EXPERIENCES OF MILITARY-TRAINED EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: TRANSFERENCE OF MILITARY LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN TEXAS

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

The influence of military-trained educational leaders on education is a growing topic in educational research. Troops to Teachers and Teach for America contribute to former military service members transitioning to K-12 education. Military service members possess unique experiences and talents that make them attractive to local school districts. They contribute many experiences as employees: they follow the rules, are hardworking and loyal, and demonstrate leadership qualities. Other factors, not in direct relation to teaching include maturity, worldviews, experiences, self-reflection, ability to make a difference, and the diversity of military who want to teach.

The purpose of this qualitative research was to investigate the experiences of 18 military-trained educational leaders who transitioned from the classroom to administration. A grounded theory methodology was utilized to explain how each military-trained educational leader experienced transition. Online surveys as well as in-depth interviews were conducted as the method of data collection. Four findings emerged from how the participants expressed the transference of leadership skills from the military related to educational administration.

The findings of this study may be utilized to inform institutes of higher education about supports needed in regard to working with the veteran population. Former military service members can use this study to better prepare themselves in becoming teachers and educational administrators. School districts can also create supports for current and future military-trained educational leaders to build leadership capacity amongst its schools.

Key Words: Military Veterans, Educational Leadership, Grounded Theory

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"The experience of war makes those who fight an exceptional group within a general population" (Ackerman, DiRamio, & Mitchell, 2009, p.5).

The number of military service members who have left the military service and have begun to look at or start civilian careers has increased by 30% over the last ten years (Gaiter, 2015; McCaslin et al., 2014; Rausch, 2014). Soldiers who have gone through numerous deployments and constraints of military life begin to look at options available outside of the military (Lancaster et al., 2013). For those intent on leaving the military or full retirement, securing new jobs or careers is a top priority (Clemens & Milsom, 2008; Litz & Orsillo, 2004). In line with this need for employment, many transitioning service members are using their education benefits to enter college or university and obtain a degree or trade.

One of the professions that military service members have gravitated toward has been the field of education. While several occupations are more aligned to military services (e.g., law enforcement, human resources, mechanical), this study focuses on the leadership experiences of military service members who have transitioned into educational leadership. Educational leadership can be defined as the ability to provide direction and influence others (Fullan, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). These skills are important to schools and represent many of the skills possessed by former military service members.

The Need for Educators

With teacher shortages occurring across the nation (Aragon, 2016; Dee & Goldhaber, 2016; Ritter & Brown, 2017), organizations such as universities and alternative teacher preparation programs have promoted education as a profession that can utilize military leaders. Due to self-discipline and transferable skills associated with leadership qualities such as time

management and organizational and professional development, military service members are pursuing education. These skill sets have been recognized as being beneficial by supervisors within the K-12 education system, though not without some criticisms (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998).

Some criticisms of military service members in the classroom that were identified as "military education turn hierarchical organization, competition group cohesion and weaponry into fun and games" (Saltman, 2007, p.28). Furthermore, Perez (2006) determined that the Troops to Teachers program's primary purpose is to introduce military values and experiences into educational experiences of students in hopes that they will join the military. Teacher shortages and specific military skill sets such as those mentioned above (i.e., self-discipline and leadership qualities) set the stage for an increasing number of former military service members to enter the teaching profession.

Educational Leadership

Schools and districts have always placed a strong emphasis on leadership. Schools have in recent years prepared leaders to become instructional leaders (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013; Sergiovanni, 2015). The study of leadership, in general, is not a new concept (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015; Northouse, 2013; Roberts, 1985; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2008). Amanchukwu et al. (2015) identified that leadership could fall into one of the eight leadership theories.

The most significant influence on students and schools is when leadership has been distributed across the campus (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Aside from direct teaching, school leadership plays a vital role in student learning (Leithwood et al., 2008; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

For this study, I define former military service members as individuals who had completed their service obligations, and who transition back to the civilian workforce, though some of those veterans may still be serving in the armed forces in nontraditional roles (e.g., state National Guards or Army Reserves). I define military-trained educational leaders as former military service members in school administrative positions (i.e., assistant principals, principals, directors). Leaving the military can challenge many service members due in large part to the lack of supports available as they transition back into the civilian workforce (Diamond, 2012).

There are usually between 230,000 to 245,000 former service members entering the civilian workforce each year (Zogas, 2017). Due to impending budgetary cuts and military reductions of force, that number is going to increase (Curran, Holt, & Afanador, 2017). The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2006) stated that through the Troops to Teachers program 3,875 military members were hired. Since 2006, that number has tripled, with 17,000 veterans being certified through the program, many being recruited and employed by independent school districts (Owings, Kaplan, Khrabrova, & Chappell, 2015).

Dr. Nemetsky, director of Texas Troops to Teachers, reported that there are currently 10,000 Troops to Teachers participants (personal communication, January 18, 2018). This increase in military service members going through Troops to Teachers provides an opportunity for teacher preparation program to ensure that military service members are informed of the process to becoming educators in their local state and requirements to achieve certification. One issue that should be addressed are the problems that these veterans face when they return to campus to complete their certification such as financial aid, readjustment to academic requirements and the stressors of working full time while participating in school.

Military service members in teaching

In recent years, former military service members entering the teaching profession increased because of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) alternative teacher preparation program Troops to Teachers. Of these former military service-members who entered the educational field as teachers, some will eventually leave the classroom and choose to enter administrative positions, such as curriculum instructors, district liaisons and assistant principal. While these military service members enter a variety of fields at university, the field of education draws many veterans into teaching. The field of education has not been a top choice for military service members. Military service members often opt for second-careers in law, business, social work, and criminal justice (Hayden, Ledwith, Dong, & Buzzetta, 2014).

There has been research on military service members who entered the teaching professions (Bolles & Patrizio, 2016; Broe, 2008; Keltner, 1994; McMurray, 2008; Parham & Gordon, 2016; Switzer, 2016), but with the recent increase in veterans pursuing teaching degrees, there has been an increase in research conducted on this population in many areas of education, such as teaching, administration and transition to education from higher education. Some researchers contend that a veteran presence in schools will instill order and discipline (Anderson, Fry, & Hourcade, 2014; Feistritzer et al., 1998); others focus on a need to return to the "good old days" which can include desk in rows and teachers who lecture the entire class (Henning, Rice, Dani, Weade, & McKeny, 2017), or a focus on providing community service (Daniels, 2017; Leslie & Koblinsky, 2017). There is still a lack of research on the pathways that veterans navigate as they move from the military to institutions of higher education to teaching and finally administration. While much of the research has focused on military service members

entering the teaching profession, very little has been conducted on veterans that enter administrative positions.

During their tenure as teachers, military service members develop an understanding of teaching and adapting to school culture, and as teachers, they can draw on both their military and education training if they shift into administrative roles. Former military service members as administrators could be valuable resources for school districts facing shortages. These specific veterans can fill voids at the administrative level, and their leadership skill sets may benefit schools and districts that are Title I[1] eligible (Ballard, 2005). People with conventional academic backgrounds are often lacking the leadership skills that are developed in the military as well as the life experiences. Life experience and age are dynamics that can also play a factor in success (Ballard, 2005).

Statement of the problem

As former military service members transition into higher education and the field of education, they face unique challenges that other educators may not encounter. These challenges include adapting to civilian life, difficulty connecting to coworkers who do not understand military culture and adapting to school cultures (Jones, 2013). There is growing interest in the transition process that veterans face as they leave the military for second careers (Griffin & Gilbert, 2015; Robertson & Brott, 2013) including entering the classroom as teachers (Ballard, 2005). Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1981) has been utilized in past research to address the transition from the military to higher education, (McKinney, 2017; Ryan, Carlstrom, Hughey, & Harris, 2011). The lack of research on the experiences of veterans and how those experiences

[1] Title 1 refers to the section of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) initially passed in 1965 and revised as Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged in 2004 (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

transfer to educational leadership is problematic, specifically the lack of research that focuses on barriers the face in the transition from the classroom to administration (Broe, 2008). These barriers may include lack of mentorship during the first year of administration or a lack of school district building capacity for teacher-leaders. The pathway to administrative roles including principal could be a great fit for these military-trained educational leaders due in large part to their military experiences, leadership styles, and self-discipline (Bolles, 2014). Being prepared for administrative duties and having a mentorship relationship are two key facets that may decide the success of first-year principals (Geismar, Morris, & Lieberman, 2014).

While there are exceptions, military service members still need to become certified to teach, and to do so they must participate in teacher preparation programs. In El Paso, Texas, there are several routes open to individuals interested in the teaching profession, both university-based and alternative certification. However, there are other options available to veterans who wish to become teachers, including alternative programs at the Texas Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) or online teacher preparation programs, 20 ESCs are offering alternative routes into teaching.

Purpose of the study

The overall goal of this study was to explore the personal experiences of military-trained educational leaders and how their military experience influenced their leadership in school administration. This study was exploratory in understanding the personal narratives and experiences of former military service members who are currently in administrative roles (i.e., assistant principal, principal, director). Specifically, I attempted to understand what military service members bring to administration but also what military training transferred to education.

I also sought to understand the transitional needs of these veterans as they moved from the classroom to administration.

For this study, I examined the personal experiences of 18 veterans, and the leadership experiences that they felt were transferable from the military to teaching to administration. There may be life-learning experiences that military-trained educational leaders can bring to the field of educational leadership. In this study, I identified what positive changes are brought to the profession, what challenges military-trained educational leaders face, and what areas need improvement for these military-trained educational leaders. Exploring these data is vital for assisting future military service members in their transition from the classroom to administration and understanding the facts will better support districts and principal preparation programs to ensure the success of veterans as educational leaders.

The path from the military to school administrator shapes and influences how that administrator might react to different situations. After they serve on active duty, there are three possible pathways that veterans can take: leave the military and attend an institute of higher education (IHE); pursue a career outside of education; leave the military and follow an alternative path. However, the path from the military to education is not always direct. After graduating from higher education, there are three pathways military service members can take: begin teacher preparation/certification; take additional higher education courses (i.e., master's or doctoral level classes); graduate and begin a career in something other than education.

After obtaining a teaching certification, there are three distinct paths a teacher can take: pursue leadership preparation and certification; stay in the classroom; leave education. Along each of these pathways, there are learning opportunities and experiences that military-trained educational leaders face that they will draw on later in their careers. The transition from active

military duty through the education attainment aspect as well as the teacher training and administrative leadership certification help shape the military-trained educational leader. While I list higher education occurring after military service, there are some instances where military personnel have completed their education degrees before or during military service.

There is a lack of research on the personal experiences, formal education, leadership capacity and pathways of military-trained educational leaders in the transition from the military to K-12 administrators. This study will address the gap in research between former service members in the classroom and former service members as school leaders.

Research questions

In this study, I analyzed personal interviews and ethnographic data of 18 military-trained school administrators and explored what experiences had influenced them when they transitioned from teaching into K-12 administration. The question that guided this research was: How have military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their roles within schools?

The following sub-questions further explored the influence of military leadership in the roles of school leaders;

- What military leadership experiences have veterans found that have influenced (either positively or negatively) their experiences as school leaders?
- What are the critical barriers that military-trained educational leaders must overcome as they transition from the classroom to educational leadership positions?
- What strategies have been successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions? What tools can be used to improve the success of transitioning military service members from the classroom into school leadership positions?
- What supports have been provided to bolster the success in their roles as administrators?

By answering these questions, I added awareness to the issues facilitated more successful transitions for those who choose to follow this path in the future. These leaders shared their stories and gave valuable input on their personal experiences as they transitioned from the classroom to school administration.

Significance of the study

In this research, I describe the experiences and views of the transition of military-trained educational leaders. As more of these ex-service members enter administrative positions, it becomes essential to understand the leadership qualities and the skill sets they bring or adopt as they move from one leadership level to the next. Understanding transferable skills from the military to education becomes more critical as more military service members choose education as a second-career (Howe, 2017; Jones, 2017). There has also been a movement by media and lawmakers to embrace veterans due to their perceived leadership qualities and the belief that this structured type of leadership will benefit students by introducing greater structure and more rules (Balingit, 2017). Media and lawmakers target former military service members who would benefit from a second career as educators and help government agencies understand the importance of programs that support these transitions of veterans into K-12 education.

Soldiers returning from the current Iraq/Afghanistan War and pursuing higher education could benefit from a career in education. Ackerman, DiRamio, and Mitchell (2009) interviewed 25 returning combat veterans and found that there is a need for this unique population of students to receive academic, health care, and financial support at their institutions. Thus, there is a valuable opportunity to explore shared experiences of military-trained educational leaders as they become school leaders to understand the similarities and differences in their experiences that led to leadership. This opportunity allows researchers to understand the challenges that

military-trained educational leaders face as they transition from teaching to school leadership positions.

My story

I joined the military when I was 17 years old. I graduated high school in December of my senior year and left for basic training in January. I was away for training for approximately 16 weeks. During this time, I began to embrace the rigor and structure. I recognized I was also taking more responsibility and engaged in more leadership roles. I served in the Army, on active duty for four years. I realized that I was maturing and becoming someone who was responsible and dependable. My military training expanded to include more leadership roles. During my active duty time, I continued to grow. We conducted training specific to my military occupational skill. Upon reflection, I learned skills that I now realize transferred over to education. Transferable skills such as time management, organization, and the Army corps values. Those values are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honesty, integrity, and personal courage. In the fall of 2001, I left the military and enrolled in college. Transition from active duty to higher education was not that difficult; however, as an older person in college, I did face challenges. Some challenges I faced were becoming independent and being responsible enough to attend classes. Choosing the right courses, working a full-time job, playing division 1 soccer and still serving in the New Mexico Army National Guard were also challenges that I faced.

During my first deployment in 2005, with the Army Reserve, I took on more direct leadership responsibilities within the military. Prior to my deployment I attended my first professional military education course on leadership. It was here that I gained the ability to write reports, learn how to delegate, and the importance of visible leadership. I returned home and finished my degree at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. I struggled in classes as I did

not have support in returning from a combat zone to college. I learned how important it is to have some kind of mentorship from my struggles. It took me two years to finish, and I decided that I wanted to return to Afghanistan.

My second deployment helped me further develop my leadership skills as I attended my second professional military education school prior to deployment. This time the focus was on learning skills to help develop leadership skills. Here I gained more knowledge on influencing others, developing others and becoming more confident in my ability to set priorities, organizes tasking's for subordinates and mentor junior enlisted soldiers. Upon my return home, I decided to enter the teaching profession. I completed my master's at the University of New Mexico, then I moved to Texas and began my teaching career. I was in the classroom for a total of seven years before I decided to pursue a leadership position and became an administrator.

The transition for me from military to administration was a long and strenuous path. There was no support other than my immediate family, and the only reason I was successful was my ability to stay motivated to succeed. Moving away from family, deploying to combat zones and being away from your spouse has a large impact on who you are as an individual. This has made me realize the plight of educators who have had military experiences and returned to the United States after deployment with no idea of what the future holds. There was what I deem, only superficial support from the military. However, there was a need to contribute or give back to society. Despite good intentions, educators with former military experience who undertake careers that are service driven, such as education, may need to learn how to adapt and understand that not all their military leadership experiences will benefit them.

In my first year as an administrator, I had struggled with my job. I did not have a support system in place to assist with questions and concerns. The principal at the time did not assist in

my development to become a better administrator. It was not until the second year that I sought out other administrators who had military experience and solicited advice. In the district, I currently work in there are a total of six military-trained educational leaders. We have created a space where we can contact each other and discuss solutions. The mentorship and fellowship that we have created within this informal network have helped all of us grow as leaders. I have even seen how other former service members who do not seek out mentorship and who have not joined the network, without support struggle to be better leaders.

Organization of the dissertation

In Chapter 1, I explored the phenomenon of military-trained educational leaders who have left the service and are entering the K-12 teaching career. I explained the issues that these veterans face at each stage of their transition from the military to college, employment in the classroom as K-12 teachers, and service as K-12 administrators. I also explored the preparation (training and mentorships) that these leaders receive in each stage of their transition.

In Chapter II, I concentrated on the historical background and the policies that impact former military service members attending institutions of higher education (IHEs). An analysis of military experience and transition from the military to IHEs was also conducted. I also examined the rationale for recruiting former/retired service members for administration after they have completed the requirements to become certified as an administrator in Texas and the perception of mentorships that MTELs develop in their first three years.

In Chapter III, I provides the study's methodology and conceptual framework; I utilized grounded theory (Straus & Corbin, 1994; Yin, 2015) to help understand the experiences of military-trained educational leaders, especially with the transition from military to education and transference of skills from military to education. I briefly revisit the research questions guiding

the study to contextualize the research and inform on procedures for recruiting and interviewing. The data collection and analyses processes are described, and the limitations affecting the study are discussed.

In Chapter IV, I reported the four findings relevant to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. Four themes emerge from the data and where condensed under four key findings. The data indicated that veterans who were teachers and later became administrators shared mutual philosophies about the transference of military skills applied in the role of educational administration. Among the skills transferred from the military to administration include but is not limited to: time management; self-discipline; ability to multi-task; and adapting and overcome adversity while thinking outside of the block

In Chapter V, I provided and analysis and discussed how recent research along with my findings relates to one another. In Chapter VI I also provide implications for future leaders, school districts. Furthermore, I provided ideas for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

For the review of the literature, I investigated the intersection of second-career training of military-trained educational leaders, their entry into K-12 teaching, and their subsequent transitions into leadership positions within K-12 education. To better understand this connection, this review begins with an examination of historical background and policies that influence of military veterans who seek higher education. I also examine literature related to military leadership experience and transition from the military to college. Next, I lay out the role of teacher preparation programs and mentorship. Finally, I discuss the rationale for recruiting military-trained educational leaders for administration after they have completed the requirements to become certified as administrators in Texas and their perceptions of their mentorships during their first three years. I also provide research data on the effectiveness of mentor evaluation.

Over the past 15 years, researchers have begun to explore the increasing number of military service members who are moving into K-12 education (Bolles, 2014; Owings et al., 2006; Parham & Gordon, 2016). Policies, diversity, experience, career transition, motivation and a need for qualified teachers have provided ample support for employing transitioning service members in specific school districts. The literature gives insight into this transition and helps identify why and how service members are transitioning to K-12 education.

Historical backdrop

There has been a long connection between war and education. Attending university from the late 19th century to the early 20th century was an "elitist" privilege for predominately wealthy, White, Protestant men (Bannier, 2006); only 5% of World War I veterans attended university (Edmondson, 2002). Before the United States involvement in World War II, 10% of all Americans attended university (Wilson, 1995).

The end of WWII saw the return of millions of American soldiers to the United States. This massive influx of men and women heading back into the workforce presented many logistical problems. Congress introduced several policies to assist returning service members in obtaining higher education. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (P.L. 78-346 58 Stat. 284m), also known as the Montgomery G.I. Bill, introduced many benefits for returning service men and women, and one of the main benefits was funds for education (Bound & Turner, 2002).

Under the G.I. Bill, members of the armed forces who were returning home after World War II, could attend institutions of higher education. These opportunities to attend college were not offered in earlier conflicts; Civil War veterans, for instance, returned home with minimal government assistance and, there was also no support from President Woodrow Wilson for returning veterans at the end of WWI. Moreover, the Great Depression added to the problems of veterans with legislation that provided little economic relief (Keister, 1994).

In 1942, President Roosevelt decided that American men and women of the armed forces need support. The President's decision paid off as there was a substantial voter turnout among the millions of service members returning home from the war (Edmondson, 2002). Many universities felt that the G.I. Bill would hinder the veterans and "demoralize education" (Buckley, 2004). Administrators were concerned about the influx of student veterans and

whether the colleges and universities and the students could handle the rigor (Buckley, 2004). Southern legislators were another opponent to the passage of the G.I. Bill. The legislators felt that allowing unemployment benefits for both Black and White veterans was morally wrong (Ford & Miller, 1995). Research proved that these concerns had no merit as student veterans were and still are today considered academically proficient owing to the discipline and aptitude for hard work they developed while in the service (Cate, 2011).

The G.I. bill

In 1944, Public Law 346, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, otherwise known as the G.I. Bill, narrowly passed the House of Representatives by one vote and was sent to the President's desk. On June 22, 1944, President Roosevelt signed the bill into law, affirming that "It gives emphatic notice to the men and women in our armed forces that the American people do not intend to let them down" (Bannier, 2006, p.38).

Over the next 64 years, the G.I. Bill changed with the involvement of the United States in multiple world conflicts (Bannier, 2006; Buckley, 2004; Ford & Miller, 1995). From the Veterans Readjustment Act of 1952, which assisted Korean War veterans, to similar acts in 1955 and 1966 for post-Korean War and Vietnam veterans, universities saw a sizeable increase in returning service members utilizing their benefits; of which 44% were Korean War veterans (White, 2004). Colleges and universities became overwhelmed in large part because of these veterans taking advantage of their educational benefits (Bound & Turner, 2002; Olson, 1973). The Cold War saw changes in troop levels, and the subsequent years saw fluctuation in the numbers of service members entering higher education (Bound & Turner, 2002; Olson, 1973).

The G.I. Bill was reauthorized from the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 to the Montgomery G.I. Bill, and now it is notably named the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. Changes in the G.I.

Bill includes an increase in the allowance for tuition and fees, a housing allowance, and a book and supplies stipend (Arminio, Grabosky, & Lang, 2014).

The Educational Assistance Act of 2008 increased benefits offered under the G.I Bill under which service members transition out of the military to pursue degrees in professional fields; this financial assistance is one of the main reasons veterans pursue such degrees (Radford, 2009; Radford, 2012; Sander, 2012; Steele, Salcedo, & Coley, 2010). Since the Post 9/11 GI Bill was enacted, the number of student veterans has doubled on college campuses (Smith-Osborne, 2013). With transitioning veterans looking for new careers, universities and colleges need tools and programs to support these men and women veterans. The impact of the support that is necessary for the success of the veteran at the IHE depends on whether they already have a degree and only need alternative certification or if the service member still needs four years of college. Federal and state policies have supported military service members in their transition from the military to school.

