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Navy Downsizing and its Effect on Active Enlisted Navy Personnel

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Abstract

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Eden Velasco Castro

MS, University of Phoenix, 2008

BS, National University, 2003

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The overall scope of naval missions has remained largely unchanged despite the loss of more than 8,000 naval personnel each year since 2002. The downsized naval workforce experienced an overload in work assignments and an increase of health-related issues resulting in lowered morale, motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity. Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs links personal satisfaction to work productivity, which is critical for naval personnel to protect national security, provide humanitarian services, and respond to international crises effectively. This phenomenological study included semi-structured interviews with military and civilian leaders at naval bases located in San Diego and El Centro, CA. Participants reflected on their lived experiences, feelings, and interactions concerning the downsizing phenomenon. Primary themes, generated by a modified van Kaam technique, were related to the change of personal values, Navy readiness and balance force, and leadership's effectiveness and efficiency. The primary finding was the need for naval leaders to communicate downsizing decisions effectively. Additional research is needed to expound on the perceived unfairness in the implementation of downsizing decisions. Social change may occur for naval personnel, community members, and other external stakeholders through the improvement of downsizing communication practices that might reduce health risk factors, economic deflation, and population migration.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to my daughter Alexandra Rubalcaba. Through this study, I want her to know that she can achieve any goal for her life. There is no limit on what she can do.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

United States military downsizing began at the end of World War II. A subsequent round of military downsizing happened at the end of the Cold War (Borch & Wallace, 2010). Leaders and managers continued using downsizing as an organizational restructuring strategy in the 21st century (Heinecken, 2009). Remaining personnel experienced work overload because of the military downsizing efforts (Prindle, 2005), which may lead to decreased job satisfaction, lower morale, negative behavior towards the organization, increased job uncertainty, and stress (Heinecken, 2009). Because of such ramifications, it is necessary to understand the Department of Defense's (DOD) downsizing effort.

Background of the Problem

The DOD has been downsizing military personnel for many decades because of budget constraints; these budget constraints might likely to continue for years to come (Prindle, 2005). In 1990, there were 2.1 million active military personnel (Virick, Lilly, & Casper, 2007). In 1993, 1.8 million were serving, and by the end of the decade, there were only 1.4 million remaining military personnel (Virick et al., 2007). Shortages of military personnel cause stress, job dissatisfaction, lower morale, and negative attitudes toward the organization (Prindle, 2005).

In this study, I explored the rationale behind the U.S. Department of the Navy's downsizing, the naval leadership strategies for ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the naval mission while implementing the process of downsizing, and the negative effects (e.g., stress, low job satisfaction, low morale, and low motivation) of

downsizing on the active enlisted Navy personnel. The Navy's climate and culture were also important to examine because of their effect on employees and the organization. This effort may contribute to the scholarly body of knowledge by providing information regarding the negative effects of downsizing on the organization and surviving employees.

Problem Statement

Since 2002, the Navy has been reducing its workforce by 8 to 10 thousand personnel each year (Gilmore, 2009). This reduction of the naval forces negatively affected enlisted military personnel's well-being, organizational efficiency, and effectiveness because it resulted in an increase of stress (Wallace, Arnold, Edwards, Frazier, & Finch, 2009). Leaders and managers need to mitigate this problem because stress in the workplace costs organizations over $300 billion a year (Wallace et al., 2009).

The general business problem is that the remaining active enlisted military personnel have to assume tasks left by downsized personnel and fulfill added responsibilities to achieve the organization's mission, which often results in work overload (Prindle, 2005). The specific business problem is that this work overload results in an increase of stress levels for surviving personnel (Silla, Gracia, Manas, & Peiro, 2010; Virick et al., 2007), as well as lowered job satisfaction, and lowered employee morale (Kossek, K. Kalliath, & P. Kalliath, 2012).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the effects of a reduction of the naval workforce on the remaining enlisted active personnel's motivation, job

satisfaction, and morale. The phenomenological research design best fit the study because it entailed purposive interviews of Navy leaders (both officers and enlisted), command career counselors, and active enlisted Navy personnel to examine their lived experiences and perceptions. The participants were chosen based on their assigned responsibilities and affiliation with the Navy, and they do not represent the Navy as a whole. The Navy active enlisted ranks population included personnel with a minimum of 2 years experience in entry level supervisory positions, which are petty officer enlisted rank (paygrade E4) through the highest enlisted rank, master chief petty officer (paygrade E9). I conducted the interviews of participants at naval bases located in San Diego and El Centro, CA.

The goal was to influence social change by bringing awareness to the leadership and management of both private and public sectors about the negative effects of downsizing on employees and the organization. For example, the stress that results from work overload affects production (Norris, 2009), as well as being detrimental to employees' overall health (Wallace et al., 2009). Therefore, if alleviated, overworked employees could find balance between their work and other responsibilities (e.g., family time), and be less stressed, which also would lead to fewer health issues.

Nature of the Study

To help unveil the lived experiences of participants, I used the modified van Kaam qualitative phenomenological approach recommended by Moustakas (1994). A qualitative design fits this study because this method is best when seeking to explore an individual's perceptions, situations, and experiences (Rowley, 2012). In addition, a

qualitative research method is best to use when the research study is nonsequential (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Stierand and Dörfler (2012) stated that qualitative research provokes thinking, as compared to quantitative research.

The qualitative approach was appropriate as compared to a quantitative or mixed method approach because this study involved a collection of data concerning participants' perceptions of downsizing. Malina, Nørreklit, and Selto (2011) stated that the quantitative research method is the best approach to use when a researcher needs to test a theory to prove or disprove a hypothesis through statistical data; this approach was not appropriate to use in this study because it did not include analysis of statistical data. Mixed method research is the combination of both quantitative and the qualitative research approaches (Malina et al., 2011), and for similar reasons, it was not appropriate to use in this study.

Creswell, Plano-Clark, and Morales (2007) discussed five qualitative designs, which are narrative research, case studies, grounded theory, phenomenology, and participatory action research. Narrative research is a collection of stories or data in a chronological manner (Creswell et al., 2007) to develop expertise that can be used to resolve complex problems (Everett & Barrett, 2012). A case study focuses on a specific issue, find solutions, and justify research findings by using multiple data sources (Ellis & Levy, 2009). Grounded theory requires a large number of participants; the researcher initiates the research process and theorizes participants' views of a particular phenomenon by instituting a theoretical framework (Reiter, Stewart, & Bruce, 2011). In participatory action research, the researchers' goal is to achieve social change and

improve people's lives (Creswell et al., 2007). Phenomenological research analyzes participants' views to generate new meaning (Moustakas, 1994).

Considering the business problem explored, and after comparing and contrasting the characteristics of the five qualitative designs, the phenomenological research design best fit this study because it captures the premises of lived experiences, feelings, and beliefs of participants (Moustakas, 1994). This uncovers the downsizing phenomenon and helps address the research question elucidating a phenomenon by exploring the views of participants, who are stakeholders (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Question

Ibrahim (2011) stated that a research question should lead the researcher in finding or discovering a solution to a problem. In this qualitative phenomenological study, I explored how effective and efficient Navy leaders are in achieving their missions during the downsizing of personnel by exploring leadership strategies and how downsizing affects personnel through their lived experiences. In qualitative studies, beginning the research question with the words *what* and *how* help the researcher explore a phenomenon (Malina et al., 2011). The central research question was: What are the consequences of Navy downsizing to active duty enlisted personnel and the organization? The following were the interview questions.

1. How do you feel about the Navy's downsizing of personnel?

2. How do you perceive Navy's downsizing affects the organization's mission?

3. How do you feel about the Navy's get-tough approach to reduce ratings?

4. How do you describe your perception and understanding of the current approaches used for downsizing units?

5. What do you perceive to be an appropriate strategy in maintaining morale during downsizing?

6. How do you perceive Navy leaderships' effectiveness in maintaining job satisfaction during downsizing?

7. What do you perceive to be an effective strategy that may increase motivation?

8. What strategies may be implemented to manage workload during downsizing to help minimize stress?

9. What positive outcomes do you perceive from the Navy downsizing?

10. What negative outcomes do you perceive from the Navy downsizing?

Conceptual Framework

Theoretical and conceptual frameworks provide guidance in the development of knowledge (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). A conceptual framework is useful in demonstrating the link or relationship between relevant concepts (e.g., downsizing, job stress, job satisfaction, morale, and motivation) and in understanding the consequences of downsizing on the factors that affect personnel and the organization (D'Souza & Taghian, 2010).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the conceptual framework applied in this study. Maslow proposed in the 1943 theory of human motivation that an individual's needs drive his or her behavior. Maslow conceptualized the hierarchy of needs in descending

order: self-actualization, self-esteem, love or belongingness, safety, and physiological. In 1954, Maslow articulated the hierarchy of needs and published the book titled Motivation and Personality. In 1971, Maslow extended the motivation theory and went beyond self-actualization by adding transcendence needs (Aydin, 2012). Self-transcendence, which means helping others achieve self-fulfillment, is the next step beyond self-actualization (Aydin, 2012). Scholars applied Maslow's hierarchy of needs in numerous studies, and it became a fundamental part of literature in marketing, human resources, motivation, and management (Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg, & Schaller, 2010).

Maslow's motivation theory is one of the widely recognized content theories on motivation; various authors have expanded it (Kenrick et al., 2010). Hytti, Stenholm, Heinonen, and Seikkula-Leino (2010) applied Maslow's theory in the context of education. Shuck, Rocco, and Albornoz (2011) applied Maslow's theory in their research on employee engagement. Other researchers have elaborated on Maslow's theory and have added sets of needs (Shuck et al., 2011). In addition, many researchers have reconstructed Maslow's theory. For example, Fisher (2009) reexamined and entrenched it in the context of leadership. Niemiec, Ryan, and Deci (2009) used the self-determination theory in examining the consequences of attaining intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations after attending college. Williams et al. (2011) also used the self-determination theory in their study on tobacco intervention.

Literature has revealed that employees' motivation theories can help leaders and managers understand the underlying problems caused by downsizing, which in turn would help them determine needed strategies or take actions that would enable them to

provide or meet employees' needs. Meeting or not meeting employees' needs affect their behavior toward the organization (Fisher, 2009). Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a strategy that may be beneficial for Navy leaders in achieving their missions while in the process of downsizing. This theory may help in exploring how personnel development could be achieved in the midst of downsizing.

Operational Definitions

Operational definitions inform readers of the explicit meaning of words and list terms used in the study, which help avoid misinterpretation of the construct of a term (Remund, 2010). Providing the definition of a term helps researchers convey their intended message; therefore, researchers should ensure consistency to help readers adequately understand the scope of the study (Remund, 2010).

Career reenlistment objectives (CREO): CREO is a method used in determining the advancement and rating of conversion opportunities for enlisted personnel (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

Emic: Emic relates to the perspective of one or appropriate number of individuals (Morrow, 2005).

End-strength: In the Navy, end-strength is the allowed total number of personnel who are on active duty at a given time (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

Etic: Etic relates to the perspective of many, or more than needed, number of individuals (Morrow, 2005).

Horizonalization: In analyzing research data, horizonalization is the extent of the participants' perceptions or experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Military Keynesianism: Military Keynesianism is an economic theory advocating that war and defense spending improve the economy (Borch & Wallace, 2010).

Navy paygrade: Navy paygrade is the level of personnel's monetary entitlements that correspond with their ranks (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

Navy ratings: The Navy uses ratings to group an enlisted personnel's job specialization (U.S. Navy, 2011).

Overmanned Navy ratings: Navy enlisted ratings that have 103% or more total enlisted personnel are considered as overmanned ratings (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

Psychological hardiness: Psychological hardiness is a personality trait that tends to view stressful and difficult event(s) as normal features of life. Hardy individuals demonstrate the characteristic of having a sense of control over personal and work stress (Bartone, Eid, Johnsen, Laberg, & Snook, 2009).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are major elements of a research study because acknowledging them establishes the credibility of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2009). Assumptions are presuppositions that certain concepts are true without establishing proof, limitations are the potential weaknesses, or threats on the study, and delimitations set the limit of the study, which helps the researcher manage the study (Ellis & Levy, 2009).

Assumptions

In this phenomenological qualitative study, I assumed that open-ended questions help obtain objective responses from the participants and that participants would answer interview questions truthfully. Literature revealed that it is appropriate to assume that employees are productive, loyal, and motivated when the leaders of organization meet or satisfy their needs (Udechukwu, 2009).

Limitations

Limitations of study are internal or external factors that may affect the reliability and validity of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2010). According to Ellis and Levy (2010), the two sources of limitations in research studies are (a) how the researcher conducts the study, and (b) problems that may be encountered while conducting the study. The weaknesses of this study included:

1. time constraint;

2. workload constrained the number of willing and available participants; and

3. the phenomenological research design may have posed a potential threat to the validity of the study because it confined the information to the views of participants.

Delimitations

In this study, the focus was on the effect of downsizing on the Navy enlisted active duty personnel. It was not feasible to expand the study to explore the effects of downsizing on officers given the limited time. I gathered data using the face-to-face or phone interviews; the interviews continued or lasted until no new relevant information

resulted from the interview of added participants. Reliability and validity of the data were dependent on the credibility of the lived experiences of participants.

Significance of the Study

Downsizing has affected more than a hundred million lives around the world (Gandolfi, 2009). In the year 2008, the United States downsized more than 2 million employees (Datta, Guthrie, Basuil, & Pandey, 2010). Downsizing harms employees economically, physically, and psychologically, and it negatively affects employees' attitudes and creates social chaos (Tsai & Yen, 2008). Therefore, "special attention should be paid to this social phenomenon," (Tsai & Yen, 2008, p. 368). Managers and leaders struggle to maintain control when implementing the downsizing process because it remains unclear how they rationalize their decisions to let go of essential personnel (Prindle, 2005). If an organization fails to communicate the rationale for downsizing to employees, it could easily lead to employees' negative perceptions toward the organization, and it could deflate the morale of remaining employees (Datta et al., 2010).

