* policy and practice implications based on the findings of this

study, it is also important to note the *broader* implications that are relevant to any practitioner

working with women in higher education. This group of practitioners includes those in a military

training environment that is less involved (e.g. not 24-hours a day and seven days a week) and

general women's leadership development opportunities. The hyper-masculine environment

described in this study was one way of bringing to light possible challenges and barriers facing

women on college campuses.

The first recommendation is to consider the specific barriers women experience as they

develop a leadership identity on a college campus. These barriers may include access to mentors,

systems that discriminate based on gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, environments that promote gender bias and hyper-masculinity norms, as well individuals in leadership positions with implicit biases. These systems and biases can be challenging to identify and address on our own. To identify barriers and generate change, one approach is to have external reviewers examine the climate of academic and co-curricular programs, identify barriers, and make evidence-based recommendations about areas for improvement. Such reviews should be inclusive of the most broadly representative sample of women students.

A second recommendation for practitioners, regardless of gender identity, is to invest considerable time and professional development resources in constructing leadership experiences that more accurately address how students differently experience such educational effort. It is incumbent upon practitioners to understand their own bias by reflecting on their own leadership experiences and preferences for what leadership should look like and how it is taught. Our past experiences influence how we teach and train others. Further, it is important to examine if practitioners are teaching leadership based on knowledge that is no longer relevant for the changing trends in leadership and diversity of leaders and leadership styles. To mentor and shape future leaders, practitioners need to be aware and knowledgeable of the changing needs of modern students who have been shaped by experiences ranging from emerging influences such as social media to a new political landscape, particularly on issues related to equality. Practitioners' prior knowledge and experience is exceptionally valuable in sharing with students; however, the changing context needs to be considered when determining best practice for implementing leadership development programs.

The third recommendation is to consider replicating this study, if even in a less formal way, on different campuses and in different contexts. Practitioners interested in understanding women's experiences in developing a leadership identity, regardless of the learning context, can use the interview protocol questions developed for this study as a way to elicit an understanding of local leadership experiences among women. Such an approach ought to consider ways to encourage women to participate who may either be concerned of retaliation for sharing their honest experiences or those who feel nothing will change so why waste their time. In the recruitment process, for example, the intended uses of findings and the processes by which student identity is protected should be explicit. One additional consideration is to include interview students, regardless of gender, to better understand how gender identity mutually shapes leadership identity.

Conclusion

As all positions in the military are now open to women, it was imperative to understand how the military training environments, originally devised for men only, influenced the leadership development of women's view of self as leaders. This qualitative study was conducted to better understand the process of how cadet women in a university military training environment perceived their view of self as a leader changed over time. This study used constructivist grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis as described by Charmaz (2014) and used the LID model as a sensitizing concept to understand the LID in the context of a senior military college, at a single institution of higher education (Komives et al., 2005).

Twenty-one individuals who identified as women and completed at least four semesters in the military training environment agreed to participate in an approximately one-hour interview. Through the analysis of those 21 interviews, eight themes were identified which

helped to answer the research questions as to how cadet women in a university military training environment perceive that their view of self as a leader changes over time. The theme *leadership defined* helped to answer the first research question of how participants definition of leadership changed over time, while the themes *internal dialogue*, *strategies for managing influences*, and *practicing leadership* answered the second question how participants' view of self as a leader changed over time. The third research question, what experiences participants perceived contributed to and inhibited their development of a view of self as a leader, was explained through the themes *context for learning leadership, external influences, and internal influences*. The theme *experiences*, explained the variations among women in the way they perceived their view of self as a leader developed in the military training environment. These themes contributed to previous research either through alignment with previous findings or added additional context to consider when understanding how women develop a view of self as leaders.

These findings not only contribute to previous research, but also have implications for future research and practice. It is important when applying these research findings to take into consideration the specific context that was studied and the limitations identified in the research study. Even with these limitations, one hopes that the knowledge gained from participants sharing their own personal experiences will positively contribute to future leadership development experiences for women.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval

VIRGINIA TECH.