Federal policies

Three distinct federal policies, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 2008's Race to The Top (RTTT), and Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) have had varying impacts on military-trained educational leaders who are seeking certification in education. NCLB especially targeted alternative certification teacher programs and support programs such as, Troops to Teachers, and highlights the need for second-career teachers (Johnson, Birkeland, & Peske, 2005).

Race to The Top (2008), makes far less mention of alternative track teachers, than did No Child Left Behind (2001), which was reauthorized under the Obama administration as ESSA (Haller, Hunt, Pacha, & Fazekas, 2016). However, all three policies increased the focus on

alternative certification for teachers, while ESSA also focused on investment in principal preparation and development (Rothman, 2016; Rowland, 2017).

The impact of NCLB. NCLB, signed by President George W. Bush in 2001, focused on issues of accountability and aimed to ensure quality education for all students regardless of race, gender, or intellectual capacity. Teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention most affected colleges and universities under the provisions of NCLB (Anderson & Bullock, 2004; Coble & Azordegan, 2004). Although there is no clear definition of alternative certification in the literature (Mungal, 2012), I define alternative certification as the programs in which second-career teachers are trained and obtain their certification in teaching. The glaring difference is that with traditional certification programs, students attend a four-year program preparing them for the teaching profession while alternative trained teachers already have earned a degree in other content and only require courses on teaching (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). Alternative certification is not a new concept in the United States, in fact, since 1985, over 200,000 teachers have chosen this pathway to certification (Anderson & Bullock, 2004; Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). In 2003, Congress allocated over $41.65 million to assist returning service members in their transitions to teaching, including funding for the Troops to Teachers program.

Due in large part to NCLB, school administrators actively sought highly qualified teachers, and when the pool of those teachers dried up, districts faced shortages Troops to Teachers participants helped fill gaps in shortage areas, such as rural and low socioeconomically regions at Title 1 schools, especially in the role of special education teacher (Owings et al., 2006). Of the 20,000 service members recruited by Troops to Teachers, 18,000 have become certified teachers (Owings et al., 2006; Owings et al., 2015).

There have been changes in the program since 1994 that assist additional participants who would not have qualified under the earlier provisions. The significant differences between the original legislation and PL 112-239 are funding eligibility and subsidies. Funding increased from $30 million to $50 million. Initial eligibility required six years of active duty or ten years of combined active duty and national guard/reserve time in service. The new requirement is four years of service or 90 days continuous active duty since September 11, 2001, in response to veteran unemployment (estimated 18%; Owings et al., 2015). Under section 541, Troops to Teachers was transferred from the Department of Education to DoD.

One of the critical themes for NCLB was the issue of accountability. Accountability was addressed in NCLB by employing teachers who had degrees in specific areas, a term is known as highly qualified teachers (Mungal, 2012) and in focusing on how universities are going to prepare and train teachers and how school districts are going evaluate success. NCLB promotes alternative programs to produce highly qualified teachers (Simpson, LaCava, & Garner, 2004). The changing administration also brought in new education policies such as Race to the Top and Every Student Succeed Act reauthorization of NCLB.

The impact of RTTT. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (2009) and RTTT of 2009 forced states to compete for the RTTT funds. RTTT pressured businesses to hire unemployed veterans via the 2009 initiative Educate to Innovate (Burke & McNeill, 2011). One of the primary purposes of this initiative was to employ 100,000 new and effective science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers in the next decade. This policy helped veterans transition to school campuses (Milgrom-Elcott, 2016). The policy also, was in part to address the issue of unemployed veterans. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) analyzed employment differences between men and women veterans as of 2016, and the rate of

unemployment was 5% for male veterans and 5.6% for women veterans (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016).

For Gulf War II era (2003-present) veterans with less than a high school diploma, the unemployment rate was not reported, but the unemployment rate for veterans with only a high school diploma is 8.2%. For veterans with some college or at least an associate degree, the percentage dropped to 7.0%, and the rate for veterans with a bachelor's degree or higher was 4.8%. These data suggest the importance of education in the employment of veterans, and RTTT's purpose was to by-pass the apparent failing of NCLB by addressing veteran unemployment (Cummins, 2014; Lewis & Young, 2013; McGuinn, 2012).

The impact of ESSA. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was the 2015 re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. A component of ESSA that was relevant to this research is the focus on principal preparation and development (Dynarski, 2015). ESSA Title II, Part A, allocates approximately $2.3 billion per year to state and local education agencies (2017-2020) through a funding formula in which states can access the funds to improve teachers, principals, and other school leaders. Other benefits include

- improving principal certification (regular and alternative), evaluation, and support systems;
- perseverance (principal preparation programs and academies);
- training or professional development on such topics as differentiation performance; evaluating teachers; cultural competence; instruction and student learning; postsecondary education for students; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education; career and technical education (CTE); and technology;
- recruiting and retaining school leaders;

- induction and mentoring for early career principals; and
- differential pay for hard-to-fill positions.

With these supports, ESSA offers military-trained educational leaders an opportunity to grow in the field of educational leadership if, programs receive the funding. States may also apply for competitive federal grants in school leader recruitment, support, and incentive programs (including for teachers as well) and, supporting effective educator development. Schools can benefit from the Supporting Effective Development grant to support educator recruitment, preparation, certification, and professional; The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) uses grant funds to promote such programs in conjunction with the Military Student Success Center. Texas and other states are required to "ensure that investments in leadership preparation and development are evidence-based, as required by ESSA, and tailored to address the context of their educational systems" (Matters, 2016).

State policies

In addition to federal programs that support former military service members, many states and territories offer education benefits to residents who have served or are currently serving. It was not until 1943 that legislation was amended by Texas Senators Grady Hazlewood and George Moffett to provide Texas soldiers with an educational benefit at the time they joined the military under what is known as The Hinson-Hazlewood Act. The Hazlewood Act of 1923 predated the Montgomery G. I. Bill by nine years as original legislation for Texas veterans. Under Texas Education Code, Section 54.3411, the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) determines the amount of funding members were entitled to receive each year. Five elected officials govern the LBB, and their primary purpose is to produce a fiscal impact statement and revenue estimate. The members of the LBB are:

- The Texas Lieutenant Governor
- The Speaker of the House of Representatives
- The Chairman of the Texas House Appropriations and Ways and Means Committee
- Two appointed House members

Under the Hazlewood Act, eligible Texas veterans are provided an exemption for tuition and fees at any of the 38 general universities, three lower division colleges, 50 community and junior colleges, and ten health-related colleges (State of Texas Legislative Budget Board, 2014).

Table 1 lists the number of *Hazlewood* exemption awards from the past five years. The data show increases from 2012 to 2016.

Table 1

Hazlewood Act Exemptions by Year

Year	Awards	Value of Awards (In Millions)
2012	29,003	$110.2
2013	35,769	$146.1
2014	38,946	$169.1
2015	38,822	$168.1

The National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics for the fiscal year 2013 reports there are 21,369,602 veterans in the United States. California, Texas, Florida, Pennsylvania, and New York are the five states with the highest veteran populations (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, 2017). Table 2 lists the current education incentives in these five states for residents who have served in the military that is, comparable with the State of Texas.

Table 2:
State Education Benefits and *Qualifications for Veterans*

State	Veteran Population	Incentive	Qualifications for benefit
California	1,893,539 (.088% of total U.S. Population)	College tuition waiver for dependents	Dependents of service members who are service-connected disabled (100%) or, killed or missing in action
Texas	1,583,272 (.074% of total U.S. Population)	Up to 150 hours of tuition exemption including most fee charges at public institutions of higher education	Veterans whose residency is Texas at enlistment, which can be transferred to spouses and dependent.
Florida	1,569,406 (.073% of total U.S. Population)	Tuition Waiver; Tuition Deferment; Reduced Tuition; Education for children of deceased or disabled Florida veterans	Purple heart recipients receive a tuition waiver for undergraduate study; Tuition deferred until federal benefits are obtained: Full tuition paid for members of FL National Guard: Dependents of service members who are 100% disabled following service or of prisoners of war and soldiers who are missing or killed in action receive four years of tuition
Pennsylvania	943.417 (.044% of total U.S. Population)	Education Gratuity	$500 per semester for children age 16-23 of a parent who is 100% permanently disabled
New York	912,499 (.042% of total U.S. Population)	Veterans Tuition Awards for study up to eight semesters of undergraduate and six semesters of graduate study full- or part-time	Eligible veterans who matriculated into an approved program.

Source https://www.military.com/education/money-for-school/state-veteran-benefits.html

University policies

University policies also must support the transitioning of military service members in large part because of federal and state policies aimed at addressing the fact that; more veterans are returning to school. The University of Texas at El Paso allocates approximately $328,550 (.007%) of its total $447,380,142 budget to Military Student enrollment (UTEP Annual Operating Budget, 2017). This amount includes the operation of the Military Student Success Center (MSSC) whose mission is to assist military-affiliated post-secondary students in using their educational benefits and to facilitate their transitions from the military to college life. MSSC's goal is to make The University of Texas at El Paso one of the most military-friendly universities in the United States.

Military experience and transitioning from military to education

Military experience. In this section I examine the research of service members' military experience and identity; the indoctrination methods, the discipline, and the structure end up becoming the fabric of the individual. Individuals who serve after September 11, 2001, are described as Gulf War-era II veterans. As of June 2017, there are 539,675 service members in the Army and 1,429,036 service members in the military (Defense Manpower Data Center, 2017). Table 3 depicts the demographics of the military (U.S. Department of Defense, 2017).

Table 3

Demographics of Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers FY16

Demographic Variable	DoD Active Duty	Reserve and Guard (Selected Reserves)
Total Number	1,370,329	842,510
Ratio of officers to enlisted men	1 to 4.7	1 to 5.5
% women/% men	16.4% / 85.1%	18.5% / 81.5%
% minorities	30.7%	25.1%
% located in the United States, U.S. territories	87.2%	99.0%
% 25 years old or younger	43.1 %	34.2 %
% with bachelor's degree or higher	19.9 %	21.1 %
% married	55.2 %	45.9 %
% in dual-military marriages	6.4 %	2.6 %
Number of separations	206, 218	136, 809
Retired personnel	1, 551, 844	744,629 (Ready Reserve)

Source; United States Department of Defense, 2017

Indoctrination into the military. The transition from civilian to military life requires the ability to adapt to the structure first of basic combat training and then of their military service until they discharge, retire or otherwise leave (Lieberman et al., 2014); basic training is vital to shaping who soldiers will be during their careers in the military (Foran & Adler, 2013). For instance, 35,000 recruits annually enter the Air Force's six-week basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas and 72,000 men and women attend the Army's basic training (Snedecor et. al., 2000). During the 10-weeks of training, recruits are turned into well-disciplined soldiers;

over time, they gain specific skill sets that can assist them even after they leave from the military.

For example, during Army basic combat training, recruits learn an assortment of basic combat skills including; Basic Rifle Marksmanship, land navigation, and drill and ceremony (Adler, Williams, McGurk, Moss, & Bliese, 2015). Training also includes combat conditioning by running an obstacle course, marches of unpredictable distances up to 12 miles, physical training, and the Modern Army Combative Program, a mixed-martial arts program that combines Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Wrestling, Judo, Muay Thai, and boxing (Jensen, 2014). Basic Training is divided into three phases. In Phase I (also known as "Red Phase"), recruits are subjected to "total control over their daily lives," their every action is scrutinized and continuously corrected by drill sergeants (Crawford, 2015).

In Phase II ("White Phase"), soldiers begin weapons training. Additionally, Phase II includes continual, intense physical training (PT) along with drill and ceremony training. At the conclusion of Phase II, soldiers are to demonstrate proficiency with the various weaponry with which they trained (Crawford, 2015).

Phase III or ("Blue Phase,") is the culmination of training and the most challenging of all the training phases; as a final PT test is administered during the first week of Phase III.

When a recruit completes basic training, he or she is now a soldier and has developed skills to operate in a combat environment as a basic rifleman and perform MOS (military occupational specialty) specific duties under fire. Recruits are also indoctrinated to adopt the Army "Warrior Ethos," and to memorize and live by the Soldier's Creed (Crawford, 2015).

Each branch of the military has its own, although similar, recruit training program to indoctrinate recruits into service. Table 4 depicts the characteristics of each branch's training for recruits.

Table 4

Characteristics of Recruitment Training in Each Military Branch

Branch of Service	Name of Training	Location(s); City, State	Total Length of Training (in weeks)
Army	Basic combat training	• Fort Benning, Columbus GA • Fort Jackson, Columbia SC • Fort Leonard Wood, St. Robert, MO • Fort Sill, Lawton, OK	Ten weeks
Navy	Boot camp or recruit training command	Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill	Eight weeks
Marine Corps	Recruit training or boot camp	Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) Parris Island, SC or San Diego, CA	Thirteen weeks
Air Force	Basic military training	Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio TX	63 Days (8.5 weeks)
Coast Guard	Recruit training	Coast Guard Training Center Cape May, NJ	Eight weeks

Time served in the military has been proven to instill skills and traits that are highly sought after outside the military, particularly in law enforcement but also now in education, where reformers came to believe that leadership skills such as self-discipline and structure would benefit schools, faculty, and students. It understands how veterans make the transition from military service to civilian life, and specifically from teaching to school administration that could be beneficial to former service members leaving the military, as well as for school districts to gain a better understanding of the qualities that veterans bring to their positions as teachers and administrators. Schlossberg's (1981) Transition Theory has been utilized in some studies explicitly targeting former service members in transition (Anderson & Goodman, 2014; Griffin & Gilbert, 2015; McKinney, 2017).

Transition to college. McKinney (2107), examined the experiences of military veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and applied Schlossberg's Transition Theory to understand how veterans planned for transition, self-awareness of the transition, and perceived support of the transition. McKinney's research assisted me in understanding what issues military veterans face with transition and led me to think that not only do military veterans face challenges when they transition from the military to higher education, but they face challenges when they go into education and then administration. The transition to college is a crucial area of focus as an option available to military service members who are exiting from full-time military service.

I define career transition specifically as leaving the military service either when one's expiration of the term of service expires or through retirement. There has been increased visibility of the civilian transition for veterans due in large part to numerous deployments, large drawdowns in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the intense media coverage. "The transition to civilian life presents a wholly unique situation where most military members will receive support." It

may be more difficult for longer-serving members to transition into civilian life (Bullock, Braud, Andrews, & Phillips, 2009).

The burden of transitioning falls to the individual member, their immediate and extended family, as well as friends. Securing these new jobs and careers could prove difficult, in fact, the rate of unemployment is 5% for male veterans and 5.6% for women veterans compared with 4.8% for male nonveterans and 4.6% for women (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016).

Transition is not uncommon in the military; military-related transitions include moving to new duty stations, changes within the command structure, or deployment overseas (Robertson & Brott, 2013); however, in the military transition is always supported by the command structure. Service members are trained in what is known as specific MOSs, but as they begin the pre-separation process, they need to consider the job opportunities that are available. Moreover, while most MOSs are high-skill occupations in the military, corresponding positions may not exist in the civilian world; in fact, many former service members report that their military training did not translate into job opportunities or equal pay (Mungal, Johnson, & Court, 2018). Thus, opportunities may be limited when former military service members enter the civilian world.

While returning from a combat mission or deployment can present stressors in the lives of service members, there is nothing more daunting to combat veterans than returning to the civilian lives they left (Ackerman & DiRamio, 2009). While many exiting service members have plans or options, they soon find out that those options may be limited. As such, these service members begin to explore other options open to them and education is one of those options

Beginning the next chapter in life, such as enrolling in a teacher preparation program or making the transition into teaching can be challenging. An abundance of research discusses

veterans returning to the classroom and the challenges they face (Ackerman et al., 2009; Olsen, Badger, & McCuddy, 2014: Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). Ackerman et al. (2009) asserted "The experience of war makes those who fight a special group within a general population" (p.5). This is true especially for soldiers who served during the current Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts and who are now entering college campuses. Ackerman et al. (2009) interviewed 25 veterans, discussing how school administration could better support their transitions. The interviewees described the challenges that military members face when they return to college.

Current research shows that some military affiliated post-secondary students face heightened stress and suffer from some post-traumatic stress after numerous combat deployments (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). Rumann and Hamrick (2010) researched student veterans in transition who re-enrolled in college after war zone deployments. As previous research has shown, there is a need for support for service members transitioning to higher education. Rumann and Hamrick (2010) added that many of their respondents had faced heightened stress when they returned home: "In the Marine Corps, someone will tell you outright what he or she wants. There is no guesswork involved. For college, there is no clear, do this, go home, you are done" (p. 441).

If the students decide to focus on becoming teachers, they can choose between the professional university education or the myriad of alternative options. The alternative route may offer more incentives such as shorter time, lower costs, and the ability to substitute life experience for coursework. However, teacher preparation at the higher education level has come under scrutiny in the past year (Kumashiro, 2015).

Second-career transition

There are professional and personal reasons that military service members decide to either retire or leave the military. Moving from the structured environment of the military to what can be viewed as the unstructured civilian world with different rules and obligations scares many military members, myself included. One researcher examined the transition of military personnel to public education and the factors that contributed to the transition including obstacles they faced and whether their teacher preparation had been adequate (West, 2000). The author also described five factors that facilitated these transitions and determined where veterans would be willing to work: (a) life experiences, (b) values and attitudes, (c) willingness to accept diversity, (d) ability to adapt, and (e) previous military rank and status (West, 2000). Regardless of the length of time soldiers have served, those who exit the service are required to attend career counseling at the local career transition center. At one installation, people such as the director of the transition center determine soldiers' needs and then find a fit for their second careers. While it may appear that leaving the military after a short term of service may ease the transition, another perspective is age: Soldiers who enlisted when they were young may not have the necessary life experiences to make adjusting easy, and senior service members may be entrenched in the military lifestyle.

Between 2002 and 2013, 51.3% of military service members completed either vocational training or some sort of degree program (Bidwell, 2014). This is in comparison to the 59% of younger (18-24 years of age) non-veterans (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The reauthorization and expansion of the Post-9/11 GI Bill (2009) saw an increase of veterans utilizing funding for post-secondary education (Hammond, 2017). In 2007-2008, 913,800 (4.5%) veterans were pursuing an undergraduate degree, while 146,500 (4.3%) were pursuing a graduate

degree. In 2011, 1,132,900 (4.9%) veterans pursued an undergraduate degree and 159,700 (4.3%) pursued a graduate degree (Radford, 2009; Radford, 2012).

Coupland (2004) looked at Troops to Teachers in Ohio and described this phenomenon of military service members' pursuing second-careers in teaching in the context of a specific teacher preparation program. The author evaluated ten members of Ohio Troops to Teachers and their transitions from the military to the classroom as teachers. One topic that was discussed briefly and should be explored more in-depth is military skills and experience, and how these translate into effective teaching in the classroom.

Coupland (2004) cites former First Lady Laura Bush in stating that military backgrounds with skills in management and leadership, make a difference in the classroom. There are, however, limitations in the research. For instance, Coupland (2004) conducted the study with only 10 participants in northern Ohio and lacked sufficient representation from women and minorities; only one participant was female, and none were ethnic minorities.

Transitioning into education

While there have been several studies of military service members' transitions to the civilian work world, and a select few on the transition into teaching professions, to date no studies have been completed on military-trained educational leaders specifically.

There has been an increase in military service members transitioning to K-12 public education (Celis, 1992; Ryan, 1994; Taylor, 1994), and in many K-12 schools, there is a struggle to fill math, science, and special education teaching positions (MacDonald, 2001; Recruiting New Teachers, 2000). The dearth of applicants has school administrators looking beyond what they traditionally seek, which is college graduates who pursued careers in teaching when hiring new teachers (Clewell & Villegas, 1999; Egalite, Jensen, Stewart, & Wolf, 2014; Kirby, Darling-

Hammond, & Hudson, 1989). Military service members may provide a new source for teachers and educational administrators.

Faculty in teacher preparation programs at institutions of higher education need to evaluate the process military members take to transition to the K-12 public education system and determine if it is adequately preparing them for life as a teacher and possibly an administrator. Research indicates that first-year teachers struggle in the classroom regardless of the pathway, traditional or alternative, they followed to become teachers (Anderson, Fry, & Hourcade, 2014). Traditional teachers are those who receive degrees in education and upon completion begin to work in the K-12 sector. There has been abundant research on transitioning military service members (Celis, 1992; Keltner, 1994; Robertson & Brott, 2013; Taylor, 1994; West, 2000; White, 1997). However, within the literature, gaps such as what motivates military members to choose education, specifically in high-needs areas, provide openings for future research.

Gaps in research

There is some research on military service members in teaching and on leadership characteristics of military service members as school administrators, but it is insufficient; there is limited research on the impact of former military members who go into K-12 education. With this study, I addressed veterans who are proud to serve again in the roles of teachers, coaches, mentors, and administrators; as of now, few studies show why military members choose to move into high-area needs. When soldiers leave the military, they must decide on their next careers; in this section, I examined the literature on military experiences and transition back into civilian life along with identifying some of the gaps in the research on former soldiers' transition into education. In the next section, I examined the role of teacher preparation and whether service members bring transferable skills from the military to teaching.

Teacher preparation

Teacher preparation has been under attack by legislators and media for its perceived weakness and poor teacher quality (Maher, 2002). There are a variety of routes available to individuals who wish to become teachers (Mungal, 2012). Some programs can be as brief as four-to-six-week summer sessions, or they can be yearlong, two-, or four-year programs, or any lengths of time in-between. Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow (2002) questioned whether teacher's felt adequately prepared and evaluated a variety of teacher preparation programs. The researchers found that depending on the type of preparation program; teachers felt prepared except in the areas of using technology and teaching English Language Learners. Some teachers may not be familiar with changing technology or language learners.