Reduction of Gaps

Researchers seldom study public sector organizations such as the military (Prindle, 2005). Data from literature revealed that organizations have not been successful in implementing their downsizing strategies and in achieving desired outcomes from downsizing (Tsai & Yen, 2008). In addition, downsizing has not been properly managed (Prindle, 2005). In this study, one of the goals was to fill the gaps in business practices concerning how to manage the downsizing process and achieve the organizations' desired

outcomes from downsizing while maintaining morale, job satisfaction, motivation, and mitigating stress caused by work overload.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this phenomenological study should bring opportunities to influence social change by creating awareness of the negative effects of downsizing on employees and the organization. The focus of Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivation theory was to create understanding and meet human needs. According to Maslow (1943), satisfying human needs could lead to motivation of individuals, which may help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. This is important because during the implementation of downsizing in the Navy, the primary objective is to remain efficient and effective in achieving the naval mission (W. D. French, personal communication, July 5, 2011).

In addition to the stress experienced by naval personnel due to work overload, it was also important to mention that they are vulnerable to other stressors. For example, McDougall and Drummond (2010) stated that naval personnel's experiences *combat stress* due to exposure to deployment (e.g., fear of safety, anxiety from being away from family, etc.). Combat stress causes health problems to many naval personnel (McDougall & Drummond, 2010). Another example is the *operational stress* due to the nature of military obligations, such as responding to human-cause and natural disasters, exposure to a hostile environment, and many others (McDougall & Drummond, 2010). These stressors not only resulted in lowered productivity, but also could be the reason for Navy personnel's suicidal ideation (Mansfield, Bender, Hourani, & Larson, 2011). Therefore,

addressing stress and health problems in the Navy is important to ensure that leaders are

able to provide the assistance needed by personnel. Although the focus of this research

study was on the Navy, findings should be applicable to any organization and industry.

For example, meeting employees' needs reduces stress, which in turn reduces health care

costs and increases productivity (Mansfield et al., 2011). In addition, reduction of active

duty enlisted personnel in the Navy would affect the economy and the community

because personnel separated from the Navy would need to rely on their unemployment

benefits until they find another job (W. P. Wilmarth, personal communication, June 9,

2011).

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Both private and public organizations that downsized encountered the same

issues, such as organizational commitment, job insecurity, and performance (Datta et al.,

2010). Many organizations have chosen to implement downsizing to improve financial

performance. However, literature has not shown support of its effectiveness in achieving

such a goal; there was no empirical evidence suggesting that there is a correlation

between downsizing and improved financial performance (Tsai & Yen, 2008). Iverson

and Zatrick (2011) tested the rationale of downsizing as a business strategy, and

determined that downsizing, in the long-term, does not benefit the corporations'

stakeholders, nor does it stimulate firms' long-run productivity.

The purpose of this study was to explore how downsizing affects remaining

employees' job satisfaction, stress, morale, motivation, and productivity and to explore

strategies that could be implemented by leaders and managers to achieve the desired

outcome from downsizing. In this study, I uncovered how Navy leadership could mitigate stress, maintain job satisfaction, maintain morale, and increase motivation during downsizing. I also explored how Navy leadership could be effective and efficient in achieving their missions during downsizing, and how the remaining enlisted personnel view Navy downsizing.

The literature review begins with the exploration of peer-reviewed journals, official Navy websites, military, professional and academic databases, dissertations written pertaining to the Navy, and books. It included the use of databases such as Sage Premier, ProQuest, and EBSCOhost (Academic Source Complete and Military and Government Collection) to explore the meaning and develop an understanding of the downsizing phenomenon. Other databases used included the Thoreau and Emerald Management journals (links to multiple databases), which helped link the downsizing phenomenon to other concepts, such as stress, job satisfaction, morale, and motivation. Google Scholar allowed searching scholarly literature to a considerable extent.

The concept of downsizing has emerged from a wide variety of management and organizational theories (Prindle, 2005; Tsai & Yen, 2008). In this literature review, themes explored included:

1. The downsizing phenomenon.

2. Reasons why organizations (government and private) downsized.

3. Organizations' desired outcomes from downsizing.

4. Downsizing processes and strategies management used in the implementation of downsizing.

5. The effects of downsizing on organizations and employees.

6. The approaches taken by leaders to help maintain control and alleviate the negative effects of downsizing while achieving the organizational goal.

7. Motivation and leadership theories.

8. The navy culture and leadership.

Downsizing is a broad concept; it is a multifaceted phenomenon. Literature showed that researchers defined downsizing in a variety of ways (Gandolfi, 2009). Peterson (2010) defined downsizing as a reductions-in-force, which is a business process organizations used to reduce their workforce. In the implementation of reductions in force, employers need to make sure that actions are justified and be mindful of possible employees' retaliation because they are losing their jobs based on circumstances other than poor performance or a fault of their own (Peterson, 2010). Managers of organizations have used other favorable terms to minimize the negative perceptions of the word downsizing such as rightsizing, restructuring, re-engineering, and reorganizing, which influences employees' behavior and action (Mirabela, 2011).

On one side of the continuum, organizations use downsizing as a management strategy to help increase efficiency and improve the financial performance of the organization (Gandolfi, 2009; Norris, 2009). Additionally, organizations used downsizing as a cost reduction strategy during both growth and decline of the business (Gandolfi, 2009). Nevertheless, literature showed that downsizing has been the most common strategy that organizations use to adapt to organizational and environmental changes (Gandolfi, 2009; Prindle, 2005).

Downsizing Strategies

The three downsizing strategies that organizations have used are (a) workforce reduction, (b) organizational design, and (c) systematic strategies (Gandolfi & Oster, 2009). Workforce reduction is the reduction of personnel. Organizational design is the reduction of work. Systemic strategy is the change of the organization's culture and values (Gandolfi & Oster, 2009). Public administrators should be focused on long-term strategies, post crisis challenges, and centralized priority setting as a response to the needed organizational restructuring and decreased funding (Cepiku & Savignon, 2012). In addition, government agencies require continuous application of the total quality management (TQM) process while implementing organizational changes (Chang, Chiu, & Chen, 2010). On the contrary, others have found that TQM tools are fads and are no longer effective; instead, they supported a strategic quality management (SQM) as the top ranking management method (Dahlgaard-Park, 2011).

Data from the literature revealed that communicating the criteria, timeline, and reason for downsizing is significant because it precipitates employees support (Kumar & Pranjal, 2009). Employees do perceive downsizing as fair and unfair based on the magnitude to which they believe the decision to downsize was either strategic or impulsive and communicated in an effective manner (Iverson & Zatrick, 2011). Communication also contributed to satisfaction, fairness, and performance, it helped mitigate occupational stress caused by downsizing (Datta et al., 2010). Effective communication is the key to a living strategy; the aim of communication is to achieve the mission (Bourne, 2011).

Survivor Syndrome

Organizations' downsizing implementation efforts have failed for various reasons. Most often, management failed to address the effect of downsizing on survivors; consequently, it resulted in negative attitudes, behaviors, low morale, and reduced productivity (Prindle, 2005). *Survivor syndrome* is the negative feelings experienced by survivors of downsizing (Häsänen, Hellgren, & Hansson, 2011; Prindle, 2005). The symptoms of survivor syndrome identified by Guo and Giacobbe-Miller (2012) included: (a) fear, insecurity, and uncertainty; (b) frustration, resentment, and anger; (c) sadness, depression, and guilt; and (d) injustice, betrayal, and mistrust. These negative consequences of downsizing need to be mitigated because an organization's success depends on the remaining employees; otherwise, it would negatively affect the organization (Guo & Giacobbe-Miller, 2012). Maintaining ongoing communication, maintaining morale, and mitigating survivors' concerns would help management and leadership become aware and develop an understanding of the consequences of downsizing, not only on victims and the organization, but also most importantly on the survivors (Guo & Giacobbe-Miller, 2012).

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles in managing employees' stress, job performance, and job satisfaction affect the organizational goals (Singh, 2009). The five personality dimensions (i.e., big five model) play a major role in examining the effect of leadership style on employees (Singh, 2009). The five personality dimensions are neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Bartone et al., 2009;

Singh, 2009). These personality factors serve as a conceptual framework unifying employees' behavior and leadership; however, it does not fully represent the personality characteristics that affect leadership (Bartone et al., 2009).

Researchers who analyzed the big five personality factors have found inconsistencies on their effects on leadership (Bartone et al., 2009). Further, the big five model does not ascertain the personalities that can influence leadership; Bartone et al. (2009) asserted that the personality model is missing psychological hardiness and social judgment (i.e., emotional and social intelligence), and personality dimensions. Psychological hardiness means having a sense of control on personal and work related stress; hardy individuals remain committed and show continuous good performance under stress (Bartone et al., 2009).

Emotional intelligence contributes to self-appraisal, which is the foundation of understanding one's own and other peoples' emotions, developing people skills, and explaining the variance of job satisfaction and motivation (Rozell & Scroggins, 2010). Understanding employees' emotions enabled leaders to help employees successfully cope and manage both life and work stress; this understanding addressed efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity (Singh, 2009). Improved people skills contributed to an enhanced organizational performance and increased employee satisfaction (Norris, 2009).

People are the most important part of an organization; therefore, employees should be content and motivated by their work (Srivastava, 2009). The organization should focus on retention, commitment, reduction of stress, and maximizing leadership effectiveness. Individual identity needs to be balanced with social identity; for this

reason, social intelligence also plays a pivotal role in leadership effectiveness (Firing, Karlsdottir, & Laberg, 2009). Social intelligence is the leaders' awareness of the organization and social relationships (Bartone et al., 2009). It is a valuable trait because not having social intelligence resulted in serious consequences, such as conflict and discontent, which led to negative behavior (Caldwell, Floyd, Atkins, & Holzgrefe, 2012).

In examining leaders' behavior, literature revealed that researchers consistently explored *concern for task* and *concern for people* (Eddy, Lorenzet, & Mastrangelo, 2008). Ahmed, Shakeel, Inam, Muhammad, and Tahir (2010) stated that the two dimensions of leaders' behavior are consideration (i.e., mutual trust, respect, and friendship between leaders and subordinates) and initiating structure (i.e., having established and well-defined procedures). Ahmed et al. (2010) found a negative relationship between consideration style and job stress; conversely, the authors found a positive relationship between initiating structure and job stress. This is similar to the Eddy et al. (2008) leadership model, which illustrated that *personal leadership* (e.g., building trust, and caring for people) is the mediator of *professional leadership* (e.g., aligning processes and procedures) in achieving organizations' desired outcomes.

Leadership's risk-aversion, self-centeredness, and resistance to change contribute to organizational decline and organizational downsizing; these leadership characteristics are harmful to the organization's ability to survive external factors and uncertainties, such as economic stress, that have adverse effects the organization (Carmeli & Sheaffer, 2009). Leaders and managers have a moral obligation to the organization and employees

in ensuring the viability of the organization. Leadership failures unfold organizational decline (Carmeli & Sheaffer, 2009).

The contingency theory holds that leaders adapt to any given situation to meet employees' needs (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012). This characteristic of a leader is critical in achieving the navy mission and readiness. Transformational leadership, a contingent leadership approach, clarifies the ways to adapt in a changing environment and promotes greater motivation, trust, and loyalty among employees (Zagorsek, Dimovski, & Skerlavaj, 2009). Culbertson, Huffman, and Alden-Anderson (2010) asserted that the contingency theory concurs with the leader–member exchange theory (LMX). The LMX theory is the measure of different exchange relationships that leaders or managers have with different employees (Culbertson et al., 2010). *Contribution, affect, loyalty,* and *professional respect* are four components of the LMX theory (Culbertson et al., 2010). Contribution is the amount of effort the employee contributes to achieve a common goal. Affect is the mutual liking of employees between each other outside of professional values, such as being friends. Loyalty is the level of employees' commitment to the organization in achieving a common goal. Professional respect is the recognition of one's achievement and reputation.

As with the previous studies (Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009; Mahsud, Yukl, & Prussia, 2009), Culbertson et al. (2010) found LMX to be effective in increasing team effectiveness, increasing job satisfaction, and decreasing organizational turnover. In addition, high quality of relationships between leaders and employees is

significant because a high quality of relationship has a positive implication to leaders'
effectiveness (Mahsud et al., 2009).

Understanding leadership styles or theories in a changing organizational
environment or culture is beneficial for organizations; new era and new leadership
challenges beget new leadership strategies (Brookes, 2012). Four forms of leadership
found in public organizations include political, organizational, individual, and community
leadership (Brookes, 2012). Other forms of public leadership are bureaucratic,
transactional, and transformational; they are pragmatic leadership strategies that could
help organizations achieve prudency (Green, 2007).

The federal government, such as the military, employs bureaucracy leadership
theory; the authority of managers or leaders is in accordance with their ranks or positions
(Green, 2007). The bureaucratic leadership theory has its advantages; an organization
that operates or follows a chain of command helps maintain orderliness. However, using
a chain of command may result in an organization that is inflexible and slow to adapt to
changes (Green, 2007). In addition, this could be a disadvantage to the Navy because
leaders need to apply effective diplomacy and maritime leadership strategies to achieve
their missions (Green, 2007). Because of bureaucratic leadership deficiency and the
diverse missions assigned to the Navy, other leadership theories should be evaluated
(Baruch & Quick, 2009).