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-3732 Fax 540/231-0959
email irb@vt.edu
website http://www.irb.vt.edu

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 24, 2018

TO: David John Kniola, Jeananne Marie Knies, Elizabeth Creamer, Elaine Humphrey, Claire Kathleen Robbins

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)

PROTOCOL TITLE: A Qualitative Study of College Cadet Women's Leadership Identity Development in a Military Training Environment

IRB NUMBER: 18-417

Effective July 24, 2018, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	**Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 5,6,7**
Protocol Approval Date:	**July 24, 2018**
Protocol Expiration Date:	**July 23, 2019**
Continuing Review Due Date*:	**July 9, 2019**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Interview

- Thank participant for agreeing to participant in interview.
- Review informed consent. Ask participant if have any questions regarding informed consent before signing.
- After participant signs informed consent, collect and ask to complete demographic form.
- After demographic form complete, begin recording.
- Remind participant of the purpose of the study.
    - Purpose: The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the process of how cadet women in a university military training environment perceive that their view of self as a leader changes over time and how it supports and subverts the Leadership Identity Development Model (LID) (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005).
- Ask participant if have any questions before beginning.
- Interview questions:
    1. How would you describe your current definition of leadership?
    2. Is this how you think you would have described it if I asked you that question before joining the program?
        a. Follow up:
            i. If no – what do you think has contributed to the change in definition?
            ii. If yes – why do you think that is?
    3. How would you say the military training program defines leadership?
    4. Is there anything else you want share regarding your definition of leadership?
    5. We have talked about your definition of leadership, but do you see yourself as a leader?
        a. If no, why not?
            i. Do you have a desire to be a leader?
                1. If yes, what kind of leader do you desire to be?
                2. If no, why is that?
                    a. Follow up questions as appropriate.
        b. If yes, how would you describe yourself as a leader?
            i. Has that changed during your time in the military training environment?
                1. If yes, what has contributed to that change?
            ii. Is who you are as a leader now the kind of leader you want to be in 10 years?
                1. If no, what kind of leader do you want be?
    6. We have talked a bit about your definition of leadership and how you see yourself as a leader. What do you think has influenced what you have shared so far?

      b. Specifically, any experiences that stand out to you as key moments or events that you believe contribute to what you think today? This can be experiences from the military training environment, family, friends, experiences outside of the program.

    7. We have talked a lot about your time here, are there any other experiences, factors, or interactions outside of this one that you believe have influenced your view of leadership? Experiences can be moments, feelings, interactions, etc.

      c. Follow up if no comments by elaborating and providing some examples: This could be family, friends, culture, experiences from back home, interactions with other people here at school, religion, etc.

- Thank interviewee for her time and participation and ask if she would be willing to meet again if researcher has any follow up questions from interview.
- Stop recording

Appendix C

Informed Consent

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
Informed Consent for Participants
in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Investigator(s): Jeananne Knies   jtiffany@vt.edu/540-250-3920

I. Purpose of this Research Project
The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe the process of how cadet women in a university military training environment perceive that their view of self as a leader changes over time and how it supports and subverts the Leadership Identity Development Model. I will use the data from this research study for my doctoral dissertation and possibly presentations at conferences.

Research questions:
1. How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?
2. How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change over time?
3. What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development of a view of self as a leader?
4. What are the variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a military training environment?

II. Procedures
After gaining IRB approval, interviews will begin. As the participant, you must sign this document as informed consent before beginning the interview. The interview will be conducted at an agreed upon location by both parties. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. The interview will be semi-structured, allowing for you to describe in full your own experience.

The interview protocol will begin with the assignment of a pseudonym you select and coded accordingly. The interview protocol is designed to gather information and elicit responses about your experiences and leadership development in a military training environment. Once the interview has been transcribed, the audio recording will be deleted.

III. Risks
Minimal risks are possible, pseudonyms will be used, no raw data will be shared outside research team, and if direct quotes are used, any identifiable pieces of information will be reomved. You may withdraw at any point in the study. Your decision to participate or not will have no effect on your status or relationship with the [military training program].