McKibbin (2001) argued that both traditional and alternative forms of teacher preparation have strengths and weaknesses. McKibbin (2001) summarized Bruce Joyce in describing how student-teachers are like children learning to cook in their mother's kitchen. The distinguishing factors between traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs are the time committed to each. As stated before, traditional teacher preparation programs will take longer to complete where alternative certification does not take as long. The similarities are the student-teaching portion.

Texas requirements for teaching and administration. According to the Texas Administrative Code; 19 Tex. Admin. Code §228.35 (2017) for the initial certification, each educator preparation program shall also provide one of the following:

A. Student teaching, as defined in §228.2 of this title for a minimum of 12 weeks. Student teaching is a vital aspect of teacher preparation that will train teachers what it takes to teach. In Texas, teachers must teach at least two years before being admitted into

an educational administration program. To attain principal certification in Texas, a candidate must meet five criterions according to the Texas Education Agency: (a) must hold a master's degree from a university that is accredited; (b) hold a valid Texas teaching certificate; (c) have two years of creditable classroom teaching experience (d) complete principal certification program (e) complete the required exam (TEA, 2017).

Troops to Teachers. As mentioned above, Troops to Teachers, a federal program sponsored by U.S. DoD, provides military service members a route into teaching; the program has helped over 20,000 service members (Parham & Gordon, 2016) either finish their degree to pursue certification in teacher education or acquire alternative certification if they already have a degree. There is also career counseling available through the main website, and each state has a coordinator to assist in job placement. Since it is inception, over 20,000 military service members have made their way into the classroom (Parham & Gordon, 2016).

The Troops to Teachers program is meeting the needs of education by bringing more men and some women into the profession. There are also more minorities who teach in schools in inner cities and who teach special education, math, and science. Many of these teachers prove that they value high standards for themselves as well as students and plan to make education a second-career (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willet, 1998). Troops to Teachers participants are predominantly male compiling of 82% of the population; 18% are females; 37% are persons of color; 61% of the participants plan to continue teaching, and an additional 16% plan to be in other positions in education such as administration. (Feistritzer et al., 1998).

In 2005 and 2012, studies were completed that detailed the characteristics of Troops to Teachers participants. Owings et al., (2006) surveyed 2,103 Troops to Teachers participants to determine if they were more efficient in classroom management and instruction than were

teachers with comparable years of teaching experience. “Principals overwhelmingly (more than 90%) reported that Troops to Teachers are more effective in classroom instruction and classroom management/student discipline than traditionally prepared teachers” (Owings et al., 2006, p. 102). The most valued qualities of the Troops to Teacher participants were their following policies and procedures, positive impact on student achievement, working well with other staff, and independently handling student discipline issues.

In the updated study, Owings et al. (2015) focused on six areas in the Troops to teacher program: (a) participants who remained in high-needs schools following the 2005 study; (b) participants who were teaching in high-need subjects (math, science, special education) since the 2005 study; (c) participants who planned to stay in teaching profession; (d) how well participants and their administrators believed the former service member were addressing current pedagogical instruction and classroom management compared with their effectiveness in the 2005 study; (e) whether principals believed that participants were better meeting their schools’ needs than were other teachers; and (f) whether principals believed that participants were meeting the needs of diverse learners.

Since one of the requirements for Troops to Teachers participants is that they teach in Title I schools, this percentage remained unchanged; for 84% of participants, their first teaching assignments were in high-needs schools. Regarding teaching in areas of high need, 43% of the respondents worked in math, science, or special education. Most participants (67% in 2012 compared with 55% in 2005) indicated that they planned to continue as a classroom teacher or pursue other positions if advancement was offered. “Overall, principals are still pleased with the work and dedication of TTT members and meeting the school's needs” (Owings et al., 2015, p. 90). Troops to Teachers participants faced some barriers in their first years as teachers. Culture

shock, information for teachers, and levels of support are the barriers that former service members faced in the classroom. For instance, in the military, there are standard operating procedures for everything, whereas in teaching, there are guidelines, but they are often vague and open to interpretation (Parham & Gordon, 2016).

Lack of information for teachers on how to work with military service members, including addressing the pre-conceived notion that all veterans have post-traumatic stress disorder is another barrier they face (Barnard-Brak, Bagby, Jones, & Sulak, 2011). The motivation to work in administration and step out of the classroom has lured military service members to pursue degrees in administration and become school leaders (Bolles & Patrizio, 2016; Owings, Kaplan, & Chappell, 2011). Sixty percent of participants in Feistritzer et al.'s (1998) seminal piece on Troops to Teachers indicated that they would pursue degrees to become school administrators. Many of the military service members in schools have held leadership positions in the military and could be a great fit for school districts looking for leaders among their ranks.

Addressing leadership needs

Under the Obama administration, through the Educate to Innovate (2009) and 100kin10 initiatives, private-sector businesses were encouraged to hire unemployed former military service members (Stern, 2017); the latter, a collaboration of companies and businesses, aimed to stimulate businesses to hire 100,000 new and effective STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) teachers in the next decade. This emphasis on former service members as educators and leaders stemmed from a need to harness what was viewed as transferable skills that would help schools. Military transition counselors, human resource directors and now school administrators can better assess the needs of transitioning military service members by understanding why they

pursue teaching and the processes they go through before reaching the classroom.

This knowledge will help in reducing unemployment among former military service members; the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) reported that nearly 9.0% of veterans were unemployed. With the unemployment rate among Gulf-War II veterans at an all-time high (Clemens & Milsom, 2008; Litz & Orsillo, 2004), former military service members will be looking for new careers; this knowledge will also aid in the understanding the different tools veterans need for support, such as whether they merely need alternative certification, or they need four full years of college.

Former service members possess unique experiences and talents that make them attractive to local school districts (HR Exchange, 2014*).* Willie Watson, an assistant superintendent with Manor Independent School District, reported that "veterans brought many desirable traits to education: they follow rules, loyal, and demonstrate good leadership qualities. Other characteristics, not in direct relation to teaching include maturity, worldviews, experiences, self-reflection, ability to make a difference, and the diversity of military who want to teach." (W. Watson, personal communication, November 18, 2014). In this section, I examined teacher preparation and certification in Texas, the Troops to Teachers program, former service member's transitions into education as a second career, and the needs of leadership. In the next section, I examined the role of navigating from teaching to educational leadership.

Military-trained educational leaders

Benefits of military background. Their military backgrounds can contribute to veterans' second-career accomplishments as teachers and administrators. These military-trained educational leaders express that their time in the military and specific experiences prepared them to be successful classroom teachers and school leaders (Gantz, 2004).

Organization, time management, personal and student discipline, working with diverse populations, and leadership and motivational skills are all critical tenets that military-trained educational leaders value most (Bolles & Patrizio, 2016; Gantz, 2004). These same qualities may also contribute to their success leading faculty, staff, and students toward higher standards and student achievement: "As practicing teachers, they are learning to act successfully within the school culture, so their desire to become principals has the credibility of relevant experiences" (Owings et al., 2015, p. 59).

Navigating to administration. It has been well documented that some former military service members are navigating from the classroom to administration (Burton & Weiner, 2016; Hoffert, 2015). Recent research has addressed preparing individuals who aspire to lead schools and the role of mentorship during principals' first years (Reyna, 2017). School leadership over the next ten years will dramatically change: Research shows that 70% of current principals anticipate retirement or promotion within the next decade (Oleszewski, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012). Filling administrative positions begin with assistant principals, a position that is a stepping stone for career advancement (Daresh & Voss, 2001).

However, for former military service members, there are a variety of reasons that shifting from the classroom to administration can be challenging. First, teachers and administrators require certification and for some, it may have been a long time between degree attainment and

teaching and the demands of working full time and going back to school can be difficult (Ackerman et al., 2009; Burnett & Segoria, 2009). Second, the cost of coursework may be prohibitive, and the G.I. Bill only covers a certain number of courses.

In Texas, The Hazlewood Act is accessible for those military service members who lived in Texas when they joined, but for those who did not, the financial burden could deter their willingness to pursue further education. Districts look for leaders who can guide their schools and have instructional leadership backgrounds as well as who can provide strong leadership and management skills for the school, communicate effectively with parents, school board members and external stakeholders, build relationships, and model positive leadership principles (Bolles & Patrizio, 2016). Many of the participants had gone from the classroom to a role in administration. In some of the school district's teachers are encouraged to move into a curriculum role (e.g., curriculum coach; state compensatory education intervention coach or other pseudo administrative positions) to assist new administrators with the transition from the classroom to administration. Research has shown that military service members who pursue careers in education bring some specific skills to the classroom and campus, especially organization, leadership and discipline (Bolles, 2014; Broe, 2008, Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998).

Military service members as administrators. The research on military-trained educational leaders or military service members as school leaders and their experiences is relatively new. Some veterans have transitioned into administration, but few if any researchers have thoroughly examined this (Bolles & Patrizio, 2016; Fryer, 2013; Owings et al., 2011). Both the media and the public have embraced and promoted the idea that former service members can be beneficial to education. The experiences, barriers, and development of school leadership are three components that will be examined throughout the transitional pathway from the military to

the principalship. In today's changing realm of K-12 education school leaders must become instructional leaders more than building managers.

There is a causal relationship between military and educational leadership. Owings et al. (2011) studied former military service members who left the classroom and transitioned to administration and found that they had success outside of the classroom. Bolles and Patrizio (2016) identified U.S. Marine Corps leadership principles that correlate to Marzano, Waters and McNulty's (2005) 21 responsibilities. Table 5 presents a comparison of Marzano et al.'s 21 responsibilities with the Marine Corps' leadership principles (Bolles, 2014).

Table 5:

Comparison of Marzano et al.'s 21 Responsibilities and the U.S. Marine Corps' Leadership Principles

21 Responsibilities of School Leadership that Work*	Related Military Leadership Principles
1. Affirmation	Know your staff and look out for their welfare
2. Change Agent	None
3. Contingent rewards	Know your staff and look out for their welfare
4. Communication	Keep your staff informed
5. Cultured	Train your staff as a team
6. Discipline	Know your staff and look out for their welfare
7. Flexibility	None
8. Focus	Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities
9. Ideals/Beliefs	None
10. Input	Develop a sense of responsibility among subordinates
11. Intellectual Simulation	None
12. Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction Assessment (CIA)	Be technically and tactically proficient
13. Knowledge of CIA	Ensure assigned task are understood, supervised and accomplished
14. Monitoring/Evaluating	Ensure assigned task are understood, supervised and accomplished
15. Optimizer	None
16. Order	None

17. Outreach	None
18. Relationship	Know your staff and look out for their welfare
19. Resources	Know your staff and look out for their welfare
20. Situational Awareness	None
21. Visibility	Set the example

*Marzano et al., 2005; **U.S. Marine Corps Leadership, 2013

Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) describe six school managerial tasks that affect learning and instruction. These managerial tasks are: scheduling, interpreting and implementing local and state policies, hiring, staff supervision, providing student services, and designing and managing staff development. Table 6 spotlights these.

Table 6

Donmoyer and Wagstaff's Managerial Task for Principals

Scheduling: Means and Ends	Scheduling can affect students in the classroom, either positively or negatively, and leaders who are aware of this impact can alter the impact of learning.
Articulating Policies, Rules, and Norms	Leaders who use the policies of the school and district have a positive impact on student learning
Hiring Personnel	Leaders who are involved in the hiring decisions prove they understand the importance of this managerial task
Supervising Personnel	Leaders who do not supervise in a procedural task versus helping teachers improve their craft improve learning
Coordinating Pupil Services	Guidance counseling; health services, special programs impact learning
Managing Staff Development	Leaders often realize that they do not have the time to plan and lead instructional development, which means they must delegate someone to do it for them

The U.S. Army also describes, in Field Manual FM 6-22 (2006), five tenets, which are the critical principles that have made developing Army leaders successful. Those tenets are a strong commitment by the Army to develop leaders, clear purpose for what when an how to

develop leadership, supportive relationships, three equally supportive areas (institutional, operational, and self-development) that allow education, training, and experience and, providing, accepting, and acting upon candid assessment and feedback. Developing leaders involves a holistic, comprehensive, and purposeful group of activities (Daresh, 2004; Daresh & Voss, 2001). An Army leader, by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility, inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals.

Army leaders inspire people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking, and shape decisions for the greater good of the organization. These occur through leadership—the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. The Army leadership requirements model (see Table 7) illustrates expectations of every leader, whether military or civilian, officer or enlisted, active or reserve. This model aligns the desired outcome of leader development activities and personnel practices to a standard set of characteristics valued throughout the Army. It covers the core requirements and expectations of leaders at all levels of leadership. Attributes are the desired internal characteristics of a leader—what the Army wants leaders to be and know. Competencies are skills and learnable behaviors the Army expects leaders to acquire, demonstrate, and continue to enhance—what the Army wants leaders to do. Table 7 spotlights requirements.

Table 7:

Army Leadership Requirements Model

Army Leadership Requirements Model	Task
A Leader with Intellectual Capacity	Mental agility; Judgment; Innovation; Interpersonal tact; Expertise
A Leader of Character	Army Values; Empathy; Warrior Ethos; Service Ethos; Discipline
Leads	Leads others; Builds trust; Extends influence; Leads by example; communicates
A Leader with Presence	Mental bearing; Professional Bearing; Fitness; Confidence; Resilience
Achieves	Gets results; integrates task roles, resources, and priorities; improves performance; gives feedback, executes; adjust
Develops	Creates a positive environment; Prepares self; Develops others; Stewards the profession

Source; Headquarters, United States Army, (2006)

Examining these tasks, as well as other experiences, biases, and leadership capacity development, will ideally bridge the gap in research about military service members and military-trained educational leaders.

Summary

In Chapter II, I provided a review of the historical background and policies that affected former military service members' pursuit of higher education. I analyzed former soldiers' experiences in the military and their transition from service to college. I also examined the rationale for recruiting former service members for administration and the perceptions of mentorships that military-trained educational leaders develop in their first three years.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative grounded theory study regarding the experiences of military-trained educational leaders and the transference of military leadership skills to school administration. With this approach, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of military-trained educational leaders experiences as participants transitioned from teaching to administration. Grounded theory's suitability in regards to this study is discussed in-depth in this chapter. The main components of this chapter include the study's methodology, participants, procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations, which also includes the studies limitations.

Research questions

In this study, I conducted personal interviews with and analyzed ethnographic data from 18 school administrators who were former service members; I also explored their experiences and how those experiences had influenced their transitions from teaching into K-12 administration. The primary question that guided this research was: How have the military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their roles within schools? I used the following sub-questions to further exploration of the influence of military leadership in the roles of school leaders:

- What military leadership experiences have veterans found that have influenced (either positively or negatively) their experiences as school leaders?
- What are the critical barriers that military-trained educational leaders must overcome as they transition from the classroom to educational leadership positions?

- What strategies have been successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions? What tools can be used to improve the success of transitioning military service members from the classroom into school leadership positions?
- What, if any supports have districts provided to bolster the success in their roles as administrators?

Methodology selected

Qualitative research highlights the experiences of people and the "socially constructed nature of reality" (Mungal, 2012, p. 49). Further, it takes holistic approaches to understand the data as they are collected and analyzed. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that seeks to understand how and why a phenomenon or behavior occurs. There are five characteristics of qualitative research: (1) researchers are interested in understanding people; (2) researchers are the principal tool for data collection and analysis; (3) research is done in the field; (4) the researcher utilizes inductive strategies; and (5) the study is descriptive (Merriam, 1998). Because the purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of military-trained educational leaders and the transference of skills from the military to education, a qualitative approach was the most logical choice.

Grounded theory. This qualitative study was performed using grounded theory methodology. Utilizing a grounded theory approach, I was able to explore transferable skills from the military to educational leadership which is a contemporary topic and best suited for this type of descriptive study (Straus & Corbin, 1994; Yin, 2003). Glaser and Straus (1967) created grounded theory in hopes to allow future researchers to create new theories which emerged from the data rather than depend on analysis from pre-existing theories. Allowing interviews to be coded by terms that summarize each phrase or sentence allowed for a new theory to emerge.

The decision to use a grounded theory approach orginated from the lack of literature and knowledge based on miltiary transition to teaching and educational administraiton. Another purpose of utilizing the grounded theory methodology was to add to the base of knoweldeg about miltiary leadership skills within education and experieces of the participants as they transition from teaching to administration. Strauss and Corbin (1994) explain that the principal purpose of grounded theory is the creation of a theory which elucidates the phenomenon under examination.

Miltiary-trained educational leaders experiences are unique in a sense that leadership skills developed in the military and subsequently transferred to educational administration can not be explained by non-veterans. This study ultimately generated a useful theory with practical applications for colleges and universities, former miltiary service membes pursuing degrees in education, current teachers who are former miltiary service members pursuing careers in administration, and school distrcits wishing to employ veterans.

Grounded theory methodology is suitable for exploring the experiences of military-trained educational leaders for two main reasons. The first is there is a lack of literature regarding former service members who transition from teaching to administraton. Second is, grounded theory allows the researcher to generate a theory that explains the transitional experience from teaching to administration and the transference of miltiary leadership skills to school administration.

The researcher. I served in the United States Army for 20 years and hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. My experiences as a military-trained educational leader did not interfere with the participants' knowledge and perspectives but provided a common framework to allow the participants to share their stories.

My positionality is embedded within the experiences of military-trained service members who have transitioned into school leadership. I received my Master's in Secondary Education from The University of New Mexico and taught for two years in Albuquerque, New Mexico before moving to El Paso, Texas to continue my teaching in Fabens, Texas. I completed my second Master of Education in Educational Administration at Sul Ross State University and began my administration career with Clint Independent School District.

My problematic issues that were faced as I transitioned from the military to college, entering the classroom and navigating the pathway to administration motivated me to conduct this study. I joined the military at 17 years old. I was active duty from 1998 until 2002. My duty stations included Ft. Stewart, GA (1998-2000) and Camp Casey, Korea (2000-2002). I left active duty three months after 9/11.

I joined the New Mexico National Guard from 2002 until 2003. From 2003 until 2006, I was a member of the Army Reserve which included stops in New Mexico, Florida and South Carolina. In 2005, as a member of the Army Reserve, I deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan until 2006. My experiences with the local nationals in Afghanistan were pleasant and often was invited to have tea with village elders. In 2006 until 2008, I was a member of the North Carolina National Guard. I completed my bachelor's degree while in the military, and again deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan from 2008-2009. My experiences were even richer, as I became involved with more humanitarian projects, including building wells in remote villages, preparing

humanitarian packages for local women and children and the construction of a school for girls. These experiences widened my view and gave me a perspective on working with students who were at risk. These experiences provoked an interest in education. At this point, I realized that I wanted to get into education.

In 2009, I joined the New Mexico National Guard and completed my masters in secondary education. I taught for two more years in New Mexico and moved to Texas. I joined the Texas National Guard from 2011 until 2018. I served over 20 years in the Army. I taught English Language Arts and Social Studies in middle school and high school. In 2014, I began my career as an educational leader.

Study participants

Texas has a number of military bases, and Texas Troops to Teachers currently has approximately 10,000 hired participants (C. Nemetsky, personal communication, December 16, 2017). I drew participants from all military branches, ethnicities, and genders as well as from various elementary, middle, and high school locations around the state. The participants had varied educational attainment, backgrounds, and administrative levels, but I selected them based on their shared military and teaching and administration experiences. Criterion-based sampling is vital to ensuring that studies have the most credible participants (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2007).

For this study, I utilized criterion-based sampling to select participants who had characteristics and features that would assist me in answering my research questions. Participants met predetermined criteria of importance (Patton, 2002), specifically the following:

- Served in any branch of the military (i.e., Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, or Coast Guard) either active duty or reserve/national guard for a minimum of four years before discharging
- Earned a degree in education or possessed a degree and received teacher certification through an alternative certification program
- Taught in a classroom for a minimum of two years and pursued further education in administration
- At the time of the study, served in an administrator role (i.e., assistant principal, principal, or director) in a school district in Texas for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years

The number of veterans in Texas who were formerly military and are currently serving in school administration positions is unknown; while there is information on careers after military service, specific trajectories such as teacher's becoming administrators are not tracked. Within Texas, 20 Regional Education Service Centers serve 1031 public school districts, and which might have employees who qualified for this study; for instance, in one district, there are eight known former military school administrators. Criterion-based sampling can identify cases that provide specific information (Patton, 2002). Each of the 18 participants in this study met my criteria and agreed to participate in the study, and was sent an informed consent form (Appendix C) that outlined the purpose of the study; I obtained signed forms from all 18 participants

Figure 1 presents the criteria for participant selection.

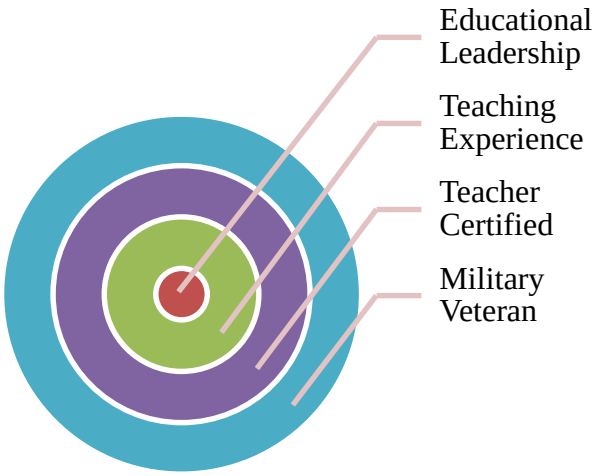

Figure 1.

Criteria for selecting the study participants

I hoped to draw between 100 and 300 respondents, and in two months, 242 respondents completed the survey. I aimed to gather responses from 25 to 50 former service members who were in positions of administration and 46 identified as former military. Of these 46, only 40 completed the survey, and of those 40, only 35 agreed to participate in the study. Three of the participants who had military service and agreed to participate were eliminated because they were not administrators at the time. This left me with 32 willing participants; of these, 18 completed the demographic survey, and of the 18, all agreed to be interviewed. This sample size was justified by the scope of the study, the nature of the topic, the quality of the data, the study design and "shadowed data" (Morse, 2000). Many researchers contended that an appropriate sample size or range for qualitative studies could vary from five to 25 participants (Guest et al., 2006; Leedy & Ormorod, 2005).