The transactional and the transformational leadership theories could be both
described as an effective exchange (e.g., communication, material, etc.) between leaders
and followers to achieve an organization's objectives (Green, 2007). However,

transactional leadership theory is inflexible with bureaucratic organizations (Green, 2007). During the downsizing process, the transactional leadership theory may fail to realize the greater needs of employees, such as job assurance (Green, 2007). The transformational leadership theory is contemporary; the complexity of the federal government and other 21st century organizations requires new strategies beyond the traditional (Bana, 2012). After synthesizing the bureaucratic and transformational leadership theories, Wright and Pandey (2010) concluded that both have their weaknesses and strengths; it is vital to consider the advantages and disadvantages of these leadership approaches to influence employees and achieve desired organizational performance.

Leadership Development

Developing excellent leaders who continuously advance their leadership skills is a challenging task for complex organizations such as the Navy (Bann, Williams-Piehota, & Whittam, 2011). It is important for the Navy to promote and exert effort in leadership development skills to remain effective in achieving its missions (Bann et al., 2011). Because of the amount of resources and the intricate missions entrusted to the Navy's top leaders, attainment of required skills, in addition to leadership skills, are necessary such as financial literacy, information management, human capital, and change management (Bann et al., 2011). Rutner, Aviles, and Cox (2012) proposed that technology is important because it is the link in the development of leadership skills.

In addition, Olivares (2011) conceptualized leadership development by understanding its context through leadership tripod (i.e., leaders, followers, and common goals) framework. Olivares stated that leadership development corresponds to the

interactions between leaders, employees, and coalition with organizational tactics and missions; therefore, investing in an individual-based leader development is not adequate. The data in the study also suggested that leaders learned and developed the essential skills of leadership through their own experiences.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Understanding motivational theories promotes employee productivity. However, theories are complex and could frustrate individuals (Malmi & Grunland, 2009). Psychologists have postulated two kinds of motivation theories, which are dualism and multifaceted theories. Researchers who embraced dualism theories classify human motivation as intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic entails individuals' basic wants and needs (e.g., a drive for autonomy). Extrinsic entails obtainment of a goal (e.g., a drive for victory). Researchers who advocated multifaceted theories discussed a number of distinct motives (Reiss, 2012). For example, Ankli and Palliam (2012) discussed perception of self, psychological, and emotional needs by using the self-determination theory. Other examples of motivational theories that researchers' found to be effective in the business field include Herzberg's two-factor theory and McClelland's trichotomy of needs (Fisher, 2009).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs has contributed to the understanding of how idiosyncratic human nature adapts to contemporary workplaces (Udechukwu, 2009). In applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs, managers should realize that organizational downsizing affects job security; therefore, the need for security becomes a motivator (Fisher, 2009). Maslow advocated that basic human needs should be met prior to

meeting or achieving satisfaction on the proceeding need (Udechukwu, 2009). Adams and Jean-Marie (2011) supported Maslow's theory that the lower order of needs has to be satisfied before the greater level of needs could be satisfied. Contrary to this view, Aydin (2012) argued that, though basic needs are essential, other needs could unfold; individual priorities may not necessarily follow the set order of needs discussed by Maslow (1943).

Job satisfaction. Udechukwu (2009) used Maslow's hierarchy of needs to help understand why there was such a high rate of correctional officer turnover and how it affected employees' productivity. The concept of job satisfaction can be measured by meeting these needs (Udechukwu, 2009). In the case of the correctional officers, job satisfaction was hard to achieve. In addition, because of the nature of their work, safety was also hard to attain. This becomes a barrier to achieving the proceeding needs, which are self-esteem and self-actualization. Because of these unfulfilled needs, correctional officers were leaving their jobs (Udechukwu, 2009). However, Udechukwu (2009) concluded that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is not sufficient to measure job satisfaction because it only discussed the needs that drive human behavior, but failed to address each need in a comprehensive manner. Udechukwu argued that the Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory clearly describes types of needs that must be met to attain job satisfaction. Accordingly, a hierarchy of needs would always be subjective because depending on an individual (and individual's priority), needs could be interrelated, overlapping, and conflicting because they could arise in multiple levels (Gomes, 2011).

Value and motivation. In downsizing organizations, job security needs are extremely important (Selmer & Littrell, 2010). Job security affects an individual's work

values (Selmer & Littrell, 2010). In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, job security relates to

the need of belongingness and self-esteem (Selmer & Littrell, 2010). "Motivation drives

behavior; values motivate" (Selmer & Littrell, 2010, p. 34). During downsizing and

economic decline, the lower levels of need increases (i.e., physiological, safety,

belongingness, and esteem) and the extrinsic motivators become less important as

compare to intrinsic motivators; job security is more important than receiving material

rewards and it is essential to achieving job satisfaction (Selmer & Littrell, 2010).

Emotional dissonance. Emotional dissonance is the conflict between the

emotions an employee feels and the displayed emotions; it affects job satisfaction, and

the emotional state of individuals (Pugh, Groth, & Hennig-Thurau, 2011). Employees'

job dissatisfaction and emotional exhaustion could result from prominent job demands,

and not meeting employees' needs (Pugh et al., 2011). This concept concurs with the

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which proposed that human potential is achieved

when individual needs (i.e., self-actualization, esteem, love or belongingness, safety, and

physiological) are met (Adams & Jean-Marie, 2011).

Stress and motivation. Stress affects motivation (Nawab, Ahman, & Shafi,

2011). Work-family conflict results in stress, which negatively affects most individuals

(Nawab et al., 2011). Interpersonal relationships promote motivation; it is the most

important factor that affects motivation (Nawab et al., 2011). Therefore, managing stress

related with work-family (and vice versa), finding balance between work-family, and

having positive relationships with coworkers and employers may increase motivation and

job satisfaction (Nawab et al., 2011). Similarly, after exploring Maslow's hierarchy of

needs, Halkos and Bousinakis (2010) concluded in their study that stress affects employees' motivation, which in turn, affects employees' productivity and satisfaction. Positive employee relationships with management, coworkers, families, and friends relieve or lessen employee's stress level and help increase motivation (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2010).

Importance of staying motivated. Stringer, Didham, and Theivananthampillai (2011) defined motivation as motive in action; they affirmed that extrinsic (e.g., monetary reward) and intrinsic (e.g., self-development) motivations drive and compel individuals to act. The most powerful motivator is the belief in oneself because only then can one act purposefully (A. Gilley, McMillan, & J. W. Gilley, 2009). The internal drive helps people view their environment in a positive way, which helps in staying motivated; the drive from the inside manifests external motivation (Stringer et al., 2011).

Leadership is responsible for the failure and success of organizations (Gilley et al., 2009). Doing more with fewer resources could frustrate leaders; it could make them feel that they are losing control (Gilley et al.). However, because of the troublesome economy and the changing business environment, leaders of the new era should not only be concerned about downsizing, but should also recognize the importance of maintaining motivation of both workers and leaders (Heffes, 2011). Both workers and leaders need to remain motivated to achieve success and organizations mission; therefore, self-motivation assessment is important to help evaluate individuals' level of motivation (Heffes, 2011). Government leaders observed that intrinsic motivators are stronger than extrinsic motivators (Nawab et al., 2011).

Organizational Change

Van de Ven and Sun (2011) described organizational change as the changed in the form, quality, or state of an organization that occurred overtime. The authors discussed four processes of organizational change, namely (a) teleology – planned change, (b) life cycle – regulated change, (c) dialectic – conflictive change, and (d) evolution – competitive change. Teleology or planned change means the development of changes of goals or objectives that occur within an organization, which fails at times when individuals do not recognize the need for change. Life cycle or regulated change is adapting to changes from the external environment. Dialectic or conflictive change means that change is achieved when conflict is resolved. Evolution or competitive change is the random changes that occur within the organization or from the external environment (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011).

In a changing business environment, organizational change is a fundamental challenge for managers (Soparnot, 2011). To implement organizational change, it is important for managers and leaders to be effective; they have to employ *action* and *reflection* strategies. Action strategy is when the focused is on people and process. Reflection strategy is the molding of people to be able to adapt to changes in the organization (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011). Pardo-del-Val, Martínez-Fuentes, and Roig-Dobón (2012) measured the influence of participative management to organizational change. The authors found that participative management is an essential tool that organization managers could use to implement changes because by engaging with employees, it helps reduce the resistance to change.

Appelbaum, Keller, and Alvarez (2012) conducted a comprehensive review of organizational crisis and organizational change management to give guidance in managing organizational crisis. The authors found that managers should have a set plan or early crisis detection methods to help them manage and survive a crisis event. This would help an organization to be better prepared when changes need to be implemented.

As with other organizations, the military needs to alter their performances to be able to accommodate or adapt to organizational changes. The implementation of flexible working environment and decentralized communication allows organizations to earn the outcome they desire from the needed organizational restructuring (Barbaroux, 2011). Leaders and managers should have planned strategies to achieve organizational changes and goals and objectives desired from downsizing of employees (Mellahia & Wilkinson, 2010). Speedy implementation of downsizing is harmful to the organization's innovativeness given that they could lose essential employees. Organization should take the time to plan and consider all the factors affected by downsizing (Mellahia & Wilkinson, 2010).

Military Keynesianism

The DOD has over a million military personnel and over a million civilian employees to include reserves and National Guard (Cohen, 2009). The Navy leaders have to manage 350,000 personnel, which is not an easy task (Bolin, 2008). To accomplish the naval missions effectively, each naval unit has to have the right number of sailors with the appropriate skills; therefore, effective planning and personnel accounting is essential (Bolin, 2008). The DOD's budget was $419.3 billion in fiscal

year 2006 (Borch & Wallace, 2010); of this budget, $130 billion is allocated to the Navy in order to manage ships, aircrafts, munitions, personnel, logistics, and support functions (Bolin, 2008). The defense industry benefits the economy and communities because it helps create jobs through defense procurement and military bases; it creates demands for goods and services (Borch & Wallace, 2010). This concept is military Keynesianism, which suggested that military spending improves economic well-being (Borch & Wallace, 2010).

The Department of the Navy's Culture

Work culture is the values and beliefs of employees that influence job satisfaction and effect organizational goals (A. P. Singh & S. Singh, 2009). Culture is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon a person's capacity to learn and pass on the knowledge to succeeding generations (Bourne, 2011). Having the knowledge and understanding of the Navy's core values, which are *honor, courage, and commitment* is important because everyone in the Navy values and lives by this ethos each day (U.S. Navy, 2011). The Navy's core value charter describes honor as an act of encouraging new ideas. Courage includes overcoming all challenges while adhering to the highest standards of personal conduct and decency, making decisions in the best interest of the Navy. Commitment includes caring for the professional, personal, and spiritual well-being of the people, which help achieve positive change and constant improvement (U.S. Navy, 2010).

Military planners and decision makers believe "less is more" (Rutner et al., 2012). However, this resulted in longer periods of isolation because of the longer time spent at

sea, increased work overload, negative work environment, which all contribute to the high level of stress and low job satisfaction among personnel (McDougall & Drummond, 2010). Therefore, the military leaders need to examine the changes in the organizational culture and values due to downsizing.

Communication and distribution of information could be accomplished through distributed leadership (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2011). Distributed leadership is a leadership practice that engages and encourages the collaboration of everyone (both leaders and subordinates) in the organization; this concept perceived that leadership success relies in teamwork and cooperation of networks (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2011). Distributed leadership theory empowers the integration of the organizational networks; this theory, in turn, allows them to adapt to changes, challenges, and demands of the organization's environment (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2011). Conversely, it is important to note that distributed leadership would require a shift in navy culture from the top-down leadership approach because military leaders' maintain precision and teamwork through command-and-control leadership (Udechukwu, 2009).

The Navy is strenuous as compared to other occupational groups or other military branches because naval personnel experiences stressors such as working and living in the ships; these conditions add on to the stress and anxiety faced by personnel due to family separations (Bridger, Brasher, Dew, & Kilminster, 2010). These stressors are in addition to the increased work demands that resulted from personnel downsizing (Bridger et al., 2010). The naval leaders have to exert effort to improve the work environment because

strain (psychological and physical) could result in the development of physical and mental illness as established or supported by previous studies (Bridger et al., 2010).

Interrelationship of Downsizing Concepts

In the literature pertaining to downsizing, researchers suggested that management need to be mindful of the effects of downsizing because during the downsizing process, they could lose employees' trust and their credibility, decrease employee productivity, decrease loyalty and morale, and risk not achieving the desired outcome from downsizing (Kumar & Pranjal, 2009). In addition, stresses caused by downsizing strongly affect employee performance (A. P. Singh & S. Singh, 2009); therefore, organizations need to manage stress to reduce its negative effects on the organization (Singh, 2009). The stresses that surviving employees experience during downsizing could lead to a decrease in morale, motivation, and performance; consequently, it needs to be addressed. Stress and organizational culture are more frequent and important predictors of job satisfaction (Gandolfi, 2009).

A. P. Singh and S. Singh (2009) opined that job satisfaction positively affected various organizational variables, such as behavior, commitment, performance, and others. Job satisfaction has a diverse effect on organizational effectiveness and individual well-being. At both the personal and organizational levels, job satisfaction also affects work-family conflict in a positive way (Culbertson et al., 2010), injustice perception (Guo & Giacobbe-Miller, 2012), social support (A. P. Singh & S. Singh, 2009), immediate changes in personal or vocational life (Tsai & Yen, 2008), stress (Pugh et al., 2011), and work culture (A. P. Singh & S. Singh, 2009).

Transition and Summary

Section 1 included the research topic of U.S. Navy downsizing. Participants shared how detrimental the negative effects of downsizing to employees. The problem statement along with the implication for social change entrenched a well-grounded discussion as to the need and reasons for this study. This section also includes the conceptual framework for this study, which was Maslow's theory of motivation.