IV. Benefits
A potential benefit of this study is to increase awareness and understanding of how women view of self as a leader in a military training environment changes over time. No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality
You will be assigned and identified in the study using pseudonyms. Pseudonyms will be subsequently coded and study codes will be stored in researchers office in a locked cabinet. The study code key will be stored separately in researchers office in a locked cabinet. In addition, no participant names will be shared with any other members of the [military training program], cadet or staff.

The Virginia Tech (VT) Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

Note: in some situations, it may be necessary for an investigator to break confidentiality. If a researcher has reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, or that a person poses a threat of harm to others or him/herself, the researcher is required by Virginia State law to notify the appropriate authorities.

VI. Compensation
There is no compensation for participants included in this project.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw
It is important for you to know that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You are free not to answer any questions that you choose or respond to what is being asked of you without penalty.

Please note that there may be circumstances under which the investigator may determine that a participant should not continue as a subject.

VIII. Questions or Concerns
Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact one of the research investigators whose contact information is included at the beginning of this document.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at irb@vt.edu or (540) 231-3732.

IX. Subject's Consent
I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

_____   Date_____
Subject signature

_____
Subject printed name

Appendix D

Demographic Form

Please complete the following form to the best of your ability and comfort level.

Age_____   Race_____   Ethnicity _____

Sexual Orientation: _____   Gender: _____

ROTC (service)/track: _____

# of Completed [military training program] semesters: _____

List all formal positions you have held in the [military training program]:

_____

_____

_____

Family in Military: Yes _____   No _____

     If family served, which service?
_____

     Which family member(s) served:
_____

Did you participate in JROTC: Yes _____   No _____

     If yes, how many years: _____

Appendix E

Study Blueprint to Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do women cadets perceive their definition of leadership changes during their time in a military training environment?

1. *Interview Question 1*: How would you describe your current definition of leadership?

2. *Interview Question 2*: Is this how you think you would have described it if I asked you that question before joining the program?

   a. Follow up:

      ▪ If no – what do you think has contributed to the change in definition?

      ▪ If yes – why do you think that is?

3. *Interview Question 3*: How would you say the military training environment defines leadership?

4. *Interview Question 4*: Is there anything else you want share regarding your definition of leadership?

Research Question 2: How does women's view of self as a leader in a military training environment change over time?

   2. *Interview Question 5*: We have talked about your definition of leadership, but do you see yourself as a leader?

   a. If no, why not?

      i. Do you have a desire to be a leader?

         1. If yes, what kind of leader do you desire to be?

         2. If no, why is that?

            a. Follow up questions as appropriate.

   b. If yes, how would you describe yourself as a leader?

i. Has that changed during your time in the military training environment?

1. If yes, what has contributed to that change?

ii. Is who you are as a leader now the kind of leader you want to be in 10 years?

1. If no, what kind of leader do you want be?

Research Question 3: What experiences do cadet women perceive contribute to and inhibit their development of a view of self as a leader?

1. *Interview Question 6*: We have talked a bit about your definition of leadership and how you see yourself as a leader. What do you think has contributed to what you have shared so far?

a. Specifically any experiences that stand out to you as key moments that you believe contribute to what you think today? This can be experiences from the military training environment, family, friends, experiences outside of the program.

Research Question 4: What are the variations among women in the way they perceive their view of self as a leader develops in a military training environment?

1. *Interview Question 7*: We have talked a lot about your time here, are there any experiences, factors, or interactions outside of this one that you believe have influenced your view of leadership? Experiences can be moments, feelings, interactions, etc.

a. *Follow up if no comments by elaborating and providing some examples*: This could be family, friends, culture, experiences from back home, interactions with other people here at school, religion, etc.

Appendix F

First Email Invitation

Subject: Invitation to Discuss Women's Leadership Experiences

Good (Morning/Afternoon/Evening) (Cadet's Name),

I would like to invite you to participate in my research study about your leadership experiences in the [military training program]. I am Jeananne Knies, [context removed that may allude to location of interviews] I am now a full time doctoral student interested in understanding the leadership development experiences of women who have completed four semesters or more in the [military training program] and are at least 18 years old. My interest was sparked on this topic by the 24 years my mother served as enlisted personnel in the Air Force and during my time [context removed to protect campus location].