All participants were assigned a pseudonym to ensure anonymity on all forms. My willingness to be adaptable, sociable, and having served in the military was useful and allowed me to gain acceptance with the participants (Willis, 2005). The perceptions of those who have

successfully transitioned from the military to educational leadership are of growing interest in academia (Bolles, 2016; Broe, 2008; Daniels, 2017; West, 2000).

The former service members who participated in this study had varied military careers; they had served a combined total of 198 and 1/2 years. Table 8 presents the participants' demographic characteristics about their military service.

Table 8:

Study Participant Demographics

	Pseudonym	Branch of Service	Rank	Years of Service	Military Occupational Specialty
1	ARMY1	Army	(E-4) (P) Corporal	5	Engineer
2	ARMY2	Army	(O-3) Captain	8	Patriot Missiles
3	NAVY1	Navy	(E-4) Petty Officer 3rd Class	12	Store Keeper
4	ARMY3	Army	(0-3) Captain	11	Armor (Tanks)
5	MARINE1	Marines	(E-7) Gunnery Sergeant	20	Communications
6	AIR FORCE1	Air Force	(E-5) Sergeant	12	Medic
7	ARMY4	Army	(O-5) Lieutenant Colonel	35	Signal
8	ARMY5	Army	(E-5) Sergeant	4 and ½	Legal Specialist
9	MARINE2	Marines	(E-4) Corporal	4	Infantry
10	ARMY6	Army	(0-3) Captain	18	Multifunctional Logistics
11	AIR FORCE2	Air Force	(E-3) Airman 1st Class	8	Avionic Specialist
12	ARMY7	Army	(E-7) Sergeant First Class	20	Infantry
13	MARINE3	Marines	(E-4) Corporal	4	Communications
14	ARMY8	Army	(E-4) Specialist	5	Infantry
15	ARMY9	Army	(O-1) 2nd Lieutenant	12	Field Artillery
16	ARMY10	Army	(E-3) Private First Class	6	Infantry
17	ARMY11	Army	(E-4) Specialist	6	Infantry
18	NAVY2	Navy	(E-5) Petty Officer 2nd Class	8	Submarine

Most participants had served in the military ranging from 5 to 10 years, whereas a few had served their full terms of 18 to 20 years and retired. Most participants were non-commissioned officers, while the others were officers; none were chief warrant officers. Of the officers, three had been reserve officer training candidates at a university, and two had attended officer candidate school. All branches of the military were represented, although the majority came from the Army. The participants also had a wide variety of job skills. They ranged from medics to storekeepers and from infantry officers to logistics and legal specialists. Table 9 list all the participants' educational attainment and education career experiences.

Table 9:

Participants' Experiences in Education

	Pseudonym	Degree	Subject	Grade	Years	Administrative Position	Administrative Years
1	ARMY1	M.Ed.	SPED	K-6	10	Principal	7
2	ARMY2	M.Ed.	SPED	Kinder	10	Principal	13
3	NAVY1	Bilingual Education	ELAR	K-6	10	AP	5
4	ARMY3	M.Ed.	History	9-12	15	Director of Transportation	10
5	MARINE1	M.Ed.	History	9-12	6	CTE Director	12
6	AIR FORCE1	M.Ed.	Science	K-8	5	AP	6
7	ARMY4	M.Ed.	Math	9-12	11	AP	9
8	ARMY5	M.Ed.	History	6-12	5	Operations	16
9	MARINE2	M.Ed.; PhD	History	9-12	6	Superintendent	9
10	ARMY6	M.Ed.	Math	9-12	7	AP	1
11	AIR FORCE2	M.Ed.	SPED	K-12	5	Principal	17
12	ARMY7	M.Ed.	Business	9-12	2	AP	8
13	MARINE3	M.Ed.	Math	6-8	8	AP	1
14	ARMY8	M.Ed.	ELAR	9-12	8	Principal	12
15	ARMY9	M.Ed.	SPED	K-8	5	AP	5
16	ARMY10	M.Ed.	PE	K-12	16	Principal	10
17	ARMY11	M.Ed.	Math	9-12	12	Principal	14
18	NAVY2	M.Ed.	CTE	11-12	3	Superintendent	21

**CTE is Career Technical Education*

Gaining access to participants in this study was essential at the beginning stages of the research. Publicly listed emails located on the Texas Education Agency website were utilized to contact potential participants. Human Resource offices at each school district also assisted my search of participants through email and provided me with a list of potential participants based on the previously mentioned criterion.

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling from various school districts within Texas. An introduction letter and a Research Study Cover Letter (See Appendix A) was sent via email.

Data collection

For this study, I utilized open-ended questions, interviews, and follow-up questions for my data collection. One positive aspect of conducting interviews was the ability of the researcher to ask probing questions. I conducted 30-minute semi-structured interviews as my data collection approach, with supplemental surveys to gather demographical characteristics before conducting interviews as my data collection approach. The interviews began with questions regarding participant's leadership experiences in the military. The next set of open-ended questions explored the transition from the military to education and the perceived difficulties that the participants faced. The interview then focused on the transition from teaching to administration and the skills that participants believed transferred from the military to educational administration. The interview ended with open-ended questions regarding supports received from peers and supervisors and recommendations from participants to future military-trained educational leaders.

Survey instruments

For this study, two surveys were vital for me to collect demographic data. The Survey in Appendix B was used to determine how many former military service members were currently serving in school administration at the time of the study. Participants were asked to give their email addresses if they wished to be contacted later for consent to participate in the study. The Survey in Appendix D was given to those participants who consented to the study and met the minimum criteria specified earlier. This survey gathered demographical data that was used to explain the experiences of military service members further is administration.

Survey 1. The demographic survey in Appendix B was utilized to identify how many former military service members in Texas chose to pursue a career in education. The survey asked if the participant had been in the military. If they had not, then the survey would end. The survey was administered through Qualtrics, and all data was masked.

Survey 2. The demographic survey in Appendix D was utilized to gather information from the participants; for example, how long each participant had served in the military, what branch, and their military occupational specialty. Participants also identified what degree they had attained, what grade levels and subject they taught and how long they were in the classroom. The final set of questions addressed their current administrative position and how long they had been an administrator.

Procedures followed

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was sought from The University of Texas at El Paso. Once approved, I accessed emails of school faculty that were available publicly on the internet. The emails were found on school websites that were located through various regional education service centers. Once potential participants were identified a 7-question

Qualtrics survey (Appendix B) was utilized asking if the administrator was ex-military; if the answer was no, then the survey ended was sent. If the participant replied yes, he or she was asked which branch of the military they had served in, whether he or she was currently teaching or in administration and if he or she was willing to participate in the study. Separately, I contacted Dr. Nemetsky, director of Texas Troops to Teachers and requested that he contact participants through the program database. Doing so protected the confidentiality of all registered members of Texas Troop to Teachers and ensured the confidentiality and the voluntary nature of the study.

Potential participants who identified that they were former military and interested in participating in the study were emailed an introduction letter (Appendix A) along with an additional survey in (Appendix D) to narrow the sample size to only current school administrators. Texas Troops to Teachers currently has over 10,000 participants in their database (C. Nemetsky, personal communication, January 18, 2018). Based on the responses from the second survey 32 former service members who were currently serving in administrative roles were sent an informed consent form, as shown in Appendix C. Eighteen of the 32 participants returned the informed consent form signed.

I followed up with the 18 participants and began to schedule either face-to-face interviews or telephone interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in locations chosen by the participants. Each interview began with the researcher thanking the participant for their time and reminded the participant of the informed consent signed by both the participant and the researcher. Interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and stored on a computer with password encryption. Once an interview was completed transcription of the interview began

immediately. The use of a transcription service was utilized to complete some of the transcription.

Once all interviews and transcriptions were completed, copies of the transcriptions were sent to the participants to check for accuracy or add any clarifying items that may have emerged. All interview data was then imputed into an online analysis programs called *MAXQDA.* This program allowed for me to begin to analyze the data so that coding was ongoing as other interviews were conducted.

Data analysis

With the amount of data that was collected there was a possibility that the data would become overwhelming. Finding themes that emerged from the data allowed me to interpret the data and is known as emergent themes analysis (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007). The organization and labeling of the themes that merge were inputted into a qualitative data analysis computer program called MAXQDA. MAXQDA helps researchers code, transcribe, and visualize information (Reyna, 2017). For this research, I used Saldaña's (2015) approach of first cycle and second cycle of coding.

In the first cycle, I utilized open coding as well as attribute coding to capture what the participant is saying. Open coding (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) involves breaking down data and allowing the data to "remain open to all possible theoretical directions indicated by your readings of the data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46). During the initial analysis of data, I was able to generate codes from what participants stated line by line. Utilizing this style of coding helped ensure that the procedures of grounded theory remained true. Charmaz (2006) also suggest that initial coding is suitable for researchers who are relatively new to coding data and is conducting qualitative studies. For grounded theory, open coding is a critical aspect of the

methodology (Charmaz, 2006, Glasser & Strauss, 1967). During the first cycle I was able to analyze the interview data in-depth and re-analyze and compare previous interview data to new interviews as they were completed. Utilizing constant-comparative analysis I was able to be reflective about the interviews and emerging themes.

Attribute coding involved gathering descriptive codes. In this study, attribute coding related to the length of military service, length of time in the classroom, and military rank. The characteristics or demographics were just as important as what participants stated during the interview (Bazeley, 2003; Gibbs, 2002). Saldaña (2015) suggests that this style of coding is a way for the researcher to document details about participants and other related components of the study. Survey 2 (as seen in Appendix D) provided data that contributed to codes that assisted me with my analysis of the study.

For the second cycle, I applied theoretical coding which included adding conceptual labels to codes identified during the first cycle. Theoretical coding involves comparing and finding relationships between codes that were developed during the initial coding process (Charmaz, 2006; Stern & Porr, 2011). Walker and Myrick (2006) make the argument that researchers must integrate the data around a common theme or story in order to develop a theory. For this reason, conceptual labels and thematic categories were built on analysis of the codes and helped frame the study.

Attribute coding involves gathering descriptive codes and in relation to this study relates to length of military service, length of time in the classroom and military rank. The characteristics or demographics are just as important as what participants stated during the interview (Bazeley, 2003; Gibbs, 2002). Saldaña (2015) suggest that this style of coding is a way for the researcher to document details about participants and other related components of the

study. Survey 2 (as seen in Appendix D) provided data that contributed to codes that assisted me with my analysis of the study.

In total, there were 30 coded units of meaning during the first cycle. Examples of coded units include the following: *risk taking, react to adversity,* and *thinking outside the box*. Other examples include *time management, structure* and *organization*. Conceptual labels were then placed on the units of meaning. In total there were 10 conceptual labels. Examples of the labels include *motivation, learned leadership,* and *organizational capacity*. Codes were then organized into thematic categories and recurrent themes. For example, the codes *leader with presence*, *leader of character* and *leadership development* were organized into the thematic category *leadership characteristics*. Figure 2 provides a visual depicting the relationship between the codes, conceptual labels, and thematic categories.

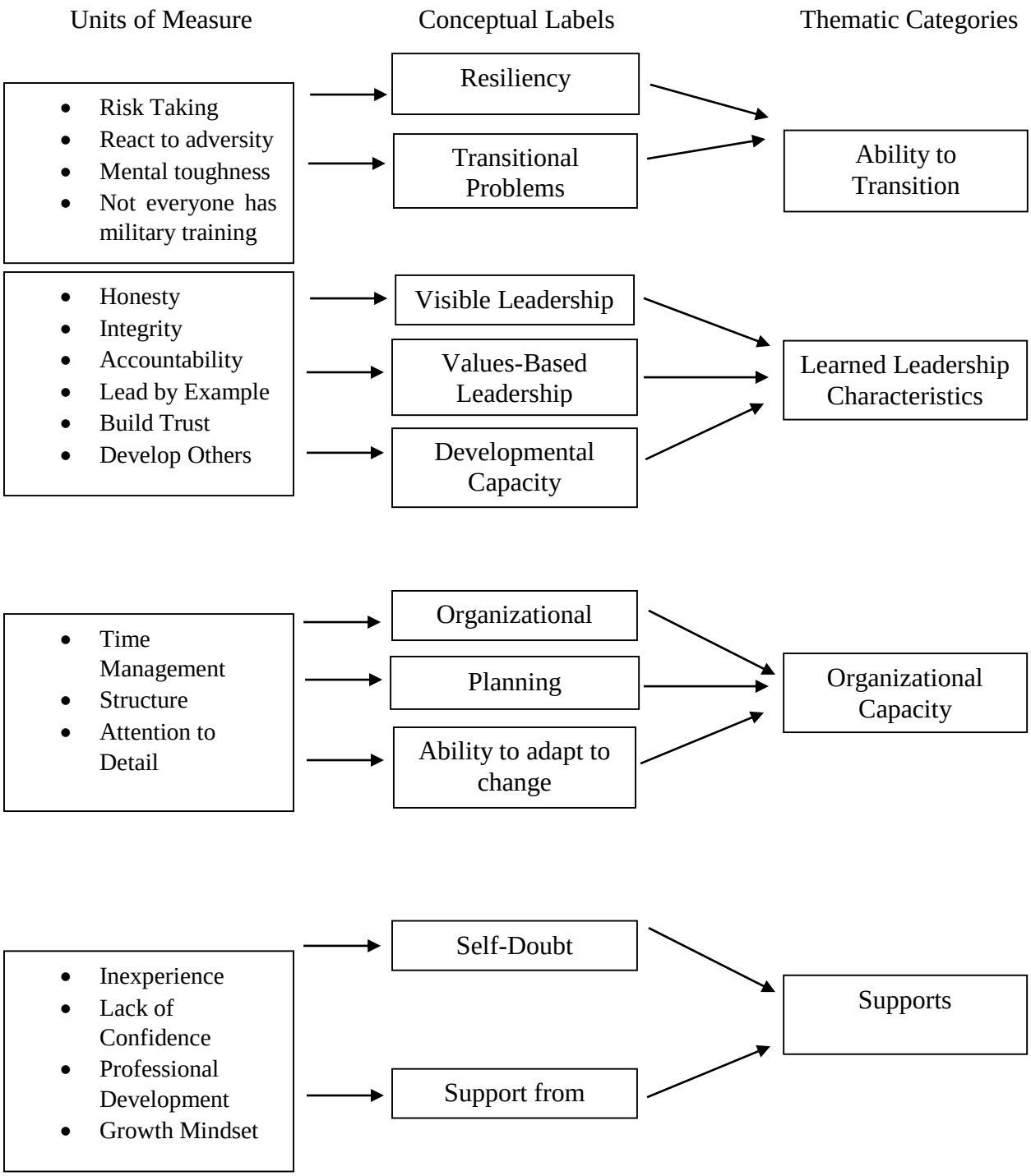

Figure2:

Conceptual Framework

Trustworthiness

Guba and Lincoln (1981) proposed that in order for a study to be considered trustworthy the researcher must ensure creditability, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Furthermore, it is the researcher's ability to be creative, sensitive, flexible and capable in utilizing verification strategies that determines the trustworthiness of a study (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002). One of the ways that I was able to ensure credibility within the study was to ensure that all participants had experiences within the military, teaching and administration as the study's main purpose was to explore the experiences of military-trained educational leaders. Another way that I was able to ensure credibility is based on my background, qualifications and experience as the researcher. Patton (2002) contends that the credibility of the investigator is vital in qualitative research due to the researcher's role in data collection and analysis. Another strategy that I utilized to ensure trustworthiness was member checking data. Participants were sent copies of the transcription to inspect what they stated and if there were any follow up answers.

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study, as there are with many qualitative studies. First, this study concentrates explicitly on K-12 school administrators who were in the military and are employed in a public school in Texas. Although there will be a plethora of information, transferability must not be made about military-trained educational leaders (METLs). Second, the number of individuals will be limited due to the number of administrators who agreed to participate. Third, I have personal and professional relationships with some of the participants, which can affect how much the participant might be willing to share. Finally, I was employed by one of the school districts in which participants were selected.

Ethical considerations

A significant concern for any research is constructing a product that is considered valid and reliable while maintaining an ethical stance (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A process to ensure trustworthiness, credibility and ethics in research is to have research approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). To ensure confidentiality, all participants who agree to participate were assigned pseudonyms. Schools and districts in which the participant's work was masked to ensure confidentiality. Full disclosure was provided to participants, which outlines the nature, purpose, and requirements of the study (Reyna, 2017). All research material was stored in my computer, which was password protected and locked in an office accessible only to myself.

Informed consent as outlined in Appendix B was signed by all participants prior to conducting the research. Prior to interviews participants were once again reminded that the involvement in the study was strictly volunteer and at any time participants were allowed to discontinue participation within the study. The risk associated with this research are no greater than those involved in daily activities. All records will be destroyed at the completion of the study to minimize any future risk related with confidentiality.

Summary

In this chapter, I defined the purpose of the study and the rationale for the qualitative study was presented. I also reviewed the demographic surveys and interview protocols, and the study strengths and limitations were laid out in detail. I discussed the methodology and instrumentation I used to support the study. Also, I presented demographic data on the study participants and their military and educational backgrounds. Furthermore, I presented my positionality, as it relates to the study. In Chapter IV, I present my findings based on the methods I discussed in Chapter III.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

In this chapter, I describe the findings of the grounded theory methodology study conducted to answer the research question:

The question that guided this research was: How have military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their roles within schools?

The following sub-questions further explored the influence of military leadership in the roles of school leaders;

- What military leadership experiences have veterans found that have influenced (either positively or negatively) their experiences as school leaders?
- What are the critical barriers that military-trained educational leaders must overcome as they transition from the classroom to educational leadership positions?
- What strategies have been successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions? What tools can be used to improve the success of transitioning military service members from the classroom into school leadership positions?
- What supports have been provided to bolster the success in their roles as administrators?

This chapter also addresses major themes that have emerged from the data of 18 military-trained educational leaders. This analysis is drawn from the participants' demographic data and survey and interview responses. The key themes were: (1) ability to transition which includes transitional experiences problems faced during transition and perseverance and adaptability; (2) leadership characteristics which includes leading with presence, leading with character and learned leadership; (3) organizational capacity which includes organizational skills, planning,

and ability to adapt to change and; (4) administrative supports for success which includes the sub-themes of self-doubt, reflection on experiences and mentorship.

Ability to Transition

The ability to transition is something commonly found within the military. Participants discussed how they were able to transition successfully from the military to higher education to teaching and then into administration. Although some participants did share that there were experiences of negative transitions and three of the 12 participants did share their barriers within the transition. This theme discusses problems faced while in transition, teaching in the classroom and perseverance and adaptability amongst the military-trained educational leaders.

Problems with transition. Some participants described some of the challenges that they faced after leaving the military and beginning a career in education and subsequent administration. Many of those challenges are also outlined in other research (Ballard, 2005; Bolles, 2014; Broe, 2008; Coupland 2004). An assistant principal stated that a significant challenge was the difference in the way people responded to orders/instructions in educational settings compares to the military.

> The not being consistent and following chain of command, not following rules, the complaining. I know even the military, we've got a few guys that go, "Oh, man," but that doesn't last very long, and you get it done. In education, I know whatever I started teaching, my colleagues were like, "I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to do that binder (NAVY1).

The elementary principal emphasized that one of the challenges was that not everyone understood military training and alluded to the fact that you do not get to say no in the military:

> I had a teacher complain about how guided reading is so much. They want us to do this much and da-da-da-da." I'm like, "Just get it done. Just get it done. No excuses." I've

always believed in no excuses, get it done, even now. And I think that's why sometimes districts keep piling on and piling on and piling on, we don't know the word "no" or "can't." (ARMY11).

Another principal supplemented the research by contending that a challenge was that not everyone was like him or thought like him.

The very biggest challenge was, 1) not everybody was like me, and did what I believed or perceived to be the right thing. That was one challenge. And then 2) was the communication aspect of not just saying, "Hey this is what needs to be done." This was getting that buy-in, talking things over, making my point to get other people to see how they're wrong and I'm right. Those were two of the biggest challenges I would say (MARINE2).

An elementary principal shared his belief on a challenge but also support to that challenge, *"Letting go and not having control of everything around you, and that's like a goal.' 'Cause in the military, they're in control of you. They're telling you what to do, how to do it, when" (ARMY1).* The principal went on to say that challenge led him to his success, "But that really kind of helped me focus on getting my two degrees. And then not only that. As a teacher, I was in control. I used to call it my jungle" (ARMY1). Another elementary principal summarized the theme by saying although it was a challenge you should learn to let go.

I think knowing that you don't always have to be in charge. That was the hard part. It's like there's such high accountability in the roles that you play in the military and that you're giving a mission and that mission must go through regardless, and so you carry a tight ship. And so coming into civilian life as a classroom teacher, as an administrator,

> sometimes that's a little bit difficult, letting go, letting go and trusting your troops, or in this case your staff, enough to truly and fully let go (ARMY11).

Teaching in the classroom. All 18 participants were classroom teachers between two years and 16 years. In Chapter III, Table 9 discusses each of the participant's educational background, which includes; how long they were in the classroom, what subject and grade they taught, and their current administrative role. Many of the participants had stayed in the classroom for eight to ten years. Only two participants stayed in the classroom less than five years. One participant who spent 15 years in the classroom shared his experience:

> The kids understood what the procedures in the classroom were, which I got from the military, and it was well-organized. The kids knew where to turn in papers. The kids knew there was a seating chart. The kids knew everything that went on and so I didn't have a lot of discipline problems (ARMY3).

ARMY3 provided a critique of teachers who spend less than five years in the classroom before moving to administration:

> You learn what works and what doesn't work. I think over time you become a better teacher. And my feeling is I think if you're in a classroom less than five years, it's tough to be an administrator because you haven't figured it out yet.