Section 2 includes a discussion on the role of the researcher and the research approach used in this study. Detailed descriptions of the research methodology, research design, and tools used in data collection are presented. Justification of methods and strategies in gathering, storing, and analyzing data from participants are discussed. Section 2 also includes justification of the reliability and validity of the study. The findings of this study are presented in Section 3.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes a restatement of the purpose of the study, discussion of the modified van Kaam technique by Moustakas (1994) used to analyze themes, and discussion of the generation of themes from existing literature and data gathered from the interviews of participants. It also includes analysis of the data collection tools and techniques along with the appropriateness of the qualitative research method and phenomenological research design in addressing the research question. The research question for this study was: What are the consequences of the Navy downsizing to the active duty enlisted personnel and the organization?

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was three-fold: (a) to examine how downsizing affects employees' job satisfaction, stress, morale, and motivation; (b) to explore its effect on remaining personnel's productivity; (c) to explore naval leaders effectiveness and efficiency in implementing personnel downsizing strategy. Qualitative data were obtained by purposive interviews of the Navy enlisted active duty personnel and civilian leaders assigned to naval bases in San Diego and El Centro, California. This study might contribute to social change by attributing the negative effects of downsizing to a larger organizational problem, such as the decline in employee productivity due to lowered job satisfaction, motivation, and morale and increased stress due to work overload, which could cause health issues to remaining employees.

Role of the Researcher

According to Moustakas (1994), in a phenomenology, the researcher and the participants become co-researchers in the development of knowledge of a phenomenon. However, Morrow (2005) asserted that researchers tend to be biased in their research; therefore, researchers should exert their best effort to minimize bias by remaining neutral. This study involved in-depth inquiry of participants' views to explore the downsizing phenomenon. To accomplish such goal and to achieve the goal of fairness, the researcher needs to maintain objectivity and reflexivity (Morrow, 2005). Keeping a self-reflective journal (i.e., record of reactions, assumptions, etc.) throughout the research process as suggested by Morrow (2005) and applying the epoche process discussed by Moustakas, (1994) helped set-aside prejudgments and biases and established rapport with participants. Though there was no perceived harm or risk in participating in the study, I had to exercise necessary actions to meet ethical obligations to participants (Damianakis & Woodford, 2012).

I was on active duty as an enlisted member of the U.S. Navy for more than 7 years (April 1998–June 2005). In April 2008, I became a federal civilian employee for the Department of the Navy (DON), and since then, I have been serving as a human resource assistant (HRA), the equivalent to a personnel specialist (PS) Navy rating. I worked for the Navy in San Diego, CA, and now work at the Naval Air Facility in El Centro, CA. I know most of the participants; therefore, they might have felt more comfortable sharing their views.

Participants

The participants contained a purposeful sample of both military and civilian Navy leaders, command career counselors, and enlisted active duty Navy personnel. Purposive sampling represents participants who are affiliated with a certain organization and are knowledgeable of the problem or the phenomenon being studied (Kindstrom, Kowalkowski, & Nordin, 2012). In a qualitative study, sample size is not as important as the sampling procedures, depth of interview data, depth of inquiry, and validity of gathered information (Morrow, 2005).

Gaining access to participants was not a challenge given that I am a DON employee and have direct contact with most of them on a regular basis. Consequently, I have established a working relationship with most of the participants. Compliance with the ethical standards set by Walden University and U.S. civil and federal regulations helped ensure that the ethical protection of participants was adequate. The recruitment process of participants through personal, electronic mail, or phone conversation started after obtaining approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants who agreed to participate signed the consent form included as Appendix A prior to each interview.

To remain unbiased, objective, and to ensure the reliability, validity, and accuracy of the research findings, I implemented the following strategies:

1. Triangulation technique.

2. Create a checklist of procedures to be followed during the research.

3. Evaluate the validity of the instrument.

4.   Examine the result of data gathered carefully.

5.   Participants review the accuracy of the data.

6.   Remain neutral.

7.   Comply with the established Ethics Code.

The data from the interviews will remain in a locked drawer for 5 years to protect the rights and the privacy of the participants. Only I have access to the data. The assigned committee chair(s) was informed as soon as the data were secured. I obtained participants' permissions prior to sharing or publishing information gathered from the interview. In addition, I offered participants a chance to obtain a copy of the summary of the research findings.

Research Method and Design

The purpose and goals of this study were accomplished by applying a qualitative phenomenological research strategy for inquiry, documenting the perspectives of all participants, and by collecting data that helped explore the perspectives of participants regarding Navy downsizing. The qualitative research method helped in the analysis of participants' views because it involves uncovering the emotional and symbolic dimensions of the participants (Rowley, 2012). In the quantitative research method, the researcher tests a theory by refuting or accepting hypotheses (Malina et al., 2011). The quantitative research method did not fit this study because it did not involve testing a hypothesis. Accordingly, the mixed research method did not fit this study because mixed methods enable researchers to obtain understanding and explore the benefit of both the quantitative and qualitative research methods (Malina et al., 2011).

Method

The qualitative research method was appropriate and best fit this study because the qualitative research method explained the data gathered through refinement and testing of the meaning and understanding of a concept, which helped achieve the research objectives in this study (Malina et al., 2011). A qualitative phenomenology was appropriate because it provided a better understanding of the meaning of the phenomenon (i.e., downsizing) from the views of participants (Moustakas, 1994).

The modified van Kaam technique by Moustakas (1994), a seven-step phenomenology research process, allowed me to gather data and views of participants and explore the answers to the research question. The modified van Kaam technique helped me to analyze the data obtained from the participants through the open-ended interview questions. In this study, the primary objective was to explore the downsizing phenomenon through the views and lived experiences of participants. Therefore, it was important to minimize prejudgments and eliminate biases. The epoche process, a technique that establishes rapport between the researcher and the participants at the opening of the interview, helped the researcher be receptive, and in turn, set aside prejudgments and ensure that the research was unbiased (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Design

The phenomenological qualitative research strategy helps the researcher understand participants' lived experiences (Malina et al., 2011). Aspects of participants' lived experiences categorize participants' experiences or views; therefore, this qualitative approach helps the researcher make sense of a phenomenon (Kindstrom et al., 2012).

Many researchers in the public sector organizations used phenomenological research design (Brown, 2012). Researchers also used this design in social sciences, particularly in sociology (Creswell et al., 2007). For example, Kupers (2012) used phenomenology in studying the complexity of leadership. Perrin-Wallqvist and Carlsson (2011) used phenomenology in exploring the perspective of educators and students pertaining to self-image and physical education. Phenomenology uncovers the truth and achieves essential understanding of a phenomenon (Englander, 2012).

Qualitative research design denotes a shift in the phenomenological paradigm; this is because qualitative research is interpretive (Reiter et al., 2011). Individuals make sense of their world in different ways (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Philosophical worldviews (paradigms) guide and influence research by interconnecting research designs, methods, and data collection techniques (Creswell, et al., 2007). Worldviews help elucidate one's viewpoint through the description of lived experiences (Stierand & Dörfler, 2012). Furthermore, worldviews influence how researchers conduct their research (Creswell et al., 2007; Qu & Dumay, 2011). Devoting attention to a paradigm is important when evaluating the appropriateness of using a qualitative research approach (Reiter et al., 2011). A qualitative researcher's challenge is to discover the meaning of a phenomenon through the participants' worldviews (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

Main classes of paradigms or worldviews include: (a) positivistic (positivism or postpositivism) as deterministic, reductionistic, and numeric; (b) constructivism as understanding a phenomenon through participants' views; (c) advocacy and participatory as political and collaborative; and (d) criticalism as reification of a concept (Brennan,

Voros, & Brady, 2011). The constructivism worldview helps create and develop

knowledge and meanings from the participants' views and lived experiences.

Constructivism could help researchers gain a deeper meaning or understanding of the

downsizing phenomenon because it emphasizes the process of how individuals formulate

knowledge from their experiences and environments; constructivists build meaning from

reality by vigorously formulating knowledge (Altman, 2009). In addition, considering

the contextual and emergent nature of a qualitative research, the research goal was to be

descriptive in designing the intended instrument for this study as well as in the analysis of

the data, as suggested by Stierand and Dörfler (2012).

Population and Sampling

The Navy is a large, complex organization and uses a top-down bureaucracy

system, a command and control management model (U.S. Navy, 2011). The Navy

operates under the supervision of the Secretary of the Navy (Code of Federal

Regulations, 2010; U.S. Navy, 2011). The civilian executive assistants are responsible

for the Navy's administrative functions. The Chief of Naval Operation's (CNO)

responsibility includes execution of plans and serves as an advisor to the Secretary of the

Navy. The Commandant of the Marine Corps informs the Secretary of the Navy about

matters executed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The Secretary of the Navy

designates staff assistants to take care of organizational matters, such as assigning

responsibilities to their respective commands (Code of Federal Regulations, 2010).

Commanding officers are responsible for their assigned commands; they take actions and

set restrictions in compliance with the Navy regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, 2010).

A purposive sampling technique best fit the study because the knowledge and lived experiences of participants would help in gathering in-depth information (Kindstrom et al., 2012). A sample size between 5 and 25 is sufficient in a qualitative phenomenological study (Creswell, 2009). Because literature supported Creswell's statement and to meet the Walden University requirement, 20 naval personnel were interviewed for this study. Qualitative research is idiographic and emic in nature; it only requires few individuals to find meanings in a certain phenomenon (Morrow, 2005). On the other hand, quantitative research is nomothetic and etic in nature; it requires large samples of the population for a researcher to be able to measure or define a variable quantitatively (Morrow, 2005). I selected the participants based on their affiliation with the Navy and their involvement in the implementation of the Navy leaders' downsizing efforts.

To understand the Navy's advancement system and gain insight on how downsizing affects active duty enlisted Navy personnel's careers, I explored the Navy's career reenlistment objectives (CREO); the focus was on the CREO 3 category. CREO is divided into three categories: CREO 1 = undermanned, CREO 2 = manned at desired level and CREO 3 = overmanned. Navy enlisted ratings that are 103% or more are classified as overmanned. For example, the Navy enlisted rating PS is overmanned because they are at 110% staffing as of July 2011 (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

The Navy leaders are responsible in carrying out and ensuring success in achieving the naval mission (Navy Personnel Command, 2012). The command career counselors provide guidance to the enlisted active duty personnel on choices or options available to them that could help them in their Navy careers (Navy Personnel Command, 2012). CREO 3 is the group affected the most by the Navy's downsizing and restructuring (Navy Personnel Command, 2012).

Ethical Research

I executed data collection and interviews in full compliance with the existing regulations and ethical standards set by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Walden University. The IRB approval number for this study is 04-20-12-0033861. To minimize the perceived coercion in participation in the study, I informed participants of the purpose of the study and assured them that there was no risk in participating in the study. In addition, I explained the importance of answering the interview questions to the best of their ability. Prior to the interview, participants were aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time for any reason.

During the interview, I was mindful to apply interview protocol. I treated participants with respect and protected their privacy; their identity would not be disclosed and that the outcomes of the interviews would be presented to the interviewees to confirm their accuracy prior to release or publication. Individual interviews were cataloged and coded; the first participant was cataloged as a research participant (RP) 1 and so forth. Upon completion of each interview, participants received a $5.00 gift certificate from either Starbucks or Cold Stone Creamery as a token of appreciation for their time and for

sharing their views. To eliminate the possibility of data corruption and protect the rights of participants, data collected from interviews were maintained and stored properly in a safe for a minimum of 5 years. A consent form documented participants' permissions to conduct and tape-record the interviews. I obtained participants signed consent form prior to beginning the interviews; the consent form is in Appendix A of this study.

Data Collection

There are challenges that the researcher needs to overcome to mitigate issues pertaining to data collection. For example, in data collection process, the researcher should protect the interest of participants, which means any possible ethical dilemmas need to be mitigated before the actual collection of data (Wainwright & Sambrook, 2010). Therefore, the researcher needs to develop expertise on the data collection process depending on the research design chosen for the study (Dumay, 2010).

Instruments

In-depth and multiple interviews were conducted to collect detailed self-reported data based on participants' experiences, attitudes, opinions, and views toward the downsizing of naval personnel. The in-depth and multiple interviews were formatted with open-ended questions, which allowed participants to describe how downsizing affects their working conditions and life in general; these were main sources of information that were used in the development of knowledge. The in-depth and multiple interviews helped in measuring the context of the self-report data and in comparing and contrasting the participants' responses. The in-depth individual interview allows the

development of themes, which in turn, respond to the research questions (Reiter et al., 2011).

A semi structured, face-to-face interview was the method used in this study because it allowed for flexibility and control while conducting in-depth interviews with the participants (Rowley, 2012). Establishing rapport with the participants is important (Moustakas, 1994); therefore, it was the primary objective throughout the interview process. In addition to developing rapport, setting prejudgments aside and remaining unbiased are just as important; the epoche process discussed by Moustakas (1994) helped in achieving this. The epoche process helps a researcher to be receptive; in turn, it would assist in the development of knowledge beyond doubt (Moustakas, 1994).

In responding to the interview questions, I expected participants to perform the following tasks: (a) understand the meaning of the question, (b) reflect and recall relevant experiences, (c) describe pragmatic inferences, (d) formulate respond, and (e) elaborate or clarify the answer if needed. Participants' identities remained anonymous. I transcribed the interview notes and recordings and saved in an encrypted file for five years on an external hard drive. Raw data would be stored as an encrypted file in the cloud. It would be available to interested individuals or parties by written request. Cloud storage allows data to be available via the Internet, which permits versatility and enables the researcher to have higher storage space when compared with other data backup devices. Storing data in the cloud secure and keeps data protected from unforeseen events or possible disaster (Ojala & Tyrväinen, 2011). Authentication and authorization processes would be used to protect data stored in the cloud. Triangulation technique

would be used to ensure the credibility, validity, and reliability of the study; this technique help increase the quality of research (Morrow, 2005). A triangulation technique included:

1. an in-depth, open-ended, and semi structured face-to-face interviews to allow participants to elaborate their answers;

2. a review of literature and understanding of concepts discussed in literature pertaining to downsizing; and

3. used of peer reviews or debriefs.