I would like to invite you (first name of cadet) to participate in an approximately one-hour interview with me to learn more about your experience in the [military training program]. I am flexible on when and where we meet, let me know what works best for you. Please note in order to participate, you need to be at least 18 years of age and completed four semesters or more in the [military training program]. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and confidential, and the interview will be audio recorded, and once transcribed, will be deleted, for my doctoral dissertation. Your decision to participate or not will have no effect on your status or relationship with the [military training program]. In addition, no participant names will be shared with any other members of the [military training program], cadet or staff.

If you are interested in participating, please email me back at jtiffany@vt.edu or call me at 540-250-3920 to let me know of your interest and if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and helping me to better understand the leadership development experiences of women in the [military training program].

Sincerely,

Jeananne Knies

Appendix G

Second Email Invitation

Subject: Reminder - Invitation to Discuss Women's Leadership Experiences

Good (Morning/Afternoon/Evening) (Cadet's Name),

This is a friendly reminder that you are invited to participate in my research study about your leadership experiences in the [military training program]. I am Jeananne Knies, [context removed that may allude to location of interviews] I am now a full time doctoral student interested in understanding the leadership development experiences of women who have completed four semesters or more in the [military training program]and are at least 18 years old. My interest was sparked on this topic by the 24 years my mother served as enlisted personnel in the Air Force and during my time [context removed to protect campus location].

I would like to invite you (first name of cadet) to participate in an approximately one-hour interview with me to learn more about your experience in the [military training program]. I am flexible on when and where we meet, let me know what works best for you. Please note in order to participate, you need to be at least 18 years of age and completed four semesters or more in the [military training program]. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and confidential, and the interview will be audio recorded, and once transcribed, will be deleted, for my doctoral dissertation. Your decision to participate or not will have no effect on your status or relationship with the [military training program]. In addition, no participant names will be shared with any other members of the [military training program], cadet or staff.

If you are interested in participating, please email me back at jtiffany@vt.edu or call me at 540-250-3920 to let me know of your interest and if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and helping me to better understand the leadership development experiences of women in the [military training program].

Sincerely,

Jeananne Knies

Appendix H

Study Blueprint to LID Model

Interview questions:

1. How would you describe your current definition of leadership? (Connection to identify stage participant in and if in transition or not to next stage.)
2. Is this how you think you would have described it if I asked you that question before joining the program? (To see if there was a change in stages, as well as connection to categories of Changing View of Self with Others and Broadening View of Leadership.)
   a. Follow up:
      i. If no – what do you think has contributed to the change in definition?
      ii. If yes – why do you think that is?
3. How would you say the military training environment defines leadership? (Not directly connected to a stage of LID but specific to research study and unique context of study.)
4. Is there anything else you want share regarding your definition of leadership?
5. We have talked about your definition of leadership, but do you see yourself as a leader? (Connection to identity as a leader, and which stage of LID, follow up questions specifically seeking to see if in stage 5 or 6 of LID.)
   c. If no, why not?
      i. Do you have a desire to be a leader?
         1. If yes, what kind of leader do you desire to be?
         2. If no, why is that?
            a. Follow up questions as appropriate.
   d. If yes, how would you describe yourself as a leader?
      i. Has that changed during your time in the military training environment?
         1. If yes, what has contributed to that change?
      iii. Is who you are as a leader now the kind of leader you want to be in 10 years?
         1. If no, what kind of leader do you want be?
6. We have talked a bit about your definition of leadership and how you see yourself as a leader. What do you think has contributed to what you have shared so far? (Connection to the five categories described in LID to see what participant identifies as influences.)
   d. Specifically any experiences that stand out to you as key moments that you believe contribute to what you think today? This can be experiences from the military training environment, family, friends, experiences outside of the program.
7. We have talked a lot about your time here, are there any other experiences, factors, or interactions outside of this one that you believe have influenced your view of leadership? Experiences can be moments, feelings, interactions, etc. (Connects to category of Group Influences and Developmental Influences, also research question which is looking for variations among women participants.)

e. Follow up if no comments by elaborating and providing some examples: This could be family, friends, culture, experiences from back home, interactions with other people here at school, religion, etc.