Some of the participants contended that their time in the classroom has helped them develop an understanding of how education works. "You have to remember that the students are not soldiers and have to build rapport" (ARMY2). Another participant agreed and added that "I enjoyed my time in the class because I was able to work 1-on-1 with many students and I was also able to coach" (AIR FORCE1).

Perseverance and adaptability. When asked how to overcome the challenges 15 out of the 18 participants had agreed that it just takes time and a support system. “The more support we have as leaders, the easier the transition becomes” (ARMY10). When asked to elaborate on their support system, three participants mentioned the impact of mentorship during their first year as an administrator. Participants also discussed having central office administrators assist new administrators in building capacity. Other participants discussed how individuals helped overcome challenges.

A superintendent discussed how becoming more approachable and learning through past experiences led him to become a servant leader:

> Learn through experience. You find out, hey, that ... may not be approachable and puts up a wall, and so you have to stop and listen. I'm very task oriented so when I walk into a room; I have to remind myself, hey, stop and talk, stop and visit (ARMY5).

Another superintendent spoke about not having the answers since he had not been in education that long and asking for help, “I would just say having not been an educator for long, I still had a lot to learn about education. I remember having some questions asked or people asking me for help or support and me not knowing the answer” (NAVY2).

The superintendent went on to talk about the difficulty in finding solutions:

> I remember saying that to a couple, you know I'm not sure about that, I don't know. And that's okay to say but then not knowing where to find the answers. And having to go call and ask and find other people to help me find those answers (NAVY2).

A current director who was a teacher and became an assistant principal on the campus said this about supports overcoming the hardship of the transition.

> I did the principal program while I was still teaching, and at the end of the program is when I started to do assistant principal intern, but I was still in the classroom, so I had a safety net. I was surrounded by people who wanted me to succeed. It was in the same setting that I had known completely in my entire career in public education, so I mean there was a lot of people they're a teacher in one campus, and they go apply for assistant principal at another district. That might be kind of difficult, but for me it was easy (MARINE1).

In the military, transition takes place in different forms; either from rank-to-rank, or base-to-base. The final transition, when you leave the military, can be difficult for many. The path military service members take, offers insight into various directions service members might take. The transition aspect from military to education takes various pathways. Some of the participants go from the military to civilian workforce outside of education (AIR FORCE1; MARINE3; & ARMY10). Others had a degree and went straight into education (ARMY3; ARMY6; ARMY1: & ARM5). Nine of the 18 participants did mention that they had to transition from the military to higher education and that the challenges mentioned before in Chapter 2 were the same ones that they had faced, especially those who were Post 9/11 veterans.

Leadership characteristics

Participants reflected on the types of leaders they are and how the military has helped shape that style. None of the participants felt like they were going to pursue education strictly for administration. It was not until a few years later that some of the participants felt like they wanted to pursue administration. Some participants did not realize that their military experiences would open doors for them in administration and some participants became leaders after learning to utilize skills while they were still in the classroom.

While the purpose of military organizations is primarily concerned with the defense of the nation, a secondary purpose has been the building of future leaders (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000; Horowitz & Stam, 2014). The military leadership experiences of the participants also reflect several of the main themes such as leading with presence; leading with character (honesty, integrity, and natural leadership); and learned leadership. Six of the 18 participants discuss how the military developed them as leaders and prepared them for careers in educational administration.

Leadership styles

In this section, I discussed how the participants viewed the type of leader they are or wanted to be. This includes examples of visible leadership, learned leadership, values-based leadership, and developmental capacity leadership. The above terms for leadership emerged from the interviews with the participants. I used the terms to give insight on how military personnel can more easily understand their views of leadership styles and for others to understand how these leaders see leadership.

Participants described the leadership styles they use. I use the terms visible leadership, values-based leadership, and developmental capacity leadership. Each of these leadership styles has specific characteristics that participants felt contributed to their overall leadership style. The first leadership style discussed is visible leadership. Research by Halpern and Lubar (2004) state that visible leadership is also known as leadership presence.

Visible leadership. Leaders are individuals who project sincerity, values, and convection of their power. One superintendent had this to say about one of his subordinates, “The presence of a great leader can be felt by the way a leader influences their authority to make themselves heard, understood and followed” (NAVY2). Many participants contended that leading with presence is leading by example, which means you have been given authority by title but set high standards.

One participant, a director for career and technology education, added to the conversation about developing subordinates and being a leader with a presence. “I'd say you must lead by example. If I tell my staff to be there by a certain time, then I must be there as well” (MARINE1).

The idea that school leaders should be more than managers, they should become leaders surfaced throughout many of the interviews. Many participants stated that you should lead by example. “School leaders are taught how to manage schools, but they are never taught how to lead a school” (ARMY3). Another assistant principal stated, “If I have to pick up a broom and sweep something then I will, I want to set the example that we have a clean campus” (NAVY1). One participant summed up the concept of leading by example by saying:

> I think if you lead by example, they know who you are. And you don’t ever have to say it. If I have ever had to say well, you have to do it because I said so or I’m the principal then I’ve messed up (ARMY2).

Some leaders, by default, are given an authoritative position. A leader with leadership presence has demonstrated extraordinary behaviors and actions which has made them respected by their teams. Leadership presence is the image of genuineness, leaders exude honesty, culpability and have the willingness and capacity to make things happen.

Values-based leadership. Interviewees also described the how military builds characteristics that promote "honesty, hope, bravery, industry and teamwork" (Matthews, Eid, Kelly, Bailey, & Paterson, 2006). These characteristics are valued amongst leaders. However, there are also other positive characteristics that interviewees valued. Those characteristics include; morality, veracity, honor, courage, and commitment. Honor, courage, and commitment are the Marine Corps values which some of the participants continued to speak about.

One assistant principal's description of integrity resonated, "I would say the biggest influences were the poor leadership. Not my poor leadership, as much as observing other leaders that lacked integrity, or any sort of leadership value at all (ARMY6).

ARMY6 also described instances where individuals showed lack of honesty/credibility:

> The biggest lack of integrity that I saw is through the military and I still see it with a lot of leaders in education, is something will occur, that they made the decisions on, this should happen, and whatever result comes out of that poor decision-making order, not even poor decision-making, but a decision-making process, results in a poor result, and rather than accepting responsibility for that result, they blame the decision-making or flaws in the decision-making, flaws in the process, on somebody else to avoid the black eye, I guess you could say, for their decision in it.

One participant described how the military leaders he had interacted with helped to define what strong characteristics of leadership are:

> I always admired my superiors and their integrity. So, when I saw my superiors have that integrity and follow through the commitment, all of that, it better prepared me, because I said, "You know what? I have those qualities. I think I can do this." I always felt if people

see you, that you mean what you say and you say what you mean; then they're going to believe in you. They're going to want to follow (NAVY1).

Fifteen of the 18 participants listed honesty and integrity as strong transferable skills that are utilized both in the military and education as well as an aspect that has made the transition from the classroom to administration less daunting.

Developmental capacity leadership. Developmental capacity leadership is how participants felt that the gained knowledge to become effective leaders. Leadership development increases the knowledge base of individuals who are placed in leadership roles within an organization. For the military, leadership development occurs based on rank, military education, and testing. Everyone is responsible for his or her career; however, a chain of command can persuade individuals to build his or her capacity by placing them into leadership roles before receiving training.

Leadership extended beyond rules and regulations. One elementary school principal said, "My staffs, no matter where I'm at, really get along with me, because I think the Army taught me, number one, how to care for other people and how to be able to verbalize a mission and an objective" (ARMY2).

The United States military values the development of its leaders far better than any other entity in the United States (Hughes and Haney, 2002). Professional Military Education courses train each service's leaders in areas of leadership, planning, and developing subordinates. It is this mindset that has allowed some participants to be reflective and offer insight on how they train their subordinates.

ARMY11 discussed how the military allows senior leaders to develop their junior leaders and he has carried that same concept into education:

> I've always been a person who likes to be in a leadership role. And not necessarily because I want to be in charge, but because I like the ability to be able to develop leaders and not followers. From day one, I noticed that there was a lot of followers in the educational field, and I didn't think it was a good thing. I think that a good leader, develops leaders and not followers, and in order for that to happen, for me as a leader, was making sure that I'm building capacity with my staff, that anything that they do, whether it be positive or negative, the successes and failures of the team is a reflection of the leader.

ARMY11 concludes by discussing the traditions of the military and its leadership development:

> I see the benefit of a leader like that, and I think our nation's children and teachers in education deserve good leaders, and I think the military does a very good job of developing leadership skills and leaders within their ranks, and it'd be fabulous to have those leaders transition into schools and be able to put that to work.

The concept of developing school administrators and ensuring school districts allocate resources to prepare and train current and future building principals is an idea that is reiterated from 15 of the 18 participants.

A first-year assistant principal had this to say when he discussed his development in the military, "The military taught me to be organized, be regimented, stick to my plans and that I can accomplish anything as long as you lead from the front, develop your subordinates and never stop learning" (ARMY9).

Individual capacity

A middle school assistant principal contended that the military helped him learn how to develop his capacity by asking questions and if he did not know the answer he knew he had to ask somebody that did.

> I would just find the resources in the military. "Where can I do it? How can I do this?" I brought this over from the military to administration. I had a teacher ask a question that I was unsure of. I told them I was not sure but let's look for it. This is typical in the Navy. If you don't know you find out (NAVY1).

Two other middle school assistant principals, one of which was just promoted to principal discussed how the military taught them to seek out resources for tough problems. "If there is a district policy and procedure, I am unaware, or a teacher is not familiar with then I will go look for the answer and share that with them" (MARINE3). ARMY7 added, "I learned my first year on the job as an administrator what resources to allocate to which and prioritize my efforts. If I was not sure I asked, my evaluator was my biggest ally."

The development for one elementary principal in the military has helped him with parents at his campus.

> Cause I think before the military, I tended to be very immature, very standoffish, very rude. I was too frank with my comments. Boy, that changed in the military, and quick. And that honestly, that's helped me get myself out of some jams with parents here. And that really is, I think that's become my forte here at this campus. We have a lot of parents and grandparents here, and so when we're in a pickle and parents are upset, I've used a lot of those strategies that I'd learned in dealing with the different people that I live with, and

for two, three years in the military, and I've used them in dealing with parents here (ARMY1).

A superintendent concluded by addressing how the military develops future leaders who are now becoming school administrators.

Basically, a senior enlisted personnel position that was responsible for the safety of the ship operating valves and tanks and a lot of technical stuff that typically E-7s do and I did it as an E-5…. That it's being the leader or the boss or whatever isn't about rank. And that's kind of the deal about being on a submarine. Well, I think what my approach was, is I listened and observed a lot. I just spent time developing my craft, I knew where my weaknesses were, so I spent a lot of time in those areas to shore up my weaknesses (NAVY2).

However, there were some criticisms from some participants about the programs, which develop school leaders.

One former assistant principal and current director of transportation contended that leadership development in schools is not as good as it is in the military.

It's one of the things that I've seen in education is you don't get the leadership training that you got in the military, and I see a lot of administrators struggle with that. You know these new administrators are taught how to manage a school, but they're never taught how to lead a school (ARMY3).

One principal discussed how he develops programs within his school and how some people just give up:

Everybody talks about this three to five-year plan. They've purchased some program or some initiative, and they like to give it three to five years, but a lot of people will just

> give it a year and say to hell with it and move away, as opposed to okay, if we had promised ourselves three to five years and it's not working this first year, let's come up with a different game plan to carry it out. A lot of people won't do that. They will just throw it out completely. I would prefer not to do that (MARINE1).

Another criticism of having former military members in education is that military-trained educational leaders are perceived as a "bull in a china cabinet." One superintendent made the comparison when he was asked about his military experience in an interview:

> In multiple interviews that I've had throughout my career, they've referenced the civilians, and the interview committee have referenced, "Well are you going to come in like a Marine?" What they were talking about, was in the negative way. That I was going to be barking orders, I was going to be screaming, yelling, those kind of things, so I would say be ready to answer that kind of question, in a manner that goes with what you believe in of course (MARINE2).

Coupled with leadership styles are transferable skills that military-trained educational leaders have either brought from the military or developed while in the classroom. Organizational capacity is a combination of military skills and educational skills that discuss strong organizational skills.

Organizational capacity

All 18 participants identified that organizational skills they had learned in the military had made them successful as educational leaders. Organizational skills are mandatory in the military service. Skills such as time management, listening and speaking, and thinking outside the box helps to maintain high standards of conduct in a soldier's daily routine. Organizational capacity includes themes such as; ability to adapt to change; planning and; organizational skills,

which includes time management, skill at prioritizing, data producing accurate reports, managing resources, and the ability to multi-task. Bolles and Patrizio (2016), Broe (2008), Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) and Army Field Manual FM 6-22 (U.S. Army, 2006) highlight the importance of organizational skills and why these skills are vital in both military and educational leadership. Another key aspect of organizational capacity is that former service members bring skills of organization to education. However, there are skills such as lesson structure and lesson planning that they have not mastered.

Organizational skills. One assistant principal who served in the Army contended that organizational skills were probably the most transferable skill from the military to education prior to 9/11. He added:

> I don't feel that the leadership style of the military back in the '80's and early '90's lent itself directly to education and dealing with young children. Leadership-wise, probably the organizational side of the house has had a bigger influence, being organized, being regimented, sticking to plans, agendas had a bigger role in just who I am today versus being very personable and totally student-focused, young-person-, young-people-focused, and doing anything and everything possible for them to help them be successful as young people (ARMY9).

A central office director also stated that organizational skills were one of the big three core beliefs that transferred from the military to school administration. “That I was going to set my classroom up very organized and I probably got the organization skills from the military” (ARMY3).

Organizational skills can take many shapes and forms. The skills can also mean something different to each person depending on the viewpoint. Many military service members

gain vital skills that are transferable to education. Time management, the ability to pay attention to details and multi-tasking are skills that are developed throughout the careers of military service members. Many of the participants talked about organizational skills in the big picture sense. However, other participants were more specific in their descriptions.

A newly promoted principal inferred to organizational skills such as time management:

> I just think time management was the biggest one. The military taught me that as a leader I had to manage my time in order to accomplish my task. They taught us the concept of 1/3 and 2/3 rule. One-third of the time is executing the mission and 2/3 of the time is planning the mission. I still use this concept today when planning professional developments for my teachers or when a struggling teacher is having a hard time with lesson structure (ARMY10).

Five of the 18 participants were officers in the military. These participants agreed that as officers, they had to be more organized. They also believed that they were effective as administrators because their officer training focused on planning such as military missions as well as developing subordinates and running effective companies. These participants described how they viewed military training and how it influenced their school leadership. The participants viewed organizational skills regarding how it helped them be more structured and how they viewed the schools.

All the 18 participants placed a focus on organizational skills as a foundational tool utilized both in the military and educational administration. Another organizational skill that many participants felt assisted them in their future roles as administrators were planning.

Planning. Formulating a plan to assist teachers to develop instructional goals or developing a master schedule requires the intellectual capacity to formulate and analyze and re-formulate a plan.

A first-year assistant principal at a high school stated that his 20 years in the military first as a non-commissioned officer then as an officer, organizational skills are vital.

> When I became an officer, all the aspects of planning and organization, that I learned as an officer, have been valuable as an administrator, because the attention to detail, making sure you've dotted all your I's and crossed all your t's, to make sure you did not miss anything, which was something that I refined as an officer, has been valuable in administration (ARMY6).

One assistant superintendent would say that it is vital to know all the details no matter how big or small. This has resonated with me and thinking back in the military, attention to details was a staple of who we were in the military.

Ability to adapt to change. Having the ability to adapt to change is a common characteristic that former service members identified as a skill that has transferred over to education. One participant recalled a time when he had to adapt to change:

> In the Army, we had a training and then all of a sudden there was a meeting called a we had 30 minutes to prepare a brief for a Brigadier General. We were scrambling to get all of the information and to be prepared. Change is common in the military, and you have to be able to react, remain calm and overcome (ARMY1).

ARMY1 went on to talk about that experience regarding his role in administration:

> We were getting ready for an extended break, and we had to schedule an emergency faculty meeting to discuss new laws that had come out about bullying. My principal had

told me that I had 45 minutes to prepare a presentation with my counselors to go over with the staff, and when we came back to go over with the students. As an administrator, I learned that not every day is the same and sometimes you must adapt to changes.

A participant shared his thoughts on experiences relating to you try something, and it doesn't work, and you should change it on the spot:

> It was not so much as you didn't get the mission accomplished, but the way you went about it. Maybe it didn't go as planned and you got stopped right in the middle of what you are doing and then turn around and come up with a different game plan so that you can accomplish your mission (MARINE1).

Finally, a principal spoke about grit and determination when adapting to change:

> One of the biggest factors that I believed that led to my success, and where I am today; very blessed man, is I learned grit. This is even before Angela Duckworth with her awesome book. This is doing more with less, not complaining, just suck it up buttercup, and just put your head down and keep going (MARINE2).

MARINE2 would conclude about not giving up and adapting:

> Don't give up, I would say, is the biggest thing. I truly believe that when I talk to others about the Marine Corps, they put inside you this idea, and at least it did for me, that I can overcome anything. It's kind of that old saying, It's not the size of the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.

Supports

Supporting your subordinates is a staple of military leadership (US Army, 2006). Rodriguez & Hovde (2002) contend that school leaders need supports in the areas of budget, building maintenance, instructional support and professional development and mentoring. In this section, participants discussed self-doubt and supports from others.

Self-doubt. An administrator recognized that to succeed administrators needed support. A common concern among participants was self-doubt. One administrator did note that there was a struggle for him during his first year as an assistant principal:

> There was a period where I didn't feel very successful, and for the same things, I just said. It was about learning to build the relationship and learning to gain the trust and that kind of thing before I could really be effective in implementing any kind of change (AIR FORCE1).

ARMY8 described how being in the classroom for only a few years can hurt or create self-doubt amongst new administrators:

> If you go into teaching and you're only a teacher for two or three years, and then you become an administrator, when you ask a seasoned teacher to do something, your credibility may not be as good as somebody who's spent some time in the classroom. It's like the lieutenant who was once a specialist (enlisted rank) asking people to do stuff as opposed to the person who comes straight out of the academy that knows nothing, has never walked in those boots.

ARMY11 added, "Self-doubt is created by inexperience." Marine 2 stated "It doesn't matter if you are a first-year assistant principal or 2nd Lieutenant, self-doubt is a good way to get someone hurt. Whether you are in a war zone or school zone, you need to have assurances" ARMY 3 also

discussed how you need to build experience before you can lead, “I think you need to spend five, years in the classroom to learn what's going on there. It's hard to tell a teacher to do this, and you've only been in the classroom for two or three years.”

Support from others. As participants discussed the challenges and success as they transitioned from teaching to administration, many of them suggested supporting systems that helped them to succeed. Some participants recognized the role of the central office. One assistant principal noted, “anytime there's an opportunity for me to learn outside, they have [central office] always been supportive. They always had professional learning opportunities available. They were very growth mindset when it came to support” (MARINE1).

A current transportation director also noted the support he received from central office:

> In the Army, you have soldiers that are going to do something; you were expected to be there to observe, to see what they were doing, and to support them. When I became an administrator, they [central office] went in and checked on me. I think that is one of the things that I really appreciated. I felt supported (ARMY3).

ARMY10 noted that “when you hire good people you also need to support them from the top down. You hire good people, and you give them the resources and things that they need to be successful, and you let them do their job.”

A former assistant principal and current director of transportation spoke on how leadership training is not provided to new administrators. “It's one of the things that I've seen in education is you don't get the leadership training that you got in the military and I see a lot of administrators struggle with that” (ARMY3).

In my three years of administration, I have been fortunate to work for a school district that believes in building capacity and supporting not only their teachers, they believe in building

capacity amongst the district leadership. I have been lucky enough to work for principals who guide you and support you. They not only support you when you succeed, but there is also support when you fail and how you can improve. In the military, you must learn the job of the next two positions above you in case the leader is incapacitated. This can hold true in school administration as well. If you are an assistant principal and your principal is out, you are in charge.

Summary

The analysis of 18 current school administrators, who have various levels of experience and military service resulted in five essential findings. The findings had a multitude of testimony, affirmation, and corroboration that gleaned from interview transcripts, demographical data and follow up emails. The data showed that military service members who were teachers and later became military-trained educational leaders shared common beliefs about the transference of military skills utilized in the role of educational administration.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS AND DISSCUSION

In Chapter I, I introduced the idea of military-trained educational leaders who left the military, began teaching and shifted to educational leadership. I explained the issues facing former service members during their transitions from military to college and their employment as K-12 teachers and then administrators. I also introduced the purpose of this study, which was to understand what former military service members bring to school administration and how their military experiences coupled with their teaching experiences shape their leadership styles. The main question guiding this research was; how have military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their administrative roles within schools?

In Chapter II, I provided a review of the historical background and the policies that influenced military service members' returning to higher education. I also analyzed military experiences in the context of the transition from the military to college. I then examined the rationale for recruiting former/retired military service members for administration after they have completed the requirements for certification as an administrator in Texas. I also addressed the perceptions of mentorships that military veteran school leaders develop in their first three years.

Chapter III concentrated on the study's methodology and the grounding conceptual framework. I utilized a grounded theory methodology to help understand the transition from military to education, specifically from teaching to school administration. I briefly revisited the research questions guiding the study to contextualize the research and share my procedures for recruiting and interviewing. I also described my data collection and analysis processes and discussed the study's limitations. In Chapter IV, I discussed the four themes that emerged and supplement them with evidence from the interview responses.

The research question that guided this study was: How have the military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their roles within schools? I used four sub-questions to further explore transferable skills military-trained educational leaders perceived as necessary frameworks to their administration. Those four questions were:

- What military leadership experiences have veterans found that have influenced (either positively or negatively) their experiences as school leaders?
- What are the critical barriers that military-trained educational leaders must overcome as they transition from the classroom to educational leadership positions?
- What strategies have been successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions? What tools can be used to improve the success of transitioning military service members from the classroom into school leadership positions?
- What, if any supports have districts provided to bolster the success in their roles as administrators?