Data Collection Technique

Because I am a Navy civilian employee, I recruited participants through personal interaction or phone conversation with command career counselors, peers, superiors, and professional contacts. Practice interview with a colleague prior to the administration of the actual interviews helped established the confidence needed during the interview. Consent form contained the purpose and scope of the study. It was used to obtain permission to tape record the interview. The consent form is included in Appendix A. The collection of raw data from participants required travel to San Diego County. It required a number of days to complete the interview process of participants located in the San Diego area; considering the distance and varying schedules of participants. The participants provided verbal responses. A smart pen, which is a digital pen and a single-subject paper notebook, allowed the recording of notes or data gathered from the interviews. An audio tape-recorder was used for a backup. I conducted phone interviews for participants who were not available to meet face-to-face. The participants were on a

phone speaker while I read the interview questions. I scheduled twenty interviews over lunchtime or after working hours so that the interview could be conducted off duty and away from the workplace. These phenomenological interviews lasted an average of 20 minutes. In addition to conducting interviews with participants, techniques used in the collection of raw data for this study included examination of existing literatures to exemplify how one study correlates with or disassociates from another. Furthermore, because this study pertains to the U.S. Navy, it was important to explore naval instructions, policies, regulations, and other official records pertaining to Navy downsizing (e.g., Navy administrative messages [NAVADMIN], Bureau of Personnel instructions [BUPERSINST], etc.). The Navy Personnel Command website is an official Navy public website that contains NAVADMIN messages, correspondents, and other naval policy instructions. The code of the United States federal regulations contains naval regulations and official records.

Data Organization Techniques

I transcribed the answers to the interview questions word-for-word and coded them as Q1 through Q10. The summary of the research findings from the interview questions is in Appendix C of this study. I then transcribed the written responses from the single-subject paper notebook in an Excel spreadsheet; I used this Excel spreadsheet as a research log to keep track of raw data and literatures. The Excel spreadsheet research log, the single-subject paper notebook, the smart pen, and the tape recorder would be placed in a safe for 5 years in the researcher's residence. I would dispose the

paper notes using a shredder capable of shredding personal identifiable information (PII) and erase the data from the electronic devices.

Data Analysis Technique

The following were the proposed interview questions:

1. How do you feel about the Navy's downsizing of personnel?

2. How do you perceive Navy's downsizing affects the organization's mission?

3. How do you feel about the Navy's get-tough approach to reduce ratings?

4. How do you describe your perception and understanding of the current approaches used for downsizing units?

5. What do you perceive to be an appropriate strategy in maintaining morale during downsizing?

6. How do you perceive Navy leaderships' effectiveness in maintaining job satisfaction during downsizing?

7. What do you perceive to be an effective strategy that may increase motivation?

8. What strategies may be implemented to manage workload during downsizing to help minimize stress?

9. What positive outcomes do you perceive from the Navy's downsizing?

10. What negative outcomes do you perceive from the Navy downsizing?

I presented gathered data consistently with the research question underlying the conceptual framework of the study. I used the Moustakas (1994) modified van Kaam data analysis and a manual data coding process in analyzing the content of the data

gathered from the interviews. The van Kaam data analysis approach is a qualitative

phenomenological research design that allows the researcher to examine a phenomenon

in-depth through the lived experiences of participants (Moustakas, 1994). The van Kaam

data content analysis helps identify and construct coding schemes, which help analyze the

gathered data (Moustakas, 1994). This approach also help in analyzing the content of

written documents, records, and journals, in order to develop themes that can be

transformed and tested for reliability and validity of data gathered, and in turn, would

rationally address the research question (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) outlined

the following seven steps of the modified van Kaam data analysis approach:

1. Listing and preliminary grouping; horizonalization of interviewees'

    expressions.

2. Reducing and eliminating: Two requirements in testing interviewees'

    expressions are (a) does it contain a moment of experience that is necessary

    and sufficient constituents for understanding it and (b) is it possible to abstract

    and label it?

3. Developing and categorizing themes of the interviewees' live experiences.

4. Checking and identifying the correlation of components and themes for data

    validation.

5. Constructing the significance of the experiences described by the

    interviewees.

6. Establishing and differentiating the significance of themes constructed from

    interviewees' experiences.

7. Incorporating and constructing meaning from the interviewees' experiences.

Themes are categorization of concepts that conform to a phenomenon (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In the qualitative study, data analysis would not take place without first identifying themes. Identifying themes is a task that a researcher needs to accomplish to discover significant findings in the study (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In this study, I used manual coding to generate themes; I categorized these themes and used as headings in the findings section. The manual process of data coding involves identifying, coding, and categorizing of common themes (Moustakas, 1994).

Themes are significant findings in qualitative research (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Techniques used in identifying themes could range from easy to intricate. It is best to apply several of the scrutiny-based techniques to identify various themes (Ryan & Bernard 2003). Ryan and Bernard (2003) discussed the following eight scrutiny-based techniques in finding themes:

1. Repetitions - are the occurrence and re-occurrence of ideas.

2. Indigenous typologies or categories – familiarity or unfamiliarity of terms.

3. Metaphors and analogies – people (or interviewees) sometimes relate their personal experiences using metaphors and analogies. Researchers should determine underlying themes from these metaphors and analogies.

4. Transitions – shifts in content, shifts in topics, and shifts in voice tone (and many others) may attribute to additional themes.

5. Similarities and differences – comparisons of the components of data.

6. Linguistic connectors – identifying causal relationship of words. Phrases associated with taxonomic categories, time oriented relationships, and prefixes plus its allomorph are adept techniques in identifying themes.

7. Missing data - Asking or trying to discover what data is missing is appropriate and important to the qualitative study; however, it is not appropriate to use in short responses to open-ended questions.

8. Theory-related material – theorizing of data by finding social and cultural agreements and disagreements.

Maslow's (1943) motivation theory is the conceptual framework used in this study; therefore, I analyzed data from the interviews on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The classic Maslow's hierarchy of needs was illustrated as a pyramid as follows: level 1 – physiological needs, level 2 – safety needs, level 3- belongingness and love needs, level 4 – self-esteem needs, level 5 – self-actualization. An updated hierarchy of fundamental human motives includes level 6 – self-transcendence needs (Aydin, 2012).

Reliability and Validity

For a phenomenological study, data collection from interviews is an approach used by researchers (Englader, 2012). However, the reliability of interview questions is somewhat difficult to achieve because human beings are not static (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011). A thorough design of the research, especially the interview questions, a sound documentation of actions and observations, and the use of peer review could help mitigate the threats to the reliability of the study (Riege, 2003). In addition, the Epoche process makes certain that a researcher avoid bias by setting aside existing

preconceptions, beliefs, and prior knowledge of the phenomenon, which helps in achieving reliability and validity (Moustakas, 1994).

Reliability

Reliability of the study is achieved when a measuring instrument's results are consistent (Ihantola & Kihn, 2011). Therefore, similar findings from the instruments need to be achieved. The technique and procedure in conducting interviews with Navy military and civilian leaders, command career counselors, and active enlisted military personnel were consistent to ensure reliability of the findings. For research to be reliable and trustworthy, essential criteria need to be met, such as adequacy of data gathered and adequacy of data interpretation (Morrow, 2005). In applying the triangulation technique, reliability was achieved by in-depth, open-ended, semi structured interview of participants.

Validity

Validity correlates with credibility (Riege, 2003). In qualitative research, credibility conforms to internal validity (Morrow, 2005). There are techniques that a researcher could utilize to ensure the credibility of a study, such as using peer reviewers to make sure that the study is free from bias (Morrow, 2005). External validity was enhanced by using replication logic in the research design phase and comparison of evidence in the data analysis phase (Riege, 2003). External validity is common in quantitative research because it involves transferability of data (Morrow, 2005). To ensure and establish validity, I conducted a detailed assessment of the content and outcome of the study. Justification of the validity of this study depended on the

verification of the methodologies or strategies used. In applying the triangulation technique, validity was achieved by using peer reviewers and review of multiple literatures and data sources.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 begun with a reinstatement of the purpose, goals, and reasons why this study is relevant. It contains an outline of the research method and design chosen in this study by showing the characteristic of phenomenology qualitative research, comparing and contrasting it with quantitative and mixed method research approaches, and ensuring its appropriateness and alignment with the research question. It also includes discussion of how the modified van Kaam method by Moustakas (1994) is suitable in analyzing and transcribing the data gathered from the participants.

Section 2 includes detailed description of the role of the researcher in the collection of data and the researcher's responsibility to the participants along with the techniques that ensured the reliability and validity of instruments that helped ensure that this study is credible. Subsequently, Section 3 would include the application of this study to professional practice and implications for change; it would include the findings and conclusions of the study. In addition, based on the outcomes of this study, this section also includes recommendations for further study and recommendations for actions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Sections 1 and 2 indicated the basis for this doctoral study, considering its

practical application to business practice. In Section 1, the research topic was introduced,

which was the rationale behind navy downsizing and its affect on active enlisted

personnel. The intent was to explore the downsizing phenomenon. The need or reason

for this study was established in the problem statement. The conceptual framework was

also discussed in Section 1. Section 2 contains the role of the researcher and a detail

presentation of the research approach. Detailed descriptions and justifications of the

research method, research design, and tools used in data collection are presented.

Section 3 contains a detailed analysis of findings based on the personnel

interviews. Based on the data gathered, findings are organized in a manner that helps

bring clarity to the proposed research question. Section 3 also includes the

recommendations for further study, recommendations for action, application to

professional practice, and implications for social change. The conclusions were

constructed following the synthesis of the textural and structural views of interviewed

participants.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to

investigate how naval personnel perceived downsizing. The goal was to explore how

downsizing events affected unit operations and the remaining personnel's job satisfaction

and stress, morale, and motivation levels. The central research question was: What were

the consequences of Navy downsizing to active duty enlisted personnel and the

organization? Interviewed participants reported that they felt the impact of the reduced naval workforce with longer deployments, longer working hours, and an increased workload.

The target populations were military and civilian personnel who work for the Department of the Navy and have held a supervisory or leadership position for at least 2 years. The data were collected using an in-depth face-to-face, semi structured interview strategy. After conducting data analysis of the recorded interviews, the perceptions and experiences of participants were synthesized to examine the direct influence of personnel downsizing to remaining personnel and naval missions. The findings are presented by themes to help address the research question.

In this study, the Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivation theory is the conceptual framework used to understand the perceptions of participants concerning the reduction in the number of naval personnel. Conducting reviews of existing literature on both military and civilian personnel reduction helped explore and analyze existing studies published by scholars in the field. Data gathered indicated that personnel understood the rationale for the naval workforce reduction. However, participants asserted they did not understand the rationale behind the implementation of downsizing process or the strategies used in reducing reduce personnel. Participants affirmed that downsizing negatively affected their morale, motivation, job satisfaction, and quality of life.

Presentation of the Findings

The goal of this study was to determine the consequences of Navy downsizing to active duty enlisted personnel and the other members of the organization. The data

showed that, during the implementation process, remaining naval personnel experienced work overload. Subsequently, it resulted in work-life imbalance, increased stress, decreased morale, motivation, and job satisfaction, which not only negatively affected the personnel, but also their families. The findings indicated that these factors negatively affected personnel's job performance and productivity, which in turn weakened the naval force structure.

Evidence of Findings

Some interviewed participants expressed disagreement exemplified by the following statements: "I don't agree for many reasons, but since the Navy is going towards it, I must support their decision" (RP1). "…when you downsize, you eliminate…good people" (RP6). "I don't necessarily agree that we are on the right track now-a-days, I think we are downsizing to a level that would become dangerous to the fleet due to the fact that the manning is at an all time low" (RP9). "I read one statistic that the defense…is only 4 to 6% of the national budget, which means there's 94 to 96% for everything else. Why not look at budget cuts there, why look at one department; just because it's the biggest doesn't mean it necessarily has to shoulder the economic blunt for the others…" (RP15). "…I feel downsizing too much would hurt the Navy..." (RP18).

Some participants expressed agreement exemplified by the following statements: "[downsizing] is a good idea if there is a shift toward utilizing advance technology that we currently have" (RP13). "It's needed; the Navy feels that we have too many

people…" (RP8). "Probably affective measure to reduce the budget of the department of defense and to realign all the armed forces for a more affective fighting forces" (RP10).

Some participants expressed neutrality exemplified by the following statements: "downsizing is something that is inevitable" (RP2). "…it is not unusual after any major conflict or war…important part is trying to keep the right people in the right job. Also with automation, newer ships require fewer personnel to run them" (RP20). "I agree that it's probably a good idea to help rank, promotion, and such. Do I think that they implemented the restructuring plan correctly? No. But I do think it is a necessity to do that…" (RP9).

Other participants expressed mixed feelings exemplified by the following statements: "I understand the reasoning behind it…it is a necessary evil to a degree" (RP12). "Mixed feeling about it. I can understand given the current economy that budget is an issue…" (RP14). "…I understand the *why* [emphasis added] part of it, but I'm not so sure I understand *how* [emphasis added] the Navy is doing it. A lot of their policies do not make sense." (RP15).

Structural Descriptions of Personnel Reduction Experience

In this study, interviewed participants expressed a wide variety of concerns ranging from fear of the unknown to depression and possible thoughts of suicide. Because of fear of the unknown, participants asserted that personnel are "…less focus on the mission, and they start to worry more about family – would they have a job down the road?" (RP20). P3 asserted "…overall, I think it [downsizing] effects it in a detrimental fashion…the mission stayed the same, but you are reducing the available resources –

manpower, which means…less people accomplishing the same amount of work". "There might be a correlation between the amounts of suicides we are beginning to see across the different branch of services" (RP15). In support to RP15 statement, Karren (2012) stated that downsizing has been associated with increased cases of suicides.