With the analysis of the four themes, four findings emerged which aligned with the sub-questions.

- Finding 1: Leadership characteristics experienced by military-trained educational leaders transferred from the military to educational administration. Skills such as planning, quick thinking and interpersonal communication skills are the most relevant.
- Finding 2: Skills such as organization, time management, resiliency and, critical thinking transfer from the military to school administration.
- Finding 3: Many former service members encountered issues, such as reverting back to training from the miltiary when overwhelmed, and struggling with the transition from military to school life.

- Finding 4: Administrative supports for leader development and success lack compared to the military.

These four findings are highlighted below within the subsections.

All participants provided insights into what makes for effective administrators and how future veterans who are currently in the classroom can become administrators. The skill set that transferred most congruently between the military and educational administration was organizational skills. This includes but is not limited to time management, self-discipline, and the ability to multi-task, adapt, and overcome adversity while thinking outside of the box. Previous research has focused on many of the successes and failures that occur in the transition from the military to the classroom.

Integrity also seems to be an essential aspect both in the military as well as administration. Being a leader with character stood out the most since all 18 participants stated that besides organization, integrity is a staple both in the military and now as they progress through educational administration.

In this chapter, I discuss the analysis and implications of the four findings regarding military-trained educational leaders and the transference of skills from military to educational leadership. I also discuss the inferences that can be drawn about transitions from the military to education, including challenges encountered and successful transition from teaching to administrative positions. I next address supports in place that helped assist former service members who have successfully transitioned from the military to teaching to administration. Furthermore, I conclude my study by addressing the needs for future studies of military veterans in education and the support they need to foster success as well as the need for more veterans in education.

Military leadership experiences that have influenced former service members as school leaders

The notion of transition is a recurring theme within the research. As noted above, education is transitional in nature. In Chapter IV, participants described transition as a key part of military life. In education, the transition is evident in the movement of teachers and administrators around districts and between districts. During these changes, which can be sudden, faculty can also transition to administrative positions with a very little warning. In education and the military, transitions share similarities and differences. In education, you are assigned a specific school or grade, and you must comply because your contract is with the district. In the military, if you are told you are going to be deployed or moving to Alaska, you go because of your contract. I argue that military-trained teachers may have the skills to adapt to transition, these transitions tend to be more sweeping and since they are entrenched during their military career, issues of transition both in location and in position, present less stress and confusion.

Transition from military to civilian

The participants varied in their years of experience in the military, years of teaching and years as administrators. This is an essential aspect because the research explored various experiences and addressed how someone with many years of experience transitioned to administration compared to someone with few years of experience. At each iteration of transition, the participants experienced several issues as they transitioned from military, to civilian life, to education, to teacher to administrator and onward. Some participants struggled through college after the military. One example of this is how ARMY5 contended that the most difficult time for him was during the first semester of college after being away from school for

four years. Those struggles include choosing the right courses, navigating the academic language and even trying to find a perfect balance between home life and school life. They were older than their peers and most had families. Former military service members faced challenges with juggling family, work, and college.

Troops to Teachers has been a focus of research, specifically Troops to Teachers in the classroom. While Troops to Teachers helps to recruit former service members into teaching, the participants in this study gained their teaching certification through several different routes. Many of the study's participants who did not have a teaching degree chose to pursue education through traditional settings. Some of the participants who had attained a degree in something other than education before entry into the military had chosen alternative teaching certification after the military.

McKinney (2017) shows that former military service members face issues when they transition from the military to school life. Issues that impact military service members include having support to pick the right class, understanding how higher education works and paying for college. Many participants identified challenges leaving the military and barriers faced leaving teaching going into administration. ARMY7 noted that he struggled because he only faced two years in the classroom and some veteran teachers questioned if he had enough experience. One of the biggest issues addressed was, did they have enough experience in the classroom and were they going to be too rigid as an administrator? One example was a former principal who treated staff members as soldiers. Teachers would leave staff meeting's crying because of how he addressed them. Future military leaders need to develop interpersonal communication skills and realize that teachers are not soldiers. Issues that many of the participants faced were adapting to college life after leaving the service, communication with teachers, buy-in, adapting to civilian

lifestyle and some participants described returning to higher education daunting. Nearly all the participants described that leaving the military was difficult because of the fear of the unexpected. The findings suggest that transition from the military to education is an area for future research.

Transition to education and military members

Military transition to civilian life has been widely researched (Ackerman, DiRamio & Mitchell, 2009; Ahern, Worthen, Masters, Lippman, Ozer & Moos, 2015; Clemens & Milsom, 2008). Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1981) has been used to help understand and explain how the participants coped with the transition from the military to education (Anderson & Goodman, 2014). Schlossberg (1981) identified four areas that impacted transitions, which are: situation, self, support, and strategies. As Schlossberg noted, I also found many participants were self-motivated to pursue careers in administration and received support to transition. Self-motivation and support were identified by the participants as contributions to success as well. The importance in this is that understanding why transition occurs and how participants can successfully navigate the transitional path may lead to fewer barriers when they do the transition.

Furthermore, Griffin & Gilbert (2015) analyzed barriers that veterans face as they transition from the military to higher education. Participants identified three areas in which they faced challenges. The first area was the age difference with other students. The participants struggled to make connections with non-veteran peers. NAVY1 described a time when he returned to school and struggled because he had difficulty with understanding new technology due to his age. The second area for service members was not having a veteran-friendly space that allowed for veterans to connect with each other and discuss challenges they were having with classes, certification of G.I. Bill, or family issues after returning home from combat. However,

many colleges and universities have begun to create such safe spaces for veterans and families (Mungal, Johnson & Court, 2018). *Situation* refers to how individuals weigh transition and attempt to control the dilemma. One participant knew that his transition was going to be difficult from the classroom to administration and began to rely on assistance to lessen the stress of the transition. *Self* refers to how your personal physiognomies such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status affect transition. Some participants shared how since they were younger and only in the military for a shorter period they were not affected as much as older veterans with transition but did face similar issues in the classroom. *Support* refers to how individuals receive caring affirmation and positive feedback facilitate the transition. Several participants discussed how their families had supported them through deployments and military service and when they wanted to return to college there was again support. *Strategies* refer to the ability to manage transitions.

Many of the participants shared how they were able to overcome the transition from the military to civilian life by utilizing support systems and different strategies, such as seeking mentors, coming up with transition plan and goals, and accepting the transition. This research extended previous research in career transition by analyzing how military-trained educational leaders utilize both self and support to analyze the success of the transition. Some examples of this are where participants discussed how they were the first members of their families to go to college, where they had to learn about financial aid, tuition and how to speak with professors. The research suggested that the longer one stayed in the military (on active duty), the more challenging it became to transition.

Service members who were in the National Guard did not face as many transitional issues as active duty service members in areas of attending institutes of higher education or moving into

teaching. National Guard members perform most of their military service on weekends with less disruption to their life. Service members who spent longer in the military developed skills to prepare them for administration, such as developing subordinates and planning. Former service members also faced more significant challenges in transition because they placed their lives on hold to pursue a career in the military.

Other challenges military service members reported included difficulty connecting with civilian counterparts because of the personality differences. In the military, you report to the next in the chain of command. However, some experiences did not translate in the educational world. Participants reported that some teachers do not follow directives or sometimes show up late without fear of repercussions. ARMY6 gave an example of how a teacher approached him and said that he refused to follow what the principal wanted them to do in the class. This was an example of some of the situations that push against the military order that the participants valued. Participants either were able to understand the differences between education and military life or demonstrated resistance to the educational way and tried to push a more "structured" environment in the workplace.

One of the participants' biggest critiques was that in the military, you are expected to follow orders. However, some participants found that when they were teaching, and when they got into administration, they found that one of the hardest aspects of the transition was individuals not following what they were asked or told to do. ARMY3 added another expectation is that leaders need to earn the respect of their colleagues. There is not an assumption of pre-earned respect because you are the boss.

Why participants transitioned to education

Pursuing a career in education was viewed as a noble choice by the participants. Many participants expressed the importance of their education. Educational attainment offers different experiences that shape who individuals are as leaders. Many of the participants responded that they wanted to give back to the community as a reason for going into education. Other participants talked about how they wanted to be role models for student-athletes through coaching, and in Texas, you must be a teacher to coach. The coaching naturally led to entering the teaching profession.

While I believed that education might have been a calling for some participants, many of the former service members ended up in education in roundabout ways. One participant recalls how he was in college and not sure what he wanted to do in life and remembered how a high school coach had impacted him. This made him want to get into education.

Participants choose different routes to enter education. These various routes offer a perspective on the different styles of leaders. As in the military, you have enlisted and officer. Within the officer ranks, you have college officers (ROTC) and those who were enlisted and then became officers through Officer Candidate School (OCS). Most participants went through traditional preparation programs based within colleges and universities. There is some contention about online degrees and individuals who attain their degree entirely online. A contention is that online and alternative certification degrees are not as effective in preparing educators as they are shorter in length with very little follow-through by credentialing organizations. An area for future research could be how many educational leaders attained online degrees and the impact they have on leadership.

Leaders are often asked what their educational philosophy is or why they decided to pursue a career in education. Although the question asked to participants addressed their educational philosophy, some participants interpreted it as asking why they pursued a career in education? Job security, assisting youth and passion for a subject are some of those reasons. For some participants, the issue of job security and providing for their family was the main reason for entering education.

While many participants were unaware of alternative teacher preparation programs; after entering education, they discovered other training routes into leadership, and some choose alternative principal preparation programs. There were a few similarities to be found in how they all entered education. In many cases, it was through connecting with students through outside experiences or wanting to ensure younger people have proper role models or because they wanted to coach. The reason this is important is because similar stories could be shared with current military service members to draw them to education.

What participants learned while teaching in the classroom

Many of the participants stayed between five and ten years in the classroom before becoming an assistant principal. In education, you must be reflective of your practices. In military terms this is referred to as *lessons learned*. One participant discussed how the military prepared him to conduct reflective practices after a mission. MARINE3 described how in he would write notes on his lessons that went well and others that did not. He used this tactic in the classroom and completed an after-action report after each lesson. Many participants felt that after several years in the classroom they became less rigid because they started treating students like students and not soldiers. Some participants learned is that while in the classroom, they became

more flexible by writing fewer referrals, mentoring students and were open to trying new pedagogical tactics in the classroom.

Many of the participants did not feel that they were reflective enough while in the classroom and understood they needed to be more reflective to become better teachers. One of the aspects that emerged from this research was the significant difference between participants who only spent a few years in the military compares to those who spent more than ten years. There was more talk about learned leadership amongst participants who spent longer in the military. A recommendation for a future study could compare the leadership styles of former service members who spent five years or less in the military compared to those who spent ten years or more. By being reflective, you can learn what went right and what needs to be improved.

Challenges in the classroom

Many of the participants reflected upon their experiences in the classroom and whether these experiences pushed them to enter administrative positions. Participants reported on their rigidity during their first few years in the class. One participant stated that in his evaluation his principal had discussed with him rigidity. Former service members reflected that their rigidity stemmed from their military training. Everything is structured, and nothing is left for interpretation. Over time, service members retain the structure for organization, but the rigidity is lessened, and the teachers are more willing to try new things. This rigidity was tied to their military experiences and into what they believed were the expectations of military personnel who became teachers.

Rhetoric in the media and policymakers have continually emphasized an educational system that needs tougher and more disciplined teachers. When it came to discipline, it was

black or white, and there was no gray area. Former military service members did not weigh contingents into discipline and if a student broke the rules there was no, “Well, it’s because he was having issues at home and that’s why he was late to class.” A critique of leaving the classroom too soon is that the assistant principal or principal may be ill prepared for the challanges. Some of the participants stated they wished they have been more reflective when asked if they were reflective while in the classroom.

The participants’ experiences in the classroom were a revelation. Participants learned that the highly structured lifestyle of military training did not translate into every situation faced. This was a significant turning point in many of the participants understanding of the differences between the educational profession and the military. Participants reported many shifts in thinking about what works and does not work with the classroom. Key to what works was classroom management techniques, providing different cultural views in lessons and the ability to stay organized. Understanding that the students were not soldiers, they did not have the enforced structure, that themselves, as teachers needed to be flexible with both the students and the planning. Each student was different and needed to be addressed as such. What worked for one student would not necessarily work for another, in terms of discipline. Former service members also need to understand that there is a time and a place to be tough. This is done by encouraging discipline, setting higher standards and expectations for your class and following through.

As described by the participants, not all of them learned the above lesson. In fact, and surprisingly, some of the participants were quite pleased with the fact they were not flexible, and this trend continued into their role as administrators. As noted earlier, this led to conflict with other teachers and administrators who struggled or were not pleased with the dictatorial methods employed. The ability to adapt and become flexible with discipline has set some participants

apart from others. Just because you show students that you care does not mean that you cannot follow through with punishment. In the Army, leaders learn that you must be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment which is a viewpoint I have observed during my time in military. This should be the same in education.

Overcoming critical barriers while transitioning from the classroom to educational leadership positions

Transition from teaching to administration

When I began this research, I anticipated that the participants would report that their key motivation to enter education was about giving back to the community. While some administrators reported that this was the case; many participants entered administration for benefits. Most individuals join the military for their love for the country. The same holds true for education. Educators do not go into education to become wealthy. They join because they want to offer support for the future of the country and support for the students.

Transition from teaching to administration offers larger paychecks and a great deal of stability and security; however, education has been viewed as a profession where an individual does not earn large amounts of money. Many participants did contend that money was a reason, but they also stated that they wanted to have a larger impact in education outside of their classroom. This challenged my original belief that former service members had some intrinsic core values within education that they felt were lacking and inspired them to pursue a career in administration.

Many of the participants characterize the role of the principal as stimulating, demanding and rewarding. An example of this is when ARMY1 stated, “Having students come up to you as the principal and tell you how you have helped them graduate, when nobody else believed, is

rewarding." The data shows that due to these characteristics the principal is motivated, intrinsically, to continue their role as a leader.

Time commitment is the number one reason that teachers do not enter administration. As an administrator, you are responsible for many projects that must be completed after hours. Another factor is the amount of pressure administrators receive to increase standardized test scores. Finally, family responsibilities and excessive paperwork are also concurrent with other research what some of the participants had to say about barriers that were faced as military service members transitioned to administration from the classroom. However, most participants felt that they were prepared for the challenge of education due to their military experiences. AIRFORCE1 noted that his time in the military helped him feel prepared for future leadership roles. Participants stated that due to being placed in stressful situations such as combat or combat training they could overcome the barriers of stress as administrators. Some of the stressors that were faced were irate parents, frustrated teachers and emergency situations that can arise on any given day, and the ability to stay calm. Even though there are more stressors as an administrator, participants stated time and again that the military helped them react calmly under pressure, especially the participants that have been deployed to conflict zones.

Some of the participants also discussed how their families had supported them through numerous deployments and knew that in administration you spend many nights away from your family. The most common way that participants dealt with stress was to find a balance between home and work. This was common in the military as every Thursday was known as "Family Time," and soldiers were released a couple of hours early to spend time at home. Some participants shared how they valued their staff's time and made sure that they emphasized why balance between work and home is important. Some participants went as far as to bring in

massage therapist to treat their staff. If you do not deal with stress, then you can become burned out, and some participants stated that mistakes happen when you do not react to stress.

One of the biggest challenges that face administrators is the ability to think like a teacher but act like a leader. This refers to administrators seeing the big picture. They must take the concerns of all the teachers and implement plans that are for the good of the school. One concern addressed in this study is that when some of the teachers and staff had learned that the new building leader was former military, there was fear. Some fears resonated from former administrators who expect orders to be followed "no if, and's or buts." Some of the participants cited that there is an assumption that some principals do not listen to a teacher's concern. The weight of being a veteran added more concerns and stresses on teachers. As a result, such leaders should be more aware that the military experiences may be a stigma with teachers and they should be acutely aware to ensure that they are able to convey flexibility and approachability.

Another concern that was brought up is that in the military you are expected to listen and take orders. In education, there is some pushback from teachers who decide that they do not have to "attend Professional Learning Community (PLC)" or "follow through with a program." The PLC is a model to improve school improvement. Some of the participants contended that this was a challenge. The military stresses adherence to the chain of command, and again, this may not translate into the schools. To overcome this challenge, the military-trained educational leaders had to be willing to address concerns. They could not, as one participant put it, "Go in there like a Marine at boot camp, barking orders and demand that they follow his orders" (MARINE1). A lesson learned from the participants was that they had to be empathetic to their staff's needs.

Challenges and barriers

A possible outcome of leaving the classroom too early to pursue a leadership role is that some of the older teachers might not take you seriously. This was a challenge for one of the younger administrators. “I was 35 when I became an assistant principal, and I had a teacher who had been teaching before I was born to tell me, ‘How can I give them advice’ when I was only in the class for two years” (ARMY8). It becomes evident that having the military experiences does not mean participants were prepared for leadership. The critiques by other teachers hold some truths. In many professions, there is a learning curve to attain mastery. Teachers understand the time commitment to become experts. Military-trained educational leaders need to be aware of this and to learn skills to gain or earn the trust of the staff.

A few of the participants suggested how they had to work against the grain of their military training when they were in the classroom and realize that they were working with young adults and not soldiers. Several participants implied how hard it is to give up control and trust that their staff will accomplish the mission. The participants reported that it is hard to give up control. This is either because these administrators feel their staff is not capable or they themselves micromanage too much and have not developed trust for their staff. One participant even shared how he was micromanaging every detail of his staff’s day. No matter what was on the agenda for his assistant principals, the principal had to know what they were doing and how they addressed any issues. This can lead to dysfunction in your team as he was not building trust within his team. As an administrator, you need to delegate, build trust and rely on teamwork to accomplish the mission.

Another challenge that some of the participants indicated that they struggled with during this transition was not knowing the job duties indicating that they may not have been as prepared

for the administrative role as they thought. The expectation was that they would be dealing with discipline, budget, athletic events and other administrative duties that were learned during their master's classes. The reality is that you become a counselor, mediator, evaluator, and mentor to both students and staff. The most important aspect to learn is how to become flexible and embrace change as an administrator. One participant talked about how he struggled his first year. He went on to say that when he was going through his credentialing program, it was not the same as work experience on campus. Another suggestion for future research is a review of credentialization programs.

The darker side of the transition to educational leader

I would be remiss as a researcher not to discuss some of the downsides that were reported by the military-trained educational leaders interviewed. I alluded to some examples above, and here I address the issue more specifically. Several participants discussed how there is a stigma that seems to reside with serving in the military. A potential employer directly asked one participant during an interview if he was "going to come into the new position barking like a Marine." Some other terms associated with negative perspectives that have been encountered by the military-trained educational leaders interviewed for this research were "abrasiveness" and "brashness" when dealing with others. As noted above, the stigma of the military service in education, while promoted by the media and policymakers and to some degree school district boards are contrary to some aspects of K-12 education and rightly so. In some ways, schools have also been the spaces where students begin to express independence, individuality, and expression.

A cautionary tale about a former military service member that rose to a very high administrative position. His position and authority have come under review due to issues raised

by school members and district administration concerning his leadership practices on numerous occasions and from different districts. My familiarity with the situation has led me to conceptualize the issues through the lens of my research. In this case, the individual at the center of the controversy had minimal classroom experience and was quickly promoted into an administrative position due to prior military experiences and leadership. He also pursued a terminal degree to become more credentialed. He served only two years in the classroom and then another five years as a school administrator. He was fast-tracked through leadership positions. His methods and practices have been under scrutiny culminating in complaints by teachers and by members of the school district. Using the lens of this research, the shorter the period in the classroom, the possibility of more challenges may arise due to lack of experience.

In the military, it is common to raise one's voice when you as a leader want to gain attention, to convey orders to subordinates or to issue clear commands in the field. There is sometimes a negative spillover when some military-trained educational leaders revert to a training approach or lifestyle reminiscent of a drill sergeant, to speak loudly or bark orders to get things accomplished. This is a leadership style that would not be well received in an educational environment. There are many ways to get things accomplished without raising one's voice or berating others.

Educators may not respond if your method of communication involves raising one's voice to convey information. Other stereotypic perspectives that some former service members may face include that they are inflexible and unwilling to incorporate input from others. One participant spoke about how he had seen other counterparts who were virtual dictators in an educational environment. Because of this, it is important that military trained educational leaders be self-aware of their leadership practices. I should also point out that there are administrators

with non-military backgrounds who may share similar characteristics as these. However, my focus is on those with military backgrounds, those whose military training are the foundation for their beliefs.

Additionally, some leaders progress through the ranks too quickly and believe that because they served in the military, they only need to spend a few years in the classroom before being ready to run a school. As mentioned earlier, when soldiers fast track into administrative positions they often are not truly prepared to take on the role and responsibility of that position. One participant mentioned that just because you were in the military, does not necessarily equate to quality leadership. For example, if you lead a faculty meeting and run it as if you are a drill sergeant the staff's receptiveness will likely be negatively affected by your communication style. For the most part, this is not the norm, most of the participants have, to varying degrees, made the transition to educational leadership. Many participants claimed that they have succeeded because they could be flexible and reflective. Others may claim they had success, but it was evident that they struggled with their leadership skills. I present the issues to make incoming military-trained educational leaders aware of the pitfalls that may befall them. I next address the leadership styles that have been effective.

Successful strategies and tools to transition from the classroom to leadership positions

Important leadership characteristics

I found that there were relevant leadership style that participants identified through lived experiences that have made them successful as leaders. Participants in this study identified characteristics such as honesty, integrity, command presence, ability to adapt to change and organizational capacity, which was learned in the military and found that they continue to use in administration. Skills such as; time management, paying attention to details, and thinking outside

the box helps to uphold high standards during a soldier's daily routine. Organizational capacity includes the ability to adapt to change, planning, and organizational skills. The ability to multi-task was also mentioned as a relevant organizational skill.

Organizational capacity of military-rained educational leaders

My analysis of the data shows that military-trained educational leaders can utilize their ability to understand the dynamics of complex organizations to structure their campus to perform at optimal levels. Military leaders conceptualize and act upon how to gain maximum efforts from their troops. The same holds true to the organization of a department, grade level or entire campuses. Participants discussed how they used their teachers as tools to build strong teams to accomplish the mission.

Organizational skills. Time management; the ability to prioritize tasks, disseminate and write data; produce accurate reports; manage resources and multi-task are vital in successful military service members. Participants agreed that these skills are also essential and transferable to educational administration. Results in this study confirm that organization and time management, as well as military leadership experiences, can and do a transfer from the military to educational administration. One of the early military skills that continued to be important is organization. Participants also found that this skill was vital in being successful as an administrator. One takeaway from this is that future administrators must be organized and manage their time wisely.

"Winging it" as one participant alluded to is hardly a respectable tactic as an administrator reported. The capacity to produce a plan, such as professional development or testing training, is one that should not be put together haphazardly. For example, educational leadership positions like assistant principal or principal are expected to make schedules and

formulate budgets for new programs regularly. The experience most military-trained educational leaders have with creating these plans are invaluable to schools that lack specific characteristics or experiences in this area.

Furthermore, the military places emphasis on adaptability, order and structure. But military service members are also taught to become resilient and react to situations and move on. They do not get caught up in the minutiae that something has changed. However, in the case of school educators, it becomes more important to revisit situations to reflect and learn from mistakes. In education, such situations tend to repeat themselves. Some participants found that being adaptable to change was a success for them during military service as well as in education.

An example of adaptability is in the overall planning of a school year. Being an expert at developing plans does not just mean knowing how to develop and articulate a plan. It also means knowing how to be adaptable and think outside the box when the plan goes astray. The ability to plan well includes distinguishing what works and what does not and not lose your nerve when a plan must be rejected and being able to think of a new, effective one on the spot. Working under pressure and developing new ideas to correspond with a change in surroundings are much sought after skills that military-trained educational leaders possess.

Schools can benefit from the organizational skills that military-trained leaders can bring to improve success. Organization is something that is learned and can be transferred from the military to the schools. As mentioned above, such skills can help with planning classes and events. This theme was not one that was identified in the literature, which may be directly related to the lack of research of military-trained educational leaders as school administrators. Therefore, this study extends what is known about relevant organizational skills transferred from the military to educational administration.

Participants also talked about the essential skills that they felt were important to success. Some skills were both military in nature and some which were strictly grounded within the field of education. Key military skills were following orders, self-discipline and showing up to work earlier than everyone else (e.g., if you are not 10 minutes early your late). Key education skills include developing lesson plans, taking attendance, and analyzing student data.

Several of the participants contended that military-trained leaders might be better at understanding procedures and district policies that enable a school to function. The ability to analyze procedures and policies is a tool that many former service members learn in the military. Most military branches require junior and senior leaders to plan missions and execute the plan. One participant complemented the study by saying "The construction of a timely, inclusive and organized plan is the trademark of any military operational plan" (ARMY6). The importance of this is that current military service members must continue to hone this skill if they wish to work in education. In fact, these skills are called up by educational leaders daily. As an administrator, each day is never the same. To be successful, administrators must organize their plan of attack to accomplish all daily task.

Views on military versus school district leadership development

One participant reported that the military better prepares its leaders than school district training. ARMY3 stated "In the military they spend more money developing you to become a efficient leader, while in schools you are developed to become a building manager." Military training can be viewed as a way for school districts to embrace leadership that is framed with high discipline expectations and not just have building managers. Research in leadership development, especially surrounding the military, can ensure that schools districts and principal preparation programs are not just developing building managers but leaders.

The one area that this research may expand on current literature is the idea that military-trained educational leaders are better developed as leaders and could become instructional leaders after spending time as assistant principals. Research shows that assistant principals must hit the ground running and develop their skills on the job (Stewart, 2016; Cotton, 2016; Cooke, 2015). A recommendation for future research is how school districts build programs to ensure that assistant principals develop the capacity to ensure the next wave of principals are ready to take over the schools as future leaders. All the participants spotlighted military leadership development.

Due in large part to many participant's developments as leaders in the military, participants contended that they were successful in leaving the classroom for administrative positions. In their estimation, moving from the classroom to the front office is a sign of success, but findings in this research indicate that there are multiple measurements of success. Being a successful teacher does not equate to success as an administrator. Other measurements that I recommend for future administrators, are to consider their flexibility, personal interactions, professional interactions, and self-reflection.

Some participants critiqued how school systems fail to develop all leaders and not just these military-trained educational leaders stating that schools do not help teachers make the jump to assistant principal or assistant principals become principals. Participants felt that school districts could do better building capacity from teaching to assistant principal to their first year as principal. While the school districts have training and mentorship programs in place, much of the leadership learning comes from the informal mentorship (Reyna, 2017). Increasing mentorship programs is one-way participants felt they could be supported during their transition to administration.

Leadership styles

Three types of leadership styles emerged from the research. I term them visible leadership, values-based leadership, and developmental capacity leadership. The term *visible leadership* addresses how military leaders "lead from the front." It refers to the leader's visibility. The second style, *values-based leadership*, specifically look at leaders who lead with integrity and honesty. Finally, *developmental capacity* is leaders are those who help build others capacity for learning. They find and utilize the strengths of their team and address the weaknesses and develop their strengths. I begin by discussing visible leadership.

Visible leadership. A leader who is present and visible to their staff is effective. Halpern and Lubar (2004) defined visible leadership and leadership presence. From my perspective, an example of this is the real-life example of an area superintendent with high visibility in the community. This superintendent is always taking the time to meet with teachers outside of his office. He takes the time to have lunch with his students. One of his mantras is people first, paperwork second and he is successful in delegating duties. His leadership team, him included, set aside time to complete important paperwork that also allows him the ability to visit and connect with students every day.

He believes that his leaders must build social capital for the students and ensure they know "why" they have been promoted to leaders within his district. The superintendent has been recognized, regionally and state-wide, for his outstanding leadership, and it is due in large part to his visibility in the community. He has been instrumental in addressing student inequalities throughout the district. One critique from other educators has been that some may say is how is he getting his job done if he is always outside of his office. However, one of his strengths has

been his ability to recognize the strengths of his subordinates and utilizing their skills to delegate jobs.

Visibility as a skill can be very important. Many participants discussed how they maintain visibility. This style of leadership is at the forefront of the Army, the leadership model. It is commonly known as leading with presence. One participant described it as "You lead from the front. You never ask a subordinate to do something, you yourself are not willing to do" (ARMY8). Many participants alluded to one reason that they went into education is that they saw a lack of visible leadership. This type of visibility can be viewed as essential to education. Students and parents need to know that their administrator is present, is there in the morning, is accessible when contacted and is addressing the needs of the community. School districts need to know that their principals and assistant principals are representing the district's interest and can deal with all types of issues. This type of leadership is essential to strong leadership. A visible leader must also have strong values such as honesty and integrity. Another style of leadership that leaders must have is values-based leadership.

Values-based leadership. Many of the participants stated that military-trained educational leaders often lead with character. The military places considerable emphasis on duty, integrity, and accountability. Having leaders who practice *values-based leadership* is one of those similarities. Military-trained educational leaders also often provide direction through delegation, enthusiasm, and inspiration. A strong dynamic of leadership is the ability to generate respect through developing subordinates and creating highly-effective teams. *Values-based leadership* is a style of leadership where it is participants lead with character. Many of the participants talked about how the military instills core values such as honesty, integrity, and

personal courage to stand up for what's right was at the forefront of the training. This is something that most if not all military-trained educational leaders bring to education.

When speaking about integrity, some of the participants spoke about how when they were in the classroom; they saw administrators who lacked integrity. One participant spoke about how in the military and in education leaders who lacked integrity often failed to accept responsibility. Integrity is one of the qualities that participants who were former service members felt that they had instilled in them since joining the military. When leaders in the military lack integrity, soldiers can get hurt. When educators lack integrity, then the system and students suffer. If your school district goes through a huge scandal that is nationally televised, then this not only hurts the public perception of the district but public education.

Many of the participants also discussed their upbringings and the support from their parents as well as the differences between right and wrong. One participant reflected on his relationship with his grandfather. "I would not be the man I am today without my grandfather showing me what was right and what was wrong" (ARMY11). Integrity plays a huge role, especially in administration. All participants agreed that administrators must be role models for their staff, students and stakeholders.

Values-based leadership is often found in administrators who often place the needs of others over their own. Having the integrity to do what is right even when it is easier to take a shortcut and do what is wrong affects the perception of education. Students and parents need to understand that the school administrator will always do what is right for their student. However, leaders must also take time to recharge so that they are able to lead at a high level. In the past few years, a school district has come under fire due to the lack of integrity the school

administrators had regarding accountability testing. As leaders, school districts need to be able to trust that the decisions made are in the best interest of the students.

Developmental capacity leadership. The importance of *developmental capacity leadership* is that it is a foundational tennent of both the military and education. Leadership development was a key finding and answers what strategies participants used to be successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions. Many of the participants contended that military-trained educational leaders who attended several Professional Military Education (PME) courses were better prepared for administrative and leadership positions after the military. Those specific courses addressed aspects of planning, leading larger groups of individuals and the ability to articulate their directives. Some school districts have begun to develop leadership capacity amongst its teachers.

Currently, there are several school districts that have teamed up with university-based administrative preparation programs to prepare their teachers for future administrative roles. Some of the districts also bring their assistant principals to the central office monthly to help develop their capacity in becoming future principals. One critique is that school districts often rely heavily on current principals to develop upcoming leaders. This is often taxing on the principal who does not have time to develop their assistant principals. There is also a chance that there may be an inequity between mentors.

The purpose of developing military leaders is to develop trust and build its subordinates; inspire confidence; build teams and set the example. Developing leaders into principals often require the same results. One of the participants shared how when he was hired the school leadership team was dysfunctional. His superintendent had told him that he needed to build up his campus. One of the tools that can be used to improve the success of transitioning military

service members from the classroom to leadership positions is creating cohorts of service members and developing leadership courses while they are still in the classroom to groom them to become future administrators.

District supports for bolstering the success in their roles as administrators

Supports for success

Mentorship and guidance as a new administrator especially within the first three years were key components of this finding. Reyna (2017) contends because of lack of support from central office; administrators must seek support in the form of informal mentoring, the process of developing a casual relationship with a mentor to build support. The same is true for military leaders. Participants contended that many of them had to seek out mentors in the military to continue to develop leadership skills.

Table 10 draws a comparison of the previously discussed managerial task by Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) and The United States Army Leadership Model. I add to the literature by addressing the primary concepts of each and the relation to each other. Concepts relate four findings addressed earlier. Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) identified six tasks that would most likely affect teaching and learning. By identifying the task and then incorporating how former military service members' leadership build on the task, I could formulate a conceptual model in which many of my participants addressed throughout their interviews.

Using Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) and the United States Army Leadership Model (2006) as cornerstones, I created a model to help understand and explain the transition experiences of military leaders as they take on the role of instructional leader. The conceptual model is meant to show how military-trained educational leaders utilize their training to accomplish the managerial task outlined by Donmoyer and Wagstaff. In the first column, I use

Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) managerial task. I compare those to the U.S. Army's leadership model, which is in column two. Each column fits into a row as they compare to one another. In the first row, Donmoyer and Wagstaff state that building a master schedule impacts student learning. One participant discussed how it was like a jigsaw puzzle when dealing with the master schedule. In column three participants must formulate plans to ensure all students are accounted for. The second row shows how educational leaders follow district policies and to do that participants stated that you must have character. In the third row, I discuss how hiring personnel is correlated to setting a clear direction. In row four, this is closely related to visibility style of leadership as discussed earlier. In the fifth column, I relate coordinating pupil services to organization. In the final row staff development is related to developing others.

The third column introduces a newer modernized view on leadership. The Johnson Concepts for the Instructional Leadership Era refers to what I see as a new approach to leadership. In this new era of leadership, principals are no longer building managers, they must become problem solvers, who are influential and develop their staff to become better than what they were. A blended model of the military leader of the 21st century and school leader of the 19th century has helped me develop this new style of leadership.

Table 10:
U.S. Army Leadership Model compared to Managerial Tasks of Principals

Managerial Task from Donmoyer & Wagstaff *	Army Leadership Task from FM 6-22**	Johnson's Concepts for the Instructional Leadership Era
Scheduling: Means and Ends	A Leader with Intellectual Capacity	Conceptualize resolutions and attain information to do the job
Articulating Policies, Rules, and Norms	A Leader of Character	Leaders hold themselves to a higher standard; Leaders also encourage, support and do the right thing when no one is looking
Hiring Personnel	Leads	Leads others, influences others and setting a clear direction
Supervising Personnel	A Leader with Presence	Command presence, confident, resilient
Coordinating Pupil Services	Achieves	Sets priorities, organizes and coordinates tasking's for subordinates
Managing Staff Development	Develops	Assesses current needs, counsels, coaches, and mentors and builds team skills and processes

*Donmoyer & Wagstaff, (1990); **Headquarters, Department of Army, (2006)

As shown in Table 10, I have crosswalked the two models. This crosswalk is listed as Concepts for the Instructional Leadership Era in the table. These concepts address how military-trained educational leaders are a blended model leader. The participants in my study addressed the Army's leadership development, and many on the job task learned in their first year as administrators.

Instructional leadership era concepts

Leadership task has changed dramatically since Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) developed the six-managerial task that principals must do to impact learning. At the apex of NCLB and high stakes testing, building administrators were focused on managerial tasks. Though NCLB has been replaced by ESSA (2015), there is now a need for administrators to become instructional leaders. This means that there has been a paradigm shift from managerial leaders to instructional leaders. The Army Leadership Model focuses on leadership

characteristics developed in the Army. Both outlines are compatible with each other because they support success for military-trained educational leaders.

The Concepts for the Instructional Leadership Era, which are a crosswalk of how both the previous models are related and can be applied to military-trained educational leaders in a more simplified manner. In the first concept, I address how military-trained educational leaders can conceptualize answers to different situations and continue to seek out knowledge to accomplish difficult task. Strong leaders must lead from the front. The second concept addresses how effective leaders are supportive, have high moral standards and are always more critical of their actions. Leaders also influence others to see their vision. In my third concept, I contend that effective leaders influence others by articulating a clear vison.

The Army helps develop leaders to think analytically. In my years as an administrator, I have realized that building a master schedule is not an easy task. Furthermore, the ability to place all students in a class without overloading or overwhelming the teacher requires individuals to think analytically. Other managerial skills that often require intellectual capacity which military-trained educational leaders possess are: developing professional development for staff; developing instructional supports for students and creating instructional calendars that coincide with academic calendars. These are the skills that military-trained educational leaders are bringing to education and administration.

Another strength that military-trained educational leaders bring is the ability to articulate the district's and campus mission to the teacher and staff. Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) list this task as articulating policies. Not only do former military service memebrs have instilled in them integrity, but they can also articulate missions, which are often handed down to them from higher. Integrity and intellectual capacity are two of the main findings that many of the

participants contend that transfer from military to education, specifically administration. These are two of the many skills that I have also brought about my transition from the military to education. In the Army, there is a moto "Lead from the Front." This mantra is also relevant in education because all leaders are accountable and must maintain visibility. Leading from the front also includes leading with honor and integrity.

In education principals usually have the autonomy to hire its staff. In the military, you are not that lucky. But like in education you have to work with what you have. It is the military leaders' responsibility to develop their soldiers and ensure that they are trained for any future mission. This is another transferable skill that military-trained educational leaders bring to education. In both professions, you must deal with various levels of talent. In working with various levels of talent, you begin to understand the strengths of your team. Another skill that is relatable is the ability to delegate authority. Finally, developing capacity and building weak team members makes stronger leaders. Donmoyer & Wagstaff (1990) also discuss supervision which relates to developing soldiers in the military. Sometimes you are unable to mold certain soldiers, and this builds resiliency in the military.

Discussion

The overarching question guiding this research was: How have military leadership experiences of administrators influenced their roles within schools? I set out to answer this question by examining four interrelated perspectives via the sub-questions. In this section I discuss some of the key findings.

Transferable leadership experiences

The first sub-question sought to explore what military leadership experiences have influenced (either positively or negatively) as school leaders? Participants listed several

transferable skills that they found were relevant in education. The first skill was time management and organization. In the classroom, former service members utilized these skills to structure their lesson, prepare for the lesson and execute the lesson. The concept of 1/3 and 2/3 was discussed as a tactic of 1/3 of the time was used to plan while the other 2/3 of time was used to teach. In their first years as teachers, some participants who had only spent a few years in the military often found that they did not manage time very well or that they still needed some help with organization.

In contrast, participants who spent a longer time in the military found that they were more organized and managed time as they had in the military. Another critical aspect that former service members bring to the classroom is structure. Although there were concerns about rigidity, discipline issues never plagued any of the participants. Some of the participants discussed that if they treat students like soldiers, they shut down. If they have a productive conversation, then they can fix any issue.

Another transferable leadership skill mentioned by participants was about being a servant leader and leading from the front. These leaders all know that you never eat before your troops as a leader. What this means is that you put other people's needs before your own. The most important transferable skill that many of the participants contended that was most relevant from the military to education was the ability to adapt to change. In education, there is constant change as district leaders provide new and innovative strategies to implement at the school. Successful military-trained educational leaders, with significant experiences in the classroom, have learned to adapt to change, can think on their feet, and provide critical discourse to problem solve. Although these were the most relevant transferable skills to education, other important skills included, leadership ability, team building, resiliency, integrity, and strong work ethics. As

you spend more time in the military you also gain skills in written communication, critical thinking and decision-making. Participants who spent more than ten years in the military and went to advanced and senior leader courses also developed skills in project planning and training others. Table 11 draws a comparison of participants who spent zero years to five years, six years to ten years and 11 or more years in the military. I describe general characteristics that participants identified from of each of the groups.

Table 11:

Characteristics of former military service members based on length of service

0-5 Years Military Service	6-10 Years Military Service	11 + Years Military Service
Limited Professional Military Education	Some Professional Military Education	Extensive Professional Military Education
Fewer challenges in transition from military to civilian	Some challenges in transition from military to civilian	Many challenges in transition from military to civilian
Less opportunity to learn developmental leadership skills	Few opportunities to learn developmental leadership skills	Experienced in developmental leadership skills
Rigidity of service member is not as evident	There is some rigidity from being in the military.	Strong evidence of rigidity due to time in service
Some organizational skills (Learned at Basic Level)	Enhanced organizational skills (including oral and written reports)	Superior organizational skills (including critical thinking and project planning)

Critical barriers

The second sub-question asked: What are the critical barriers that military-trained educational leaders must overcome as they transition from the classroom to educational leadership positions? As with any change, there are some challenges or barriers that you face. This is no different for service members who are leaving the military and entering education. Some participants noted the biggest barrier was that not everyone was like them. Participants talked about having integrity, following the chain of command and struggling with teachers not following directives. Military service members have been trained to follow orders and not

question them. Their early experiences upon entering education included tales where schools are not successful, and teachers fail to follow the directives of principals, and they question why?

Another barrier to success was the military leader's approachability. Often, former service members are too rigid or not open-minded. As a teacher, you should be able to approach a colleague your first year and asking for advice. Participants also suggested that you learn through experience. One participant suggested that you must sometimes stop and listen and become more collaborative. In many cases, teachers are the experts and know the circumstances of situations. A good leader knows that the information can aid in solving problems. A good leader looks for those who are most familiar for information and recommendations as well as concerns.

Perhaps the most crucial barrier that many participants faced was the need to shift their mindset from the military to education. Most participants stated that they had a lot to learn about education and struggled with understanding not everything is black and white. One participant discussed the differences in timelines. He showed up to work early, while some colleagues were late. This did not happen in the military. If you were on time, you were late. Another shift is that as these participants transitioned from teaching to administration, they realized that they must have interpersonal communication skills. They must show compassion and realize students and teachers are not soldiers and cannot be degraded or talked down too. As leaders, they must realize this if they are going to be successful. Interpersonal communication skills are not a staple of the military culture. This is a skill that is learned in the classroom and developed the longer they are in education.

Participants overcame each of the barriers by seeking out advice from others who had been in their places. Often, they found other teachers or administrators who were in the military

and sought some sort of mentorship with them. If they could not find a mentor, then they found someone who understood their mindset and developed a relationship. Many participants stated that this led to transitional success.

Transition from teaching to administration

The third sub-question sought to ask what strategies have been successful in their transition from the classroom to leadership positions as well as what tools can be used to improve the success of transitioning military service members from the classroom into school leadership positions? Leadership development is one area in which all participants discussed their success in the transition from the classroom to administrative positions. Many new administrators, or administrators, in general, struggle to have difficult conversations with their staff. Telling an employee, "I do not recommend that you continue employment here" is a tough task no matter who you are. It is for the betterment of this school, the district, and the students.

The ability to have difficult conversations is one way that military-trained educational leaders have to succeed when they transition from the classroom to administration. Another strategy is to find a mentor. Administrators who found mentors often did not face as difficult times as I did my first year in administration. Finally, the last strategy that seemed to be reciprocated throughout the research was to listen and observe. This is typical with most people in the military. Those who did not see the value in ‘listen and observe’ tended to be the type of administrator that struggled to connect with teachers and student and with running the school successfully.

Supports for success

The final sub-question sought to ask what supports have been provided to bolster the success in their roles as administrators? Unsurprisingly, there was a lack of support for military-trained educational leaders. This was due in large part to the fact that many of the participants were not identified as former service members and is not because of the central office administrator's unwillingness to support the participants. There is evidence that more former service members are moving into teaching due to teaching shortages (Kim, 2017). With this influx, school districts should be ready to help former service members make the transition. To be successful, you must have support. Unfortunately, for many of the participants, in their first year, they did not have support from district. The first support that they needed was a mentor. In developing leaders their needs to be guidance and counseling. This is the backbone to the Army's non-commissioned officer corps. Junior non-commissioned officers are developed through counseling's they receive from their senior leaders. This style of development would benefit young assistant principals aspiring to become principals. The principal would meet with their assistant principal on a quarterly basis and provided support for them to continue their growth.