All interviewed participants believed that naval leaders view personnel as numbers and not as people. Supporting comments include "sometimes, it becomes too much of a numbers game" (RP12). "…they are simply looking at numbers and not jobs, and so you could have a potential where you could wipe out an organization just because of the randomness of the cuts" (RP15). "I think the way they are doing it is wrong because it is based on mathematical algorithm…it does not get the view of all around sailors" (RP16).

Synthesis of personnel downsizing

All interviewed personnel articulated lowered morale, lack of motivation, and lowered job satisfaction, which affected sailors' work performance. Gathered data indicated that poor performance might damage the military's mission readiness in the end. Participants affirmed that to maintain morale, motivation, and job satisfaction, the naval leaders must stop the reduction of personnel. RP9 stated, "Until they [naval top leadership] stop downsizing on large levels, they are not going to keep motivation up." The interviewed participants articulated that the use of technology to replace or alleviate personnel negatively affected sailors. They proposed that top naval leaders should consider that *machines* would not be able to replace skilled or knowledgeable personnel. RP13 explained, "Sometimes a lot of jobs can be done better if you have a human being

actually putting their hands on it, we have emotions and feelings that a machine and technology cannot replace…"

"Mattering" is giving importance to the value of employees (France & Finney, 2009). Components of mattering included awareness, reliance, importance, and ego-extension. Mattering improves the relationship between leaders and employees (France & Finney, 2009). However, with fewer personnel to accomplish missions, fatigues, lapse of judgment, longer working hours, and less time with family were among the concerns expressed by participants. "…the morale in the organization is going down, so you are not getting the full 100% that you would normally get from personnel because of fatigue and working long hours" (RP7).

Weiner's attribution theory of motivation and emotion, as presented by Kumar and Pranjal (2009), supported the finding of this study concerning the emotional effect of a decreased workforce for the remaining employees. Using Weiner's attribution theory, Kumar and Pranjal (2009) asserted that leaders and managers should lessen the negative effect of a reduced workforce to generate positive organizational citizenship behavior. They posited that valuing employees, by providing continued training and career development, could help maintain employees' loyalty, trust, and commitment; it could also lead to achieving organizational goals.

In achieving the desired outcomes from the reduction of personnel, it is important for leaders to maintain knowledge, such as retaining skilled employee, training, communication, and use of technology (Sitlington & Marshould, 2011). Top military leaders need to be knowledgeable of the strategy, culture, and values required in

achieving naval missions and goals. Interviewed participants questioned leaders' commitment to their personnel. Leaders should seek to mitigate the damages or risks associated with the right sizing effort and need to be mindful of its long-term affect.

Findings Related to Literature

Analyzing established top military leaders' strategic approaches to personnel downsizing required comprehensive review of professional and research literature and exploration of military official websites. The findings of this study are consistent with the larger body of literature pertaining to the reduction of employees. Scholars who studied downsizing found that the reduction of personnel negatively affected motivation, morale, job satisfaction, stress, and job performance.

Research on employee downsizing exists. However, there were few published studies linking the downsizing phenomenon to Maslow's motivation theory. In addition, there was no study found that specifically focused on naval personnel downsizing. There are many studies conducted pertaining to reduction of the workforce as compared with studies on the affect of downsizing to remaining employees and the organization (Kim, 2009). The following are detailed discussions of themes to support research findings and addressed the research question: What are the consequences of Navy downsizing to active duty enlisted personnel and the organization?

Theme 1: Influence of personal perceptions and experiences on personnel downsizing

The findings of the study showed that participants' perceptions were influenced by the complexity and significance of the naval missions, personal feelings based on the

perceived negative effect of downsizing, and negative feelings towards the military leaders' policies pertaining to the implementation of personnel downsizing. Participants perceived stricter naval requirements, regulations, and policies as unfair and unjustified. They negatively affected both separated and remaining employees.

Naval missions. Navy's missions include, but are not limited to, national security, humanitarian services, and international crises (U. S. Navy, 2010). Interviewed participants reiterated that the Navy is in the business of saving and protecting lives. Considering the naval missions, their perceptions on personnel downsizing included "…things we do in the world is [*sic*] affected because of less people…we are stretch over the globe…minimize sailors, which does not make sense" (RP9). "When it comes to forward presence around the world…size of our Navy depletes…needs are not shrinking, so I hope that we would still be ready to respond effectively to whatever issues come our way" (RP14). "…we'll be stretching too many people too thin…the nation would probably suffer one of these days for it" (RP11). "We had tragedies that happened in our nations like Katrina…but you don't have many people so you can't go to these tragic events and support it" (RP5).

Doing more with less. Based on the data collected, the participants perceived that because the naval missions remained the same, the remaining personnel needs to accomplish the job left by downsized personnel. "With a reduction in personnel, you (the navy leaders) are telling people to do more with less, and that puts all the pressure on the people who are doing the job" (RP9). "What the Navy is failing to realize is even though you could get this computer and all this stuff going, you still need someone that could get

down and dirty if that fails" (RP4). RP7 and RP8 commented that the Navy has a flawed

system and programs in place because experienced personnel are being let go while less

knowledgeable people are being kept. "It is all about money" (RP2).

In conclusion, for Theme 1, interviewed participants felt betrayed by top naval

leaders. They stated that naval leaders targeted and focused on cutting personnel costs

without properly looking diligently at the naval missions and without consideration of its

consequences to personnel. They felt that reduction of personnel in the military was not

implemented in an efficient and fair manner.

Theme 2: Self-actualization

The data revealed that the fear of losing one's job raised uncertainties that could

negatively affect personnel's performance. The fear of losing a job, money issues, and

the time away from families because of longer working hours could negatively affect

personnel's quality of life. In turn, this negatively affected the quality of personnel's

work. Data also showed that during periods of change and uncertainties, self-

actualization became a challenge because of limited resources to complete assigned

tasking. The kaleidoscope career is applicable to this study because Sullivan and Baruch

(2009) explained that it is associated with authenticity (being true to self), balance (work

and non-work), and challenge (autonomy). Having the competence, ability to enhance, or

being able to take charge of one's career influences individual adaptability (Sullivan &

Baruch, 2009).

Communication. Participants posited that sailors felt they were left blindsided as

to the future of their naval careers. They repeatedly mentioned communication, or the

lack of it, throughout the interview. Participants believed that communication gives

leaders of organization a competitive advantage over the competition and helps improve

employees' performance. The analysis of gathered data revealed that the majority of

frontline leaders and personnel were not satisfied with communication within the

organization. Supporting statements from interviewed participants included "…there

were a lot of miscommunications, people having an idea about this, an idea about that

and I don't know if anybody was right or clear of what was happening and why" (RP14).

"…I don't think the admirals and the officers in charge of the different manning are

communicating with our senior enlisted leadership…I don't think anybody knows or

understand the grand master plan…" (RP15). Interviewed participants proposed that

effective communication would help alleviate sailors' uncertainties. This proposition is

in accordance with the informational justice concept by Kim (2009). Informational

justice included advanced notice, thorough explanations, adequate, honest, and two-way

communication helped in the management of organizational communication.

For leaders to promote change, effective communication is essential (Carter,

2010). This statement is supported by participants; "keeping the sailors inform, letting

them know what options they have available to them, I mean the more information you

have, the better your decision making" (RP3). "…communications, not only the

downsizing process, why it's happening…but also, clarity…what does it take for me to

be a good sailor?" (RP14). "…you have all of these unmotivated sailors…not knowing

what's going to happen to them, of course it's going to affect the future of the

organization" (RP16). Carter (2010) suggested that individuals are able to adapt and

possess the ability to cope with uncertainty, stress, and changes; it is however, influenced by internal and external factors such as education, experiences, work demand, managerial support, and personal control. RP13 asserted "…communication needs to be really well, otherwise, you would have a negative relationship of employees and employers…you can totally cut off the communication channel if the Navy doesn't do it right." Communication allows for integration of knowledge, coupled with clear goals and aligned management practices results in productivity and effectiveness (Susskind, Odom-Reed, & Viccari, 2011).

Stress. Interviewed participants shared the importance of having a sense of control over personal and work-related matters. The lack of control on personal and work-related matters results in an increase of stress (Bartone et al., 2009), this statement is amplified by interviewed participants; RP9 stated, "Stress is being put on the sailor because they have to do more with less…" Stress negatively affects employees' motivation, productivity, and satisfaction (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2010). RP3 asserted, "…overworked sailors – overstress…lack of sleep – negatively impacts their health and it could also result in lower retention rate." This assertion is also in accordance with the literature review discussed in Section 1 concerning Maslow's hierarchy of needs that relates the fear of losing one's job relates to the need of belongingness, safety, and self-esteem (Maslow, 1943).

In conclusion, for Theme 2, the lack of job security consequently ensues employees' feeling of uncertainties. The lack of tools (i.e., equipment and people) to do the assigned jobs resulted in increased stress. Interviewed participants affirmed that

communication is the key to mitigating the negative feeling of uncertainties, minimizing stress, and successfully achieving the desired outcome from organizational restructuring.

Theme 3: Change of personal priorities

The data from the interviews showed that personal priorities changed during downsizing events because there is no more guarantee or job security. Some choose to refocus on school and obtain a degree, some refocus on improving their skills, and others refocus on opportunities available in the civilian market. Analysis of the data also indicated that personnel downsizing contradicts the view that employees are among the managers or leaders' top priorities.

Job security. Researchers affirmed that organizational downsizing affects job security; therefore, the need for job security becomes a motivator (Fisher, 2009). Interviewed participants supported this statement; they asserted that leadership should, "make more uncertain situation certain, know what to expect" (RP13). Analysis of the data revealed that these uncertainties resulted in loss of trust to the leadership and organization. Because of downsizing, "job security is not there anymore" (RP9). Personnel downsizing affects job security, which was manifested in the safety needs proposed by Maslow (1943).

Interviewed participants showed concern for job security. "Leaders are making a wrong decision because there are many sailors with great records or great service records and qualities that are getting kick out or being let go for the wrong reason" (RP1). "…with policy changes, there is no way not to be scared of your job…you could be the best sailor and still go home" (RP9). "Am I going to be next?" (RP3). Gandolfi (2009)

asserted that one of the consequences of downsizing is the negative perception (e.g., unfairness) caused by downsized personnel receiving incentive separation payments while remaining personnel tend to receive little support from management. The findings in this study did not support this statement. Nevertheless, other literature supported Gandolfi (2009) statement. Managers and leaders tend to pay more attention to downsized employees; they often offer downsized employees paid time off for job hunting, separation incentives, outplacement services, and so forth (Kim, 2009).

Operations tempo. The result of this study revealed that the high rate of operations tempo, which means the amount of time sailors spent at sea, longer deployments to other military units, and shorter shore or dwell time resulted in an increased stress to sailors and their families. In some circumstances, high rate of operations tempo lead to health issues. Operations high tempo also resulted in an increased maintenance and costs for ships and aircrafts (U. S. Navy, 2010). Participants affirmed, "…longer deployment results in more stress…it's stressful because you are not with your family; it's the reason why the divorce rate is so high in the military" (RP9). "We are putting more people on a ship for extended period of time…affect their morale, their family lives, and deployment cycles" (RP11). Secretary of the Navy Mabus stated that the main stressors on the naval force are the ability to be forward deployed and mission ready at all times; the navy needs to move progressively, but it is a challenge because of the limited time and budget ("Seapower", 2010).

Job Satisfaction and Morale. Analysis of the data revealed that job satisfaction is associated with morale. According to the naval military personnel manual 1700-030,

when individual personnel desires contradict with the policies of the Navy, it would damage the morale of personnel (Navy Personnel Command, 2012). Interviewed participants expressed that personnel downsizing results in low morale and low job satisfaction. To maintain morale and job satisfaction, interviewed participants suggested the use of monetary and non-monetary rewards, such as individual awards, incentives, and recognition programs. "…what's the use of you trying to succeed in your rate when there is no room for you to grow" (RP18). "I don't know if there is a program in place for job satisfaction and I don't know if it is possible to make one at this point" (RP9). The domain satisfaction concept is an assessment of an individual's quality of life; individual's life satisfaction in domains that matters much or regards as significant (Wilcove, 2009). As presented in the literature review, the concept of job satisfaction can be measured by meeting individuals' needs (Udechukwu, 2009). Interviewed participants proposed that top leadership should invest in training and development of personnel; this effort should help maintain the personnel's loyalty, trust, and increase productivity (Iverson & Zatrick, 2011).

In conclusion, for Theme 3, the data revealed that the quality of life of personnel affects their job performances. Interviewed participants affirmed that the increased time spent at sea significantly affected personnel job performance in a negative way. They attested that top naval leaders failed to consider the consequences of downsizing to personnel, their families, and the organization. The leaders need to develop programs that could effectively meet the needs of sailors because career and personal development have the greatest positive impact on personnel's quality of life.

Theme 4: Change of personal values

Organizational changes imposed by managers affect personal values in a negative

way because employees have to adapt to change involuntary. Voluntary changes

promote individual values (Sverdlik & Oreg, 2009). Values transcend actions because it

motivates individuals to take action and it justifies specific choices; it guides individual's

behavior (Sverdlik & Oreg, 2009). Thunman (2012) found that the consequences of

reduction of the number of employees include fatigue, stress, and mental exhaustion.

Employees' lack of power or little influence with the reduction implementation process

negatively affected their personal values and motivation. As personal values dropped or

altered, it negatively affected individual's self-esteem (Thunman, 2012). Therefore,

giving importance to personal values is important as it affects employees' motivation and

behavior.

Human needs. The result of the data analysis revealed that remaining employees

experienced work overload to the point of burn out. This finding is pivotal because it is a

threat to their physiological needs, which is the literal requirement of human needs

(Maslow, 1943). Admiral Roughead (retired) stated that highly skilled and innovative

sailors are the ones who prevent conflict and win wars; Admiral Roughead reaffirmed

that top naval leaders are committed to supporting both sailors and civilian personnel (U.

S. Navy, 2010). Contrary to this statement, the findings revealed that though top naval

leaders consider the overall health and comfort of sailors, participants believe that it is

not the leaders' priority. "…ultimately the repercussion is towards the sailors

involve…whether they would be displaced from the job or put in another rating…just the

overall health and comfort of the sailors…it is considered, but I don't believe it is the main factor…" (RP2). "The liberal elements of congress would be able to give more entitlements to lower class…they are shuffling money out of the military to give it to entitlement programs…once they start cutting entitlements, people would vote them out of office" (RP15).

Motivation. Personnel development, such as continued training, career advancement, and job satisfaction contribute to retention of essential personnel; organizations that invest in their employees' growth, benefits in the long run because it may result in an increased motivation (Ferreira, Basson, & Coetzee, 2010). Data revealed that for personnel to remain motivated, Navy leaders should develop a transition plan to help sailors, which include "job training, education…even working with the department of labor" (RP3). "Incentives, reenlistment bonus, awards, more recognition increase motivation" (RP8). Interviewed participants affirmed, the perception that anybody could be let go at any time resulted in "lack of motivation, dedication…they may not feel that they are part of something important…or something that they have to dedicate their whole life and whole time" (RP1). This finding is substantiated in feelings of belongingness proposed by Maslow (1943). This finding also applied to the interpersonal justice theory. Kim (2009) described the interpersonal justice as the perceived fairness of the employees' treatment.

In conclusion, for Theme 4, interviewed participants believe that naval leaders should allow remaining personnel to have a sense of accomplishment, which is in accordance with self-esteem discussed by Maslow (1943). Personnel should be allowed

and given the opportunity to be the best that they can be. To remain motivated, personnel needs to have not only self-confidence, but also confidence in their leaders by having the awareness of what the future hold concerning their careers. Leaders should value personnel and acknowledge that they remain the organization's most valuable asset.

Theme 5: Navy readiness and balance force

Interviewed participants believed there is a need to develop or improve existing strategies in maintaining a balance force and meeting the naval mission requirements during the implementation process of personnel downsizing. Interviewed participants questioned if decision makers were actually looking at the naval missions. Without a balance force, the Navy's shore and sea infrastructure may suffer from the leaders' right sizing effort. Prindle (2005) supported this concern by affirming the importance of alignment in the organizations' value, culture, and priorities.

Knowledge management. The data revealed that, during downsizing of personnel, knowledge is lost, and it is not being sustained. Armed forces have diffused and dynamic responsibilities (e.g., protecting national security, responding to natural calamity, etc.); therefore, they require skilled personnel to perform such tasking (Beeres, Bollen, & De Waard, 2010). The lack of interpersonal relationship between sailors and top leadership was manifested in feelings of belongingness proposed by Maslow (1943).

The findings show that a loss of an organization's human capital resulted in knowledge loss. This important matter needs to be dealt with because participants affirmed that the Navy would not be able to complete its missions without knowledgeable personnel. Supporting statements include "without essential and experienced personnel it

cannot function properly" (RP3); "…if you are downsizing, you need the best possible sailor for the job" (RP3). "…experience leave the door, and we become stagnant fixture in our community" (RP10). Knowledge loss needs to be managed affectively because it negatively affects an organization's productivity; it reduces external knowledge flow; it reduces the capacity to learn, moreover, it reduces organizational memory. Intellectual capital (IC) construct is a measure of organization's intangible assets; an IC material, such as experience and information generate value for an organization. IC could be used to determine the influence of valuable knowledge loss to surviving employees and to an organization (Massingham, 2010).

Military has contributed a significant amount of knowledge that benefited its citizens. Because of the assigned responsibilities in the organization and the society, military leaders developed required knowledge to help them cope with stress, assess situations, handle unpredictable circumstances, and communicate effectively. Knowledge management promotes positive attitudes and positive behaviors towards the organization; it helps maintain job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and productivity (A. Bennet, Bennet, & Lee, 2009). Knowledge-based development (KBD) concept is a resource to an organization; the emphasis of KBD is on exploring available knowledge (informing) and creation of knowledge (proceeding). KBD is sense making as it anticipates the future and the outcome (Bennet et al., 2009).

Sustainability. It may seem counter-intuitive that the Navy is downsizing its personnel during wartime, but top leadership and policy makers find it necessary to do so to maintain a sustainable, but affordable force (D. Jones, personal communication,

February 17, 2012). Secretary Mabus stated at the senate armed services committee hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2013 budget that the Navy's missions were sustainable ("Seapower," 2010). This statement is contrary to the views of interviewed participants. Findings revealed that downsizing of personnel in the end would do more harm than good. Interviewed participants believe that, with the downsizing of personnel, naval missions would be unsustainable because it has an impact on global business; sustainability is an issue with top naval leadership. "They [naval leaders] are still reducing us, but the things we do in the world are still growing, which does not make sense" (RP9), "…we would come to the realization that we are not the world's policeman…it is not sustainable because we cannot maintain or promote democracy the way we see it" (RP2).

In addition, contrary to Secretary of the Navy Mabus, Senator McCain voiced his concern about the readiness of the force and the risk of reduced naval capabilities because of budget cuts. Interviewed participants supported Senator McCain's concern. The findings revealed that downsized personnel leaves a gap, this gap needs to be filled to accomplish naval missions or goals. "...there's money issue, the system is unable to sustain itself…" (RP2). "…I think we are going to haul out our force like we did in 1970s, where we were no longer have enough sailors to man all of our ships…we would be strong on paper, but weak in reality" (RP15). Managing defense budget is important because armed forces cannot achieve their missions without needed equipments and skilled personnel (Rutner et al., 2012).

In conclusion, for Theme 5, leaders faced multiple challenges in maintaining a ready and balance force. These challenges include (a) they need to ensure that they keep essential and knowledgeable personnel, (b) they need to ensure that they are able to sustain navy missions, and (c) they need to mitigate the risk associated with downsized force. During the implementation of downsizing, it is important that naval leaders maintain a positive relationship by showing their support to personnel because naval missions and goals would not be achieved without dedicated and skilled personnel.

Theme 6: Leadership's effectiveness and efficiency

Leadership decisions pertaining to organizational right sizing influence the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization (Sitlington & Marshould, 2011). Success of organizational restructuring depends on how managements value their remaining employees, which could be accomplished in terms of recognizing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities when realigning them into different functions (Prindle, 2005). This finding is supported by interviewed participants, "it all starts with leadership" (RP5). "…reward them for good work that they do…whether it is monetary, promotion, or anything…figure out what means the most to them…as simple as picnic, something for the kids-their families…show your appreciation" (RP12). Mun˜oz-Bullon and Sanchez-Bueno (2010) affirmed that giving employees incentives when they leave either voluntarily or involuntary during the downsizing process may create a positive attitude; in turn, results in increased productivity.

Strategic plan. Senior or top military leaders act as the key decision-makers who would employ a strategic plan to maintain control of challenges within the department of

defense (Bennet et al., 2009). In strategic planning, top naval leaders have to take into

consideration the knowledge, skills, and abilities of workers (Prindle, 2005).

Formulating a strategic plan to manage loss of knowledge is critical because it is an

important organizational resource (Massingham, 2010). RP2 exemplified, "planning,

planning, planning, less people, less equipment, so you have to plan affectively and

maximize personnel with the workload. If you do not plan, you do not have foresight."

Without strategic planning, the Navy would not achieve the outcome desired from

downsizing. A strategic plan should help naval leadership remain affective and efficient

(W. D. French, personal communication, July 5, 2011).

Interviewed participants affirmed that success in achieving the desired outcomes

from personnel downsizing depends on many factors, such as effective communication,

effective implementation of personnel downsizing strategies, and valuing remaining

personnel. Mellahia and Wilkinson (2010) affirmed that an organization should take the

time to plan and consider all the factors affected by downsizing. They asserted that

speedy implementation of organizational restructuring is harmful to the organization's

innovativeness given that they could lose essential employees. RP15 attested "…you are

cutting people without cutting jobs, and you cannot manage that." "They are making

random cuts and there is no way to deal with randomness…the fault is they are cutting

people numbers instead of job numbers. If they would just cut billets, they could manage

this through regular attrition" (RP15).

Data gathered revealed that the effectiveness of the implementation process of

naval personnel downsizing was a concern. Supporting statements include "I have my

concern about how the Navy is going about doing it. Whether or not they are doing it in a constructive and productive manner…are they [top naval leadership] actually looking at missions…?" (RP3). "The Navy leaders decided to do more with less, but lots of times there is so much work that has to be done, and so many priorities that you just cannot do more with less" (RP17). Interviewed participants expressed their concerns on the affect of downsizing, supporting statements include "…this system would be unable to sustain itself…" (RP2). "Weakening the force…the naval strength" (RP16). "Until they stop downsizing on large level, they are not going to be able to keep motivation up…they won't be able to mitigate the losses in morale (RP9). "It does cause me concern in an area where we need to be careful making unnecessary cut…" (RP14). "I do not think there is a cohesive plan" (RP15). This finding could be applied to the procedural justice theory pertaining to downsizing of employees. Kim (2009) described the procedural justice as the perceived fairness of the downsizing process.

Force shaping. Data revealed that the need for top leaders to enforce new policies and regulations to maintain combat and operational readiness and maintain a balance force instilled fear, which affected sailors negatively. Leadership is a demanding undertaking. To fulfill naval missions, leadership development is essential because it is part of the Navy's strategic management process used to achieve a goal of helping military personnel excel professionally and personally (MacBryde, Paton, Grant, & Bayliss, 2012). Adhering to military values and standards, maintaining skilled personnel and equipments, and recognizing social responsibilities are essential in achieving public

organization's success or missions. Two force-shaping tools discussed during the interview were perform to serve (PTS) and enlisted review board (ERB).

Interviewed participants expressed an understanding of the importance of PTS to the Navy and its personnel. PTS allows leaders to review an individual's seniority, experiences, and skills, which is a way that they retain best sailors. PTS is a tool used by the commander, navy personnel command, to allow personnel to re-enlist or extend their contracts or enlistment in overpopulated ratings; it is also a tool used to mandate PTS disapproved sailors to separate from the Navy. Most participants believe that the PTS is an affective force shaping tool, "The PTS I can agree with cause you have to perform to serve…performing is saying you are doing what you need to do" (RP4). "Perform to serve - I actually agree with to a point…it is essentially separating the weak from the strong or vice versa" (RP3). "…it [PTS] weeds out personnel who are not performing" (RP5).

Some interviewed participants believed that PTS is not effective because they were witnessing hard worker, dedicated, and motivated sailor being separated. "The sailors that they are, unfortunately, kicking out are the most experienced, the most dedicated, and the most reliable sailors…" (RP4). "…others are staying in, and some who are really good are getting kick out" (RP8). "Good people are being let go" (RP6). Through PTS, sailors on overmanned ratings are given the opportunity to cross rate to open ratings. Some interviewed participants view this strategy as *forced* conversion, which bewildered them because they believe that sailors should have a choice as to the type of job they would like to perform. Supporting statements include "personnel who

wants to remain active duty are…forced to pursue other rating, which to me is not as

affective because now they are pursuing it more so that they can keep a job…that they are

not motivated to do…" (RP7). "…when sailors are asked to cross rate to another rate

that they may or may not have an interest for, that's when you are going to have a bit of a

problem" (RP19).

Enlisted review board is a quota-based strategy utilized by Navy leaders to

review 16,000 sailors' service records and to separate 3,000 sailors who are in a rating

with over 103% staffing (Navy Personnel Command, 2012). Interviewed participants

disagreed and did not see the relevance of ERB. They expressed dismay with the use of

ERB approach to reduce personnel because it created uncertainties and threatened

thousands of sailors and their families. RP4 argued that ERB "Is a breach of contract."

"When they did the ERB, and they decided to cut 3,000 sailors, that was like a punch on

the face because nobody saw that coming, and this is all driven due to money" (RP11).

The interpersonal justice theory, which is the perceived fairness of treatment, and the

distributive justice theory, which is the perceived fairness of the distribution of resources,

during downsizing discussed by Kim (2009) could be applied in this finding of the study.

In conclusion, for Theme 6, the analysis of the findings revealed that participants

were bewildered with the fact that Navy's mission remained the same, but less personnel

to accomplish the job. They affirmed that to achieve an effective and efficient fighting

force it is essential that navy leaders conduct an in-depth look at the naval missions

before any organizational restructuring could be done. To achieve the outcome desired

from personnel downsizing, navy missions need to be reduced first before cutting

personnel. Interviewed participants felt strong resentment as they see hard working and dedicated sailors separating from the Navy considering the fact that losing a job is detrimental not only to an individual, but also to their families.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of the study are relative to all branches of the military because it may help in the deployment of tactics and in accomplishing imperative missions such as to deter and win wars, which could be achieved by daily sacrifice of personnel. Leaders' commitment to serve the nation, community, and society requires examination of existing programs and strategies in placed in the implementation of personnel downsizing. The risk associated with the reduction of the military workforce is harmful not only to the Navy as they could lose loyal, committed, and skilled personnel, but it is also harmful to the national security, communities, and societies because of the nature of the naval missions. Therefore, it is important for leaders to determine or develop programs and establish strategic plans that would help support sailors and their dependents during downsizing process. Interviewed participants echoed the importance of affirmation from top and frontline leaders that they would do what is necessary to support sailors, civilian personnel, and their dependents.

This study may be relevant to business practice because the reduction of the workforce is also apparent to private and public companies. Because of downsizing, unemployment rate were continuously rising (Datta et al., 2010). To remain competitive in the employment market, managers and business owners need to bridge the gap that resulted from reduction of employees. For individuals to remain competitive, Karren

(2012) suggested that they should take charged of their career and create their own career management program. This study may provide increased awareness of the consequences of employee downsizing and better understanding of its influence on an organization, an individual, and society.

The findings in this study are relevant to improving business practice because they uphold the humanistic approach to the downsizing of employees. The linkage or relationship of personnel downsizing and Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivation theory may serve as a blueprint in understanding the importance of giving value to employees and their needs through effective communication and providing continued training to help increase knowledge and promote personal and career development. This in turn, may result in positive change and maintain trust, commitment, and loyalty towards an organization or towards managers and leaders of organizations. In addition, it may also result in an increased job satisfaction, morale, motivation, and productivity.

Implications for Social Change

The Navy, naval personnel, managers, leaders, nations, communities, and societies may benefit from this study. The Navy's culture and ideals are important. Leadership should defend the Navy's culture and ideals. Leaders should preserve personnel dedication to the Navy because of the possible long-term consequences of downsizing. Leaders should strive to maintain loyal, committed, and skilled personnel. They should have the moral courage to do what is right for the Navy and its personnel.

Personnel may benefit from this research because examining strategies that could help mitigate damages of downsizing on employees and the organization may bring

awareness of the negative effect of downsizing to leaders. It may help leaders realize the

value of giving importance to remaining personnel and their needs. In turn, personnel

may receive leaders' added support through career enrichment, ensuring that their welfare

is one of the leaders' top priorities, and so forth. Downsizing affects personnel health;

data revealed there were instances where it could even lead to suicidal ideation.

Therefore, awareness of the risk associated with reduction of personnel needs to be

mitigated or minimized. When personnel needs are being met, they would be well

prepared to accomplish assigned missions and ready to serve the United States, other

nations, communities, and societies.

Nations may benefit from the study because of the increased national security by

prevention of threats and potential adversaries. Communities may benefit because naval

personnel would be ready to provide stupendous service to community outreach

programs. The research also showed that leaders and managers do need to realize that

downsizing is not always the right solution to the economic crisis or budget cuts. The

societies may benefit with this finding because it may bring awareness to top leaders that

there are other avenue or ways to manage or cut spending other than personnel, which in

turn may help lower unemployment rates.

Recommendations for Action

Kumar and Pranjal (2009) found that the most challenging issues that manager's

face during downsizing is personnel issues as supported by the findings in this study. For

leaders to maintain a ready and balance military force, they need to overcome multiple

challenges. Organizational leaders and managers, especially Navy's front line and top

leaders should pay attention to the result of this study. Military leaders and company managers should take into consideration how downsizing or organizational restructuring affects remaining employees' emotional, financial, and physical well being. Organization missions, visions, and goals would not be achieved without dedicated and experienced personnel. Exploring the emotional reaction of remaining employees to downsizing is important because it determines employees' behavior and attitude towards the organization. It also determines its influence in achieving organizations' goals during or after downsizing.

Based on the findings of this study, interviewed participants felt betrayed by top naval leaders; they believed that the reduction of personnel was implemented in an inefficient and unfair manner. Top leaders need to communicate downsizing implementation process effectively and have a plan of action in addressing risks associated with downsizing of personnel. Effective communication may help minimize the feeling of betrayal. In addition, the lack of job security builds a feeling of uncertainties and increased stress. Interviewed participants affirmed that communication is the key to mitigating the negative feeling of uncertainties, minimizing stress, and successfully achieving the desired outcome from organizational restructuring.

Data revealed that the quality of life of military personnel affects their job performances. Leaders should continue developing and enhancing programs designed to mitigate the negative effect of reduction of personnel and improve the resilience of the force. An action top leaders could take is assigning junior personnel to a greater leadership role because it may overturn resentment; it may increase motivation, increase

job satisfaction, and may help build morale. Front line leaders should show their support to remaining personnel by allowing them to have a sense of accomplishment and providing them training that helps them develop skills that they could use not only inside the military, but also in the civilian community.

Placing blind faith in leaders and managers requires knowing that personnel are valued and acknowledge that they remain the organization's most valuable asset. The data in this study showed that the lack of trust with leaders and managers affects personnel motivation. Building leadership trust is a challenge during the implementation of personnel downsizing. Therefore, leaders and managers need to pay attention to the results of this study. The recommendation for action is that leaders and managers should strive to earn personnel's trust by maintaining a positive relationship. Acknowledging personnel's accomplishments, efforts, and providing them opportunities to grow could help build and maintain trust.

Considering the well-being of personnel and their families should not only help build trust and reduce resentment, but it would also help leaders and managers gain personnel's respect. The results of this study would be beneficial only if they reach the main groups of intended or pertinent audiences, which are military leaders and civilian managers. The findings would be disseminated through publications in online databases, such as to ProQuest dissertation database. If given an opportunity, results would be presented in professional conferences.

Recommendations for Further Study

I recommend further study on the behavior of employees towards the organization during downsizing as it affects the loyalty and commitment towards the organization. To improve business practice, I agree with Kim (2009) who posited that further study of the relationship between the remaining personnel and leaders and managers is needed because it may help minimize undesirable consequences of downsizing such as bitterness and distrust.

Kim (2009) discussed four major forms of organizational justices that affect employees' behavior during the implementation of downsizing: (a) distributive justice – the perceived fairness of the distribution of resources; (b) procedural justice – the perceived fairness of the downsizing implementation process; (c) interpersonal justice – the perceived fairness of employees' treatment; and (d) informational justice – the perceived fairness of the dissemination of information or adequacy of communication. Kim (2009) focused on the informative justice. I recommend further study of the role of distributive, procedural, and interpersonal justices to personnel downsizing because of their influences in the outcomes of downsizing. In addition, despite the plethora of research on downsizing, there is a need expand studies on not only remaining employees, but also downsized employees because of the immense implications of downsizing to organizations, individuals, and societies.

Reflections

Prior to this study, my preconceived idea was that the naval personnel downsizing event was a dreadful strategy to save money because I believed that leaders were taking

the risk of losing essential personnel, which could negatively affect the mission and operational readiness of the organization. There were other areas, in my opinion, where the leaders could cut to be more cost efficient, such as alignment of personnel change of station operations costs, which in the end may help save the organization a lot of money. Nevertheless, during the interview, I was able to be objective and abstain from being biased by setting aside my opinion. The focus was to gather and present data from the interviews parallel to the way the participants perceived and experienced the downsizing phenomenon.

A preconceived notion that naval personnel downsizing was a dreadful strategy was incorrect because leaders have to do what they have to do to manage the naval force effectively and efficiently. Data revealed that the number of personnel in the Navy needs to be reduced to be able to manage budget. However, I still believe that top leaders need to consider the negative effect of losing trained and skilled personnel. What changed in my perception was that not all participants view personnel downsizing as negative because the data revealed that leaders need to eliminate overstaffed naval ratings, as it is necessary to achieve alignment within the Navy.

Abstract reflection on the findings of this research unfolds that the relationship between leaders and personnel are invaluable especially during the time of uncertainties. My thoughts on personnel downsizing remained that communication along with continued training of personnel are essential tools for naval leaders in maintaining personnel trust; it is important to maintain personnel trust because it helps alleviates uncertainties and maintain a committed and dedicated naval workforce. Personal

reflections on the findings made me realize that military leaders are divided between politics and business. I also realized that personnel rely on their leaders to help them in overcoming concerns and challenges that they have to face because of downsizing. Leaders may be able to reduce the negative effect of reduced workforce and able to exert effort in the growth and development of remaining personnel by prioritizing and understanding their needs.

Summary and Study Conclusions

A qualitative phenomenological approach was used to explore the lived experiences of naval personnel with regard to downsizing. This study is significant because the naval missions, which include protecting the country's security interests, are undeniable eminent. Accordingly, speedy implementation of reduction of personnel is harmful to the missions and operational readiness of the navy. Leaders should take the time to plan and consider all the factors affected by downsizing, such as employees' behavior, health issues, and so forth. Gathered data indicated that to remain potent, naval leaders need motivated, committed, and knowledgeable personnel to perform assigned missions.

Thousands of naval personnel have been let go and thousands worry that they may be next to lose their jobs. Data showed that the reduced naval workforce has negatively affected the remaining personnel's personal well-being and job performances because of the uncertainties, fear, doubts, and loss of trust towards leaders. Leaders should seek to mitigate the damages or risks associated with downsizing and need to be mindful of its long-term effects. Personnel remain as organizations' key asset.

Therefore, it is important that they perceived that the downsizing implementation process as fair and communicated properly.

During the interview, there was a consensus that personnel depend on top and front line leaders in maintaining morale, job satisfaction, and motivation as these are an important part of Navy's culture. Interviewed participants indicated that front line leaders have no say on the implementation of personnel downsizing; most if not all of them, could not do anything, but watch good sailors forcefully separated from the Navy. Front line leaders should be given the opportunity to render an opinion on the matter; they should be given the power to retain personnel who they believe to be essential in the accomplishment of Navy's missions. In turn, this would also help leadership manage knowledge, maintain efficiency, and maintain effectiveness within the navy. Evidence from this study revealed that the future of the Navy depends on how effective and efficient leadership is in preserving the naval force structure.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study of U.S. Navy downsizing. The researcher is inviting Navy leaders, command career counselors, and active duty enlisted personnel to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part. This study is being conducted by a researcher named Eden Velasco Castro who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as Navy civilian human resource assistance, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore the rationale of Navy downsizing and the leadership's effort to remain effective and efficient in mitigating stress, maintaining job satisfaction, morale, and motivation, and in remaining mission ready while in the process of downsizing.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you would be asked to:

1. Read and understand the Department of the Navy's Privacy Act Statement.
2. Share your perceptions or views with regard to the downsizing effort of the Navy.
3. Answer or speak your responses to 10 open-ended interview questions, which would last for approximately 20 minutes.
4. Be tape-recorded during the interview to ensure accuracy of gathered data.
5. Review the transcript of the interview to ensure that it is a correct representation of your views.
6. Review findings to ensure accuracy of the data.

Here are some sample questions:

1. How do you feel about the Navy's downsizing of personnel?
2. How do you perceive Navy's downsizing affects the organization's mission?
3. How do you feel about the Navy's get-tough approach to reduce ratings?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. You may stop at any time. In addition, please be informed that declining to participate or withdrawing from this study would not negatively affect your relationship with the researcher.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

This type of study involves risks of minor discomfort that can be encountered in daily life, such as emotional distress. Being involved in this study would not pose any risks to a person's safety or wellbeing. The potential benefits of this study may include:

1. A better understanding of the force shaping tools that the Navy uses to stabilize and control staffing.
2. A better understanding of the effect of downsizing to active duty enlisted personnel.
3. It may help military personnel manage their Navy career.
4. It may help Navy leadership determine strategies needing implementation to keep the naval forces effective and efficient.

Payment:

A $5.00 gift certificate from either Starbucks or Cold Stone Creamery would be given to each participant as a token of appreciation for the time and for sharing their views upon completion of each interview.

Privacy:

Any information you provide would be kept confidential. The researcher would not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. In addition, the researcher would not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data would be kept secure by using a secured safe. Data would be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Alternatively, if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via phone at 760-604-0829 or e-mail at eden.castro@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-20-12-0033861 and it expires on April 19, 2013.

Copy of Summary of the Research Findings:

Please provide your name and address below if you wish to obtain a copy of the summary of the research findings.

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

_____

The researcher would give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Appendix B lists the open-ended interview questions intended to help uncover the perceptions of Navy leaders, command career counselors, and enlisted active duty personnel regarding Navy downsizing.

Interview questions:

1. How do you feel about the Navy's downsizing of personnel?

2. How do you perceive Navy's downsizing affects the organization's mission?

3. How do you feel about the Navy's get-tough approach to reduce ratings?

4. How do you describe your perception and understanding of the current approaches used for downsizing units?

5. What do you perceive to be an appropriate strategy in maintaining morale during downsizing?

6. How do you perceive Navy leaderships' effectiveness in maintaining job satisfaction during downsizing?

7. What do you perceive to be an effective strategy that may increase motivation?

8. What strategies may be implemented to manage workload during downsizing to help minimize stress?

9. What positive outcomes do you perceive from the Navy downsizing?

10. What negative outcomes do you perceive from the Navy downsizing?

Appendix C: Summary of the Research Findings

This study comprised a qualitative phenomenological approach. The purpose was to explore the lived experiences of naval personnel with regard to the downsizing phenomenon. Analysis of the findings revealed that participants were bothered by the fact that restructuring of the naval workforce mandated leaders to do more with less. Participants believe that leadership did not complete a thorough workforce analysis prior to implementing downsizing of personnel; they implemented downsizing without diligently examining assigned missions and without considering its consequences to personnel. It was found in the study that the active enlisted personnel and the Navy were negatively affected by reduction of personnel both operationally and emotionally. The feeling of uncertainties, fear, and work overload resulted in increased stress, loss trust towards leaders, job insecurity, lowered job satisfaction, lowered motivation, and reduced commitment. The Navy could lose essential personnel and risks loss of corporate knowledge. Consequently, it may be a challenged for leaders to maintain morale, productivity, and efficiency, which help in preserving a positive working environment.

Participants believe that the negative effects of personnel downsizing could be mitigated by constant and effective communication, improving quality of life of both personnel and their families, and recognition of personnel's hard work. Leaders might need to develop strategies that could help minimize the negative effects of reduction of personnel, such as taking into account operational tempo and distributed workload. A more in-depth awareness of the consequences of downsizing is important in achieving the desired outcome from restructuring of the Navy or any organization.

Curriculum Vitae

Education:
Walden University 2009 - 2013
Doctor of Business Administration

University of Phoenix 2006- 2008
Master in Business Administration

National University 2001- 2003
B.S., Major in Information Technology
Minor in Business Administration.

Vincennes University 1999 -2001
 Associate Degree in General Study

Certification:
A licensed realtor

Professional Affiliation:
Affiliated with the Department of the Navy