Many participants shared how they had someone they could turn too when they had questions. This was someone who would guide them to make the right choices. One tool that has worked in one district with several military-trained educational leaders was a space created so the administrators would talk with each other and help to avoid common mistakes, though this was not a district sponsored group. In school districts that are near military installations and the possibility that former service members are currently employed with the district, creating such spaces would help grow teachers to become leaders and leaders to continue to grow.

The findings support that the longer you are in the military the more leadership skills you acquire. Former service members who spent less time in the military also struggle with developing others compared to military service members who spent more time in the military. One area in which leaders have grown is in becoming a less managerial leader and more instructional leaders. In the next section, I discuss how leaders have shifted from a managerial task to instructionally driven.

Finally, managing staff development task is closely related to senior leaders in the military who must assess current needs of their troops, then counsel the soldier on either deficiency and finally coaches and mentors while build team skills.

The analysis of 18 interviews, demographical surveys and follow-up emails from current school administrators, who had differing military service and school administration experiences resulted in four findings. By asking these questions, analyzing the data and discussing the outcome this research contributed to the body of current research on educational leadership. This research contributes to the body of literature by learning about the experiences of former service members who have transitioned from the military to teaching and then from teaching to administration. Furthermore, in addition to raising awareness to the issues, this research also added to the literature on successful transition military service members to the military-trained educational leader. As well as producing supports for those military service members choosing to follow this path in the future. Moreover, these leaders shared their stories and gave valuable input on their personal experiences as they transitioned from the classroom to school administration. These experiences offered insight to the challenges of these former service members and a roadmap for former service members in teaching who wish to join the ranks of educational leadership.

CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Implications for colleges and alternative certification programs

Many of the participants in this study and similar studies have gone through some sort of alternative certification program to become teachers. Programs such as Troops to Teachers and Teach for America target individuals such as the former service members because of the incentives and the positive feedback from recruiting former military members. Participants had indicated to challenges they faced when returning to college which includes; utilizing financial assistance from military, lack of introduction classes to understanding the university, or even how to register for classes. Many of the participants had been away from academics for years and struggled with many tasks that college freshman received guidance for.

Colleges and alternative certification programs, especially in areas with large military presence, should conduct more in-depth marketing to target service members early on to assist with their transition. Military installations have education centers in which service members who are exiting must receive counseling before leaving the military. One participant discussed how they wished they knew more about education certification when they left the military so that they could have chosen the right path.

Other service members suggested to the possibility of having cohorts of teaching certifications on the base so when they left the military, they could go straight into teaching. The idea of having installations partnering with universities to offer classes, specifically in education is an idea that I have pursued and have connected to various U.S. Congressmembers and senators. I realize that with this research the idea for targeting service members for education will become a possibility. Several universities in Texas have supported former service members

by funding resource or success centers specifically designed to support military affiliated postsecondary students and their families. Allocating more resources, especially in high military and veteran population campuses will support their success.

Implications for former service members leaving the classroom

Although this research was specifically intended to discuss the transition of military-trained educational leaders, participants discussed reaching out to colleagues who were former service members but still in the classroom. When speaking to their colleagues, they asked if the teachers wanted to become an administrator. The teachers stated that they had thought about it but knew there were some challenges in making the transition. Several participants did mention that challenges such as returning to college or making the transition from teaching to administration seemed too daunting

Participants spoke about skills that were developed in the military did correspond with their duties as administrators. More importantly, the leadership training that some of the former service members had would benefit schools who needed a strong leader. A critique of some participants is that not all former military service members are cut out to be teachers or administrators. There were several instances when participants discussed how they saw individuals who were former service members and they were too rigid and stuck in their ways. The ability to adapt to change is one of the strongest themes that emerged from the research. Participants concluded that they were successful because they had to adapt and reflect to ease the transitions from the military to education.

For former service members to be successful in the classroom and administration they must remember some important concepts: the students are not soldiers, not everything in education is structured like the military, you must build interpersonal communication skills, and

use the knowledge base from the military and from education to blend your thinking. If service members keep these four rules in mind, then the transition from the military to the classroom and the classroom to administration will seem less daunting.

Implications for military-trained educational leaders

My research has captured a wide variety of thoughts and ideas about transferable skills that former military service members bring to education, specifically to the aspects of educational leadership. The interviewees showed a deep respect for those former military service members who are currently teaching and offered advice for those who are wanting to make the transition from teaching to administration. Many of the participants did however cite caution when making the jump from teaching and that the time must be right to become a successful administrator.

Many participants stated that even though they spent five, ten, or 15 years in the military, they needed to spend at least five to ten years in the classroom before making the switch to administration. The main critique offered for individuals who spent less than five years in the classroom is that they have not experienced enough to fully understand the depth and complexity of the curriculum. One participant said "You have to pay your dues and not rush this. To be successful, spend time learning before leading" (ARMY7). Only two of the participants in this study spent less than five years in the classroom. Another component to their success is the ability to network. In my district, I found that five other former service members are serving in administrative capacities. In my first year, I reached out to them to ask questions about instances or to pick their brain. Although the district was unaware of how many former service members were serving in leadership roles, through conversations I could build a network and get support. I was also able to work with a principal who became my mentor. In the past five years as an

assistant principal, I have spoken to other teachers who had military experience and shared with them my story and transition to administration.

Implications for school districts

A few of the individuals who participated in this study were superintendents. When asked about transitional issues from teaching to administration, they contended that there is not much leadership development early on in their educational administration career. The conversation was then about how can school districts can develop leadership amongst its junior leaders (e.g., assistant principals; teachers who want to become administrators). Furthermore, some school districts are currently building their current assistant principals to prepare them for the role of principal by having monthly meetings with all the assistant principals in the district, sending assistant principals to leadership development through regional educational service centers and one on one mentoring programs.

This paper also points out key skills that military-trained educational leaders possess and could potentially offer to school districts. School district administrators can exploit the skills that former military service members come with and then help them develop further skills to foster success.

Future research

This study has looked at a specific population of educational leaders in Texas and asked specific questions regarding transferable skills, transitional issues and supports in place to foster success. All interviewees contributed to the depth of knowledge of the study. They also addressed the strengths and weaknesses of former military service members who are educational leaders. Participants specifically addressed the needs for future research in areas of transition, leadership development and support.

I believe that there are several areas in which future research and exploration can assist military service members with the transition to education. The following is a list of future research areas:

Explore…

- Difference in leadership development between officers and enlisted service members in preparation for school administration.
- Women veterans and the role of the school principal.
- Comparison of military-trained educational leader and non-military-trained educational leader and the impact on school success.
- Institutions of higher education ability to assist veterans in transition?
- Supports to build capacity amongst assistant principals who served in the military.
- Transitional difficulties of former enlisted service members who leave the classroom for administration.
- Former service members in teaching who then move to administration in districts near military installations.
- Impact of military combat zone experiences in teaching and administration.
- Online degree attainment by military-trained educational leaders and its impact on leadership.
- School districts implementation of programs to develop assistant principal's leadership capacity; preparing them for the principal role.

Summary

This qualitative study explored the experiences of military-trained educational leaders, specifically focusing on transferable leadership skills developed and solidified while serving in the United States Armed Forces. The purpose of the study was to understand the transitional experiences of military service members and how leadership experiences influence their leadership roles within schools. Eighteen current school administrators completed interviews using either a face-to-face technique or via telephone. The interviews were transcribed, and data were collected using MAXQDA.

Ten key themes were identified using recurrent and comparable ideas articulated by the participants. The military-trained educational leaders focused on transferable skills from military leadership to school administration. From the ten themes came four findings that addressed supports for administrators, transitional challenges and success both from the military to education and from the classroom to administration and relevant skills that related from the military to educational administration.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Kristopher D. Johnson

Participant name
Address
Email

Dear (Name of participant),

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study on military service members who have become school leaders. This study is part of my dissertation, which is a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Foundations at The University of Texas At El Paso.

Research suggests these military veterans are successful educational leaders and leadership is a crucial component in the educational growth and student achievement. The goal of this study is to determine barriers and experiences found among the veterans that were helpful in their success. On the other hand, were some of the challenges they faced partially due to those foundational characteristics? The study aims to involve 15 to 18 military veterans who have been in the classroom and have moved into administrative positions.

Participants will be asked to complete a brief survey reviewing their military and educational history. Following the survey, we will conduct a one on one interview. This interview will be recorded and will take approximately one hour. The interview will review your military leadership experiences, your classroom experiences, and your experiences as an educational leader. The total time commitment for the interview and the survey should be no more than one and a half hours.

If you have questions relating to this research, please do not hesitate to contact me at 915-504-0055 (cell) or 915-9265203 (work) or via email at kdjohnson@miners.utep.edu. You may also contact my dissertation adviser Dr. Angus Mungal at asmungal@utep.edu if you have any concerns.

If you agree to be part of this study, please respond via email. My email is kdjohsnon@miners.utep.edu. If you agree, your time, commitment, and contribution to this research are appreciated.

Sincerely,
Kristopher D. Johnson
Kristopher D. Johnson

APPENDIX B

MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS IN EDUCATION INITIAL SURVEY

Q1 You are being asked to participate in a survey about possible experiences as a military-trained educational leader and your transition from military life to K-12 administration. By participating, you could help future military service veterans and current teachers transition along the pathway from the military to the principalship. All data will be collected anonymously; the survey will not collect information that could be used to identify you in your answers, such as your name.

Q2 Did you serve in the United States Military (Active Duty, National Guard or Reserve)

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q3 Branch of Service

- ○ Army (1)
- ○ Marine (2)
- ○ Navy (3)
- ○ Air Force (4)
- ○ Coast Guard (5)

Q4 Are you Currently Teaching in a school district

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q5 Are you currently in an administration role (I.E., Assistant Principal, Principal, Director, Central Office Admin)

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q6 School District Employed By

_____

Q7 Would you willing to participate in study that explores How Military Leadership Experiences of school administrators' influence the roles of school leaders

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q8 Please Provide an email where you can be contacted

_____

APPENDIX C

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Protocol Title: Experiences of Military-Trained Educational Leaders: Pathways from the Military to Administration in Texas

Principal Investigator:

UTEP: Educational Leadership and Foundations Department

In this consent form, "you" always means the study subject. If you are a legally authorized representative, please remember that "you" refers to the study subject.

Introduction

You are being asked to take part voluntarily in the research project described below. You are encouraged to take your time in making your decision. It is essential that you read the information that describes the study. Please ask the study researcher or the study staff to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand.

Why is this study being done?

You have been asked to take part in a research study exploring the personal experiences of military-trained educational leaders. School Leaders employed within the last 15 months will be interviewed, in order to investigate their personal experiences in an administrate role. The researcher will also gather data from central office district administrators regarding district support initiatives, including how they support military-trained educational leaders in their respective school district. The data collected will add to the literature on how military-trained

educational leaders can best be supported so that they feel they have experienced a positive and successful start as principal. Approximately, 10-15 principals and 4-6 central office district administrators will be enrolling in this study at UTEP. You are being asked to be in the study because you are (1) an administrator who was employed to the role within the last 15 months or (2) a central office district administrator who previously or currently supervise or support administrators. If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement will be (1) completing a brief demographic questionnaire, (2) one 30-minute face-to-face interview, and (3) possible follow-up phone call from the researcher, if needed, for clarification of interview data collected.

Approximately, 0 participants will be enrolling in this study at UTEP. Participants will come from school districts across the state of Texas.

You are being asked to be in the study because you are (1) an administrator who is currently employed in the role within the last 15 months and (2) a former military service member.

If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement will last about your involvement will be (1) completing a brief demographic questionnaire, (2) one 30-minute face-to-face interview, and (3) possible follow-up phone call from the researcher, if needed, for clarification of interview data collected.

What is involved in the study?

If you agree to take part in this study, the research team will:

- Email each participant a link for a brief demographic questionnaire (10-15 minutes)
- Contact the participant via email to schedule one 30-minute face-to-face interview, which will be audio-recorded. Location, date, and time of interview will be at the participant's convenience.

- Transcribe audio recordings of all interviews and analyze this recorded data for themes and patterns, aligned with the research questions and the literature.
- Contact participants by phone for clarification of data, if needed.

You will:

- Complete Military Service Members in Education Initial Survey
- Complete Informed Consent and Demographic Survey
- Conduct 30-minute face-to-face interview, or telephone interview at a location determined by the participant for convenience
- Conduct follow-up interviews for clarification if needed.

What are the risks and discomforts of the study?

The risks associated with this research are no greater than those involved in daily activities. There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participation.

What will happen if I am injured in this study?

The University of Texas at El Paso and its affiliates do not offer to pay for or cover the cost of medical treatment for research related illness or injury. No funds have been set aside to pay or reimburse you in the event of such injury or illness. You will not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You should report any such injury to Kristopher D. Johnson at (915) 504-0055 and the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-7693) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

Are there benefits to taking part in this study?

There will be no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study. There are educational benefits as the research findings may help us to understand better the personal experiences of military-trained educational leaders, and how military leadership influences their leadership in school administration. This study is exploratory in understanding the personal narratives and experiences of military service members that are currently in an administrative role (i.e., assistant principal, principal, director).

What are my costs?

There are no direct costs.

Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will not be compensated for taking part in this research study.

What other options are there?

You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

W*hat if I want to withdraw, or am asked to withdraw from this study?*

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit. If you choose to take part, you have the right to skip any questions or stop at any time. However, we encourage you to talk to a member of the research group so that they know why you are leaving the study. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect whether you want to continue to take part, you will be told about them.

The researcher may decide to stop your participation without your permission if he or she thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call Kristopher D. Johnson at (915) 504-0055 or via email at kdjohnson@miners.utep.edu. You may also contact my dissertation advisor Dr. Angus Mungal at asmungal@utep.edu or (915) 747-8433

If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-7693) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

What about confidentiality?

The researcher will utilize pseudonyms for all identifying descriptors, such as school district, campus, and participant names. All records, to include audio recordings, questionnaires, and transcriptions will be kept in a secured locking file cabinet, which will be located in Dr. Angus Mungal' s (researcher's advisor) UTEP office and will not be accessible to anyone other than the researcher. All records will be destroyed after the study is completed.

The results of this research study may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, your name will not be disclosed in those presentations.

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law.

Organizations that may inspect and copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Office of Human Research Protections
- UTEP Institutional Review Board

Because of the need to release information to these parties, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

All records, to include audio recordings, questionnaires, and transcriptions will be kept in a secured locking file cabinet, which will be located in Dr. Angus Mungal' s (researcher's advisor) UTEP office and will not be accessible to anyone other than the researcher. All records will be destroyed after the study is completed.

Mandatory reporting

If the information is revealed about child abuse or neglect, or potentially dangerous future behavior to others, the law requires that this information is reported to the proper authorities.

Authorization Statement

I have read each page of this paper about the study (or it was read to me). I will be given a copy of the form to keep. I know I can stop being in this study without penalty. I know that being in this study is voluntary and I choose to be in this study.

_____

Participant's Name (printed)

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

APPENDIX D

MILITARY-TRAINED EDUCATIONAL LEADEERS IN

K-12 EDUCATION INTERVIEW SURVEY

Q1 You are being asked to participate in a survey about your experiences as a military-trained-educational leader and your transition from military life to K-12 administration. By participating, you could help future military service veterans and current teachers transition along the pathway from the military to the principalship. All data will be collected anonymously; the survey will not collect information that could be used to identify you in your answers, such as your name. You will not receive any compensation for participating in this survey. This survey might take approximately 10-15 minutes If you feel upset at any point during or after the completion of the survey, contact the UTEP counseling center at (915) 747-302 or contact the researchers at kdjohnson@miners.utep.edu. You can stop participating at any time by closing your browser. If you close your browser before finishing the survey, your information will not be submitted. At the end of the survey, if you click “submit,” all the answers you provided will be anonymously submitted and cannot be deleted later because they are anonymous. By completing this survey, you consent to these terms and agree you understand them. You could potentially be contacted for follow-up clarification to questions answered on the survey.

Q2 Age

- 25-30
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 60-64
- 65 and Older

Q3 Military Service Branch

- Army
- Marine Corps
- Navy
- Air Force
- Coast Guard

Q4 Are you currently in the National Guard or Reserve

- Yes
- No

Q5 Source of Commissioning (If applicable) IE Service Academy, ROTC, OCS

_____

Q6 Undergraduate Degree and Year Completed

_____

Q7 Educational Degree(s) - (Degree, University, Year)

_____

Q8 Total Years Military Service

_____

Q9 Highest Rank Achieved

_____

Q10 Military Specialty: IE Infantry, Pilot, Surface Line Officer

_____

Q11 How did you become certified to teach?

- ○ Alternative Track Teacher Certification
- ○ Traditional Teacher Certification

Q12 Did you participate in Troops to Teachers

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Q13 Teaching Subject(s) and Grade Level(s) Taught

_____

Q14 Total Years as Classroom Teacher

_____

Q15 Which Principal preparation program did you participate in?

- ○ Alternative principal preparation program
- ○ University based traditional principal preparation program

Q16 Current Administrative Position

_____

Q17 Total Years in Administration

_____

End of Block: Default Question Block

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Participants Name: (pseudonym) _____

Military background: _____

Administrative position: _____

I want to thank you for participating in this study. My name is Kristopher Johnson and I am a doctoral student at The University of Texas at El Paso and this study is for my dissertation which is partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctorate in Education. I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, but the researcher of record is the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Angus Mungal. You and I have both signed and dated the consent form, certifying that you consent with this interview. You will receive a copy of the consent form and I will keep the other under lock and key. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop or take a break, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. With your permission, I will begin recording.

Script – with the recorder running.

I am sitting with _ (Pseudonym) _____ in (location) _____ for our interview today. It is approximately _____ (time) on _____ (date).

Thank you for completing the two earlier surveys, the demographic and initial pre-determination survey. This interview will take approximately one hour, and I would like to have your permission to record it so that I may accurately document the information you share. All your responses are confidential. They will be used to develop a better understanding of the leadership characteristics of military veterans now in school administrative positions.

Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin?

Again, I want to thank you for your participation in this study. I believe your input will be valuable for this study on the experiences of military-trained educational leaders and the pathways to the principalship.

Then with your permission, we will begin the interview.

1. Can you tell me briefly about your military career? How many years were you in the military? Active Duty? Reserves?
2. Types of leadership positions you held? / Number of subordinates?
3. What are some of the key military experiences that have influenced your leadership style? Can you give me some examples?
4. Reflecting on your military experience, were there any military experiences that <u>you felt</u> made you better prepared for a career in school administration.
5. Again, reflecting on your time in the military, was there any specific training that better prepared you for a career in school administration
6. Can you tell me what motivated you to pursue a career in education?
    a. Did you participate in Troops to Teachers?
    b. What did you think about the program?
7. Can you provide me with a story that exemplifies your approach to classroom management when you were a teacher? Can this approach relate to your military leadership experiences?
    a. Did your style change over time as a teacher?
    b. What is your classroom/behavior management style as an administrator?
    c. Has your style changed?
8. What (if any) challenges did you encounter in making the transition from your military

job to your career as a school administrator

9. What strategies did you employ to overcome the barriers you encountered?
10. What made you want to move up to an administrative position in schools?
    a. Was there a person (parent, student, administrator, and teacher) who influenced you?
    b. Was there an event?
    c. What problems did you see in the schools you hoped you could address?
11. Do you believe your prior military leadership experiences/training have influenced your leadership practices as an educational administrator?
    a. If so… how?
    b. Core beliefs?
    c. Principles?
12. Do you have an experience that exemplifies how your military leadership training influenced you?
13. If you were advising someone now in the military who are contemplating transitioning to a career in school administration, what advice would you have to offer? What are your lessons learned?
14. Is there anything else that you would like to add that perhaps I did not get a chance to ask you about?

    Pause…. Wait…

Conclusion:

This concludes our interview today. I will be sending you a transcript of this interview within the next few weeks. Please review it and be sure it states your opinions or thoughts accurately. I may find the need to speak with again for clarification or other reason…

May I contact you if that is required?

Again, I want you to know that once I have good written transcript of the interview, the recording will be erased/destroyed. I also want to remind you that your name will never be associated with this interview. The surveys and this interview will all be identified by a pseudonym.

Upon completion of the analysis and writing the dissertation, I will send you a copy of the final study for you to review.

Thank you again for your time.

I will now turn off the recorder.

VITA

Kristopher David Johnson was born in Biloxi, Mississippi and raised in Charleston, South Carolina and Albuquerque, New Mexico. He graduated from Highland High School in 1998. In 1998, he enlisted in the United States Army and served from 1998 until 2002 on Active Duty and continued to serve until he retired in June of 2018 with 20 years of service. In 2004 and 2008 he deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. In 2011, he earned his Master of Secondary Education from The University of New Mexico in Albuquerque New Mexico. In 2014, he earned his Master of Education in Administration from Sul Ross State University. In 2018, he earned his Doctor of Education degree from The University of Texas at El Paso.

Dr. Johnson was the recipient of several State of Texas Public Education Grants (TPEGs) for graduate students. He has presented to aspiring UTEP doctoral candidates surrounding his personal experiences in a doctoral program. Dr. Johnson presented at national conventions, most recently he presented a paper with Dr. Angus Mungal on *Navigating higher education: Transitioning from the military service into civilian life* at the national American Educational Research Association (AERA) conference in New York, NY.

While pursuing his doctoral degree, Dr. Johnson worked as a full-time campus administrator in the Clint Independent School District. He served the Montana Vista community from 2014 until 2018. Dr. Johnson was relocated to Ricardo Estrada Middle School in July of 2018. Dr. Johnson began his 10th year in education in August 2018. His long term-goals is to continue to serve as an administrator while continuing his research with military-trained educational leaders.

Contact Information: kdjohnson0804@gmail.com

This thesis/dissertation was typed by the